

when determining planning applications. "How do we make a good decision on whether certain areas of the county need to have less density or higher density or less development that draws from the aquifer?" Commissioner Longinos Gonzalez asked. "It seems that we do lack information. Is that going to be addressed in here [the water master plan]? Are we going to be able to direct water districts to do that?" He added, "We get into these discussions and we have no quantitative data on 'is there enough water to support the growth of the county in certain areas,' and if we can't answer that then we're stuck kind of guessing, and I just want to make sure that we are able to address that in the future."

Dossey responded that one of the opportunities presented by an adopted water master plan being an element of the overall county master plan is that the BOCC

would be asked specifically to ensure that an application complies with the water master plan as well as the overall plan when making its determination. He said one possibility arising from this would be the potential for the commissioners to require the applicant to provide well monitoring data as a condition of approval.

Commissioner Stan VanderWerf said that the commissioners rely a lot on the state engineer's [office] for determining water sufficiency. "I'd be interested in getting a better understanding from the state about what they're actually doing so that I can have better confidence in addressing the questions about water sufficiency," he said.

Dossey said he intends to have the State Engineer's Office give a presentation to the BOCC to explain how its review works and how it gets to the point of determining if there is adequate water for a

particular development. He said that Cole Emmons, senior assistant county attorney, could also explain how he does his evaluation based upon the county's 300-year rule.

The draft water master plan is scheduled for public hearings at the El Paso County Planning Commission on Dec. 4 and 18, at which the commissioners will be asked to consider its adoption. It can be viewed here: <https://epcdevplanreview.com/Public/ProjectDetails/110995>

The new county master plan will be developed over the next two years. At its Nov. 13 meeting, the BOCC unanimously approved the award of the contract for consulting services for its development to Houseal Lavigne Associates for an amount not to exceed \$639,748.40.

Judy von Ahlefeldt, a citizen, addressed the commissioners in the public comment part of the Nov. 13

meeting to encourage them to direct the planning commission and county to follow the procedures within the American Planning Association's Public Advisory Service document "Sustaining Places: Best Practices for Comprehensive Plans," when moving forward with the county master plan. The document describes authentic public participation as critical in the plan-making process. Currently, the plan's Request for Proposals (RFP) states only that the plan should be "generally based upon" this document. "I don't feel there has been enough public participation with the water master plan or at least in the creation of the RFP for the county master plan," she said.

**Highway 105 project progresses**

At its Oct. 30 and Nov. 15 meetings, the BOCC approved a number of requests relating to the Highway 105 project. The commissioners

approved memorandums of agreement, special warranty deeds, and four further easements that the county Department of Public Works had identified as necessary to allow the project to move forward.

At its Oct. 30 meeting, the commissioners approved two temporary construction easement agreements. The first comes from property owned by Christy Cech and Joseph Warren at a cost of \$37,300, and the second from property owned by Kevin and Michelle Meere at a cost of \$21,000. Two nonexclusive permanent easements for the project were approved at the commissioners' Nov. 15 meeting. These came from property owned by the Town of Monument at a cost of \$4,300.

**Forest Lakes development moves forward**

Progress has been made with the Forest Lakes Filing 1. At the Nov. 13 meeting, the commissioners approved the final release of a bond for defect warranty at the subdivision for \$578,463.53 following the completion and inspection of all the public improvements. The commissioners also approved an application to accept certain streets within the subdivision into the county road maintenance system.

**Other decisions**

- Nov. 6-The commissioners approved a public right-of-way access agreement to allow Michael and LaDonna Olson to access the county road system from their property on Lone Scout Lookout in Monument. The agreement enables the Olsons to extend their driveway through the unimproved portion of Lone Scout Lookout to connect with the improved portion of the road.
- Nov. 13-The commissioners approved the final release of a letter of credit for \$728 for grading and erosion control at the Monument Hill self-storage facility. This follows the completion and satisfactory inspection of the improvements at the site.

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