

Palmer Lake Town Council, Sept. 13 and 27

Water issues occupy council

By James Howald

Topics related to water—how to manage the town's water supply and how to make the town more resistant to flooding during torrential rains—took up much of the council's attention in September. These issues were addressed at the council's regular meeting on Sept. 13 and at the working session on Sept. 27.

The council also passed its long-debated ordinance addressing outdoor burning at the Sept. 13 meeting.

Council votes to restrict expansion of water system

At the Sept. 13 meeting, the council voted unanimously to approve Ordinance 16 of 2018, which specifies that the town's water supply system will not be expanded to serve properties outside the current service area. The ordinance includes a map that defines the town's service area, which is bordered by Red Rock Ranch Drive to the south and properties just north of Gillia Street to the north. The map also shows the locations of potable water mains of all sizes and specifies that the main lines can't be expanded.

The ordinance expresses the council's concerns that the water system will not be able to support new residential developments. The council acknowledged the fact that this ordinance may prevent some property owners from developing their land.

Water rate analysis to be done

At the Sept. 13 meeting, the council discussed the need for a water rate analysis. The analysis was required to obtain the loan funding the construction of the town's second water storage tank, Town Administrator Cathy Green-Sinnard told the council. Concerns about the amount of money in the town's water fund

also made the rate analysis desirable, she added.

The council reviewed a rate analysis proposal from GettingGreatRates, a Missouri-based company. The proposal specified a cost of \$5,887 for the analysis itself, and an additional cost of \$1,945 for an on-site visit from GettingGreatRates staff.

At the Sept. 27 meeting, the council voted unanimously to approve funding for the analysis without the on-site visit.

500-year rainstorm damages roads

On Aug. 17, Palmer Lake experienced a torrential downpour, estimated to be a once-in-500-years event, which damaged the towns' roads and a number of residential properties.

At the Sept. 13 meeting, the council reviewed a proposal from Martin Marietta to repair damage to Lovers Lane, Pie Corner, the Town Hall book-drop driveway and the Town Hall parking lot. The council delayed acting on this proposal until the Sept. 27 work session meeting.

At the Sept. 27 meeting, the council heard an in-depth analysis of the needed paving work from Jason Dosch, the town's roads supervisor. Dosch told the council that some repairs needed to be done immediately, but that the town also needed a comprehensive plan for drainage to be developed to address the issue over the long term. "I could spend a million dollars tomorrow" to really address all the issues, Dosch told the council.

The council voted at the Sept. 27 meeting to move ahead with the proposed repairs to Lovers Lane and Pie Corner, and to wait on other repairs until a more comprehensive study of the town's drainage could be done.

No dogs allowed on reservoir trail

The council voted to keep the reservoir trail open to hikers de-

spite damage to the trail caused by recent rains. Dogs are still prohibited on the trail.

Council moves forward on comprehensive drainage study

At the Sept. 27 meeting, the board heard from David Frisch of GMS Engineering and Dosch concerning how to develop a comprehensive drainage plan for the town. Frisch told the council that even with a hundred-year drainage plan in place, the town would have experienced flooding during the Aug. 17 downpour.

Dosch told the council that Pie Corner, High Street, Dixie Street, and Milton Street have the most pressing drainage issues. Dosch also said that, as houses were built there was no drainage plan in place, and that now rainwater is funneled and concentrated, leading to flooding.

Frisch told the council that his company could build up a comprehensive plan for the town by focusing on individual problem areas. He discussed some of the drainage issues facing the town, including the requirement to include drainage ponds where rainwater could settle before final discharge, and the fact that Palmer Lake could not be the final destination for rainwater because the lake has no natural outlet.

The consensus of the council was that the drainage study was needed, and that Dosch and GMS should work together to begin a plan.

Long-debated fire ordinance passes at last

At the Sept. 13 meeting, the council voted unanimously to approve the town's updated ordinance concerning outdoor fires. The ordinance provides precise definitions of fire-related terms, and specifies what types of fires are permitted dur-

ing Stage 2 fire restrictions. See https://www.townofpalmerlake.com/sites/default/files/fileattachments/board_of_trustees/meeting/packets/1371/board_packet9.13.18.pdf

The two meetings for October will be at 6 p.m. on Oct. 11 and 25 at Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent. Meetings are normally

held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month, with the second meeting organized as a working session. Information: 481-2953.

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Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, Sept. 18

Accepted 2018 budget draws concerns

By Allison Robenstein

During the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) board meeting on Sept. 18, Director Gary Rusnak presented some budget concerns. The board also discussed the 2019 budget and ongoing talks with Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD.)

Director disputes 2018 budget carryover

Rusnak showed the other board members a financial analysis he performed on the 2018 budget, suggesting the previous board approved a deficit budget. Much less tax revenue was carried over than previously assumed, he said. The board thought it was carrying over \$1.4 million but the real total, according to Rusnak, was \$633,276. The Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) requires the board to hold back a portion of the spendable amount, causing the true carryover to be



Above: DWFPD board member Gary Rusnak presents his analysis of the 2018 budget. Photo by Allison Robenstein.

\$243,276, said Rusnak.

Rusnak and district resident Steve Simpson suggested the budget be presented differently so that it follows standard accounting practices. Specifically,

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