

- Completion of 70 percent of the landscaping action plan and creation of a man-hour matrix that coincides with the landscape maintenance guide.

The public meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m. and the board entered into an executive session concerning legal advice and negotiations. No additional decisions were announced following the executive session.

The next Triview Metro board meeting is scheduled for 5 p.m. Jan. 9 at the Fairfield Inn, Mt. Herman Conference Room, 15275 Struthers Road, Colorado Springs. Meetings are normally held on the second Tuesday of the month. Information: 488-6868 or see www.colorado.gov/triviewmetro. Triview is also on Facebook.

Triview official posting locations are:

- El Paso County Clerk and Recorder's Office

- Park at intersection of Venison Creek and Kitchener Way
- Park on Gold Creek and Creekside Drive
- Mailboxes at Burke Hollow and Talus Road
- Park on Old Creek Drive and Toreva Drive
- Triview office: 16055 Old Forest Pt., Suite 300, Monument, CO 80132

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Monument Sanitation District, Dec. 13

2018 budget and judgment mill levy approved

By Jim Kendrick

On Dec. 13, the Monument Sanitation District (MSD) board held public hearings on the final 2018 district budget and certification of a one-time 7.734 mill judgment mill levy from MSD to El Paso County. Both were unanimously approved as presented. No members of the public were present for any agenda hearing item, and no public comments were submitted in writing.

2018 budget approved

District Manager Mike Wicklund gave an overview of the proposed final 2018 budget and answered directors' questions. He noted that there would be an extra sludge removal cycle at Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (TLWWTF) in 2018, which are normally performed every other year. The MSD share of this extra sludge removal cost was budgeted at \$30,446.

TLWWTF will then return to a normal biennial sludge removal schedule in 2019, 2021, and so on. There was also a \$50,000 budget expense item for new district Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) and IT network. The expense and appropriation line items for the judgment mill levy were \$377,035.

TLWWTF operates as a separate joint venture public utility and is owned in equal one-third shares

by Monument Sanitation District (MSD), Palmer Lake Sanitation District (PLSD), and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSO). See related TLWWTF JUC article on page 15.

The 2018 budget resolution and 2018 appropriation for \$1.212 million were both unanimously approved as presented.

2018 judgment mill levy certified

Wicklund presented a completed form titled "Certification of Tax Levies for Non-school Governments" that was prepared with Joan Fritsche of the Collins Cockrel & Cole law firm in Denver. The law firm specializes in representing governments and special districts in Colorado. This official document certifies that MSD's gross and net assessed valuation for 2017 are both \$48.745 million for the budget/fiscal year 2018. The sole purpose of MSD's total property tax revenue derived from a one-time mill levy of 7.734 mills against this net assessed valuation is for payment of Judgment Case 2015CV30521, a total of \$376,997 pursuant to Colorado Revised Statute 24-10-113(3).

Note: For more information on the history of this lengthy dispute regarding the TLWWTF total phosphorus chemical removal clarifier expansion's cost overruns and cost sharing, see all the links listed in

<http://www.ocn.me/v17n10.htm#msd>.

2018 meeting times, dates, and locations approved

There was board consensus to make no changes in the meeting schedule for 2018. Meetings are normally held at 9 a.m. on the third Wednesday of the month in the district conference room at 130 Second St.

Security camera installation and network update

Wicklund reported noted that all contracted work completed to date is working very well with 1080P HD video quality for the security cameras. Wicklund also said that Monument Computer's upgrade of the district's computer network sustainability and reliability upgrades are under way and being coordinated with I&C Design's SCADA upgrades. The district will now have cloud storage as an additional backup to dual backup hard disk drives.

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 17 at 130 Second St. Monument. For information call 481-4886.

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El Paso Board of County Commissioners, Nov. 30, Dec. 5, 12, 19, and 21.

Commissioners oppose I-25 third-lane toll

By Helen Walklett

At the El Paso Board of County Commissioners' (BOCC) Dec. 21 meeting, the commissioners ratified a resolution declaring their opposition to tolling the third-lane expansion of I-25 from Monument to Castle Rock. Earlier in December, the commissioners unanimously approved the 2018 budget. They also made decisions relating to the Monument Hill Road Safety Improvements Project, the Black Forest Basin drainage and bridge fund, the Northgate Estates development, and "tiny houses" and camping restrictions.

Commissioners oppose tolling the third-lane expansion of I-25

At its Dec. 21 meeting, the BOCC ratified a resolution declaring its opposition to tolling of the third-lane expansion of I-25 between Monument and Castle Rock.

Dave Rose, the county's chief public information officer, had introduced a draft resolution for discussion under Staff Emergency Items at the Dec. 19 meeting, stating there was confusion between the various partners in the project and among the public surrounding the Colorado Department of Transportation's (CDOT) proposal to include tolling for any new lane built as part of the I-25 "gap" project. Rose suggested that the confusion had arisen from a misunderstanding of federal highway funding requirements that mean CDOT must consider managed lanes in connection with any major highway expansion, though it was pointed out that the requirement did not specifically mention tolls. At the Dec. 19 meeting, all the commissioners expressed support for the draft resolution.

The BOCC's Dec. 21 resolution notes that CDOT is assessing the impacts of three possible options for the 17-mile I-25 gap project. These options involve doing nothing, adding a third lane to match the current configuration before and after the gap, or adding a toll-managed express lane in each direction.

The county is serving as the regional applicant for a federal infrastructure grant to assist with funding for the expansion project. Documentation prepared by county staff for the application acknowledged that CDOT is required to consider the impact of managed express lanes in connection with any major expansion. However, the BOCC's resolution makes it clear that recognition of the requirement "does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the third-lane

managed toll configuration for this project."

The question of whether the commissioners supported tolling the third lane was first raised at the Dec. 12 meeting during discussion surrounding the 2018 budget. During public comment, Deborah Stout Meininger, who describes herself as a community advocate and citizen scientist, said, "On this budget resolution it talks about the money for the I-25 expansion. One thing that was not delineated when this was brought up on the ballot, or in any of the publicity about this item, was the fact that part of the I-25 expansion was actually going to be toll roads. That made a lot of people feel very betrayed." Responding, Commissioner Darryl Glenn said, "You're misrepresenting the opinion of this board. At what point did this board take a position that we supported tolling for that extra lane?"

The other commissioners also voiced their opposition to tolling. Commissioner Mark Waller said, "We were able to ... identify the monies necessary without a tolling provision, so I would prefer to see this project go forward without a tolling provision." Commissioner Stan VanderWerf added, "I concur with that. Certainly, there's a lot of citizen concern and I agree with that concern. I did not go into this ballot measure with the understanding that there was going to be a tolled lane."

In the Dec. 21 resolution, the commissioners called on CDOT to recognize that configuring the third-lane expansion as a managed lane would be inconsistent with the configuration at both ends of the gap and would constitute a form of double taxation for county residents. Residents have already agreed to help pay for the project by passing the Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) excess revenue ballot item last November. Of the \$14.5 million voters agreed to allow the county to keep and spend above the TABOR cap, \$6 million is being used to create a pool of local matching funds to accelerate the I-25 widening. A further \$1.5 million from TABOR excess revenues will be used to help secure additional federal funding and to accelerate the project.

At the Dec. 21 meeting, Commissioner VanderWerf reported that he had requested that CDOT provide multiple further opportunities for the public to have input into the project and urged citizens to make their views heard. Commissioner Waller said it was important that people not lose sight of what everyone was

working to accomplish. Reminding everyone that this 17-mile, two-lane section of I-25 had been a factor in thousands of vehicle crashes resulting in nearly 1,300 injuries and 13 fatalities from 2011 through 2015, he said, "This is a significant public safety issue that we all have the responsibility to address. We are in a position now where we are going to break ground on this project next year." He continued, "This project is going to get built and it's going to save lives."

The BOCC ratified the resolution 4-0. Commissioner Longinos Gonzalez was absent. The BOCC understands that CDOT will make its decision in January.

2018 budget approved

At its Dec. 12 meeting, the BOCC unanimously approved the 2018 budget, which projects revenues of \$363.1 million.

The budget has two main parts. Its unrestricted general fund accounts for about 40 percent of the total budget. For 2018, the budget projects revenues of \$143.3 million for this fund, about \$66.7 million of which will go to support the public safety and criminal investigation functions of the offices of the sheriff, district attorney and coroner. Other offices and departments supported by the unrestricted general fund include the assessor, treasurer, clerk and recorder, County Parks, Information Technology, Planning and Community Development, and fleet.

About 60 percent of the 2018 budget is made up of restricted funds over which the BOCC has little or no discretionary authority. These funds can be used only for specific purposes based on sources of revenue, voter direction through specific ballot questions, and the services and programs mandated by state and federal requirements.

In compliance with voter approval of the TABOR excess revenue ballot item in November, the 2018 budget reserves \$6 million for the I-25 gap project and sets aside an additional \$1.5 million for that project from TABOR excess revenues to help secure additional federal funding and to accelerate the project. Also, in compliance with the ballot item, the budget invests \$1.5 million in park improvements, makes a provision for just over \$1 million for fire and flood recovery projects, and earmarks \$6 million to begin to address a backlog of county road maintenance and improvement projects.