

repair and the addition of an asphalt turn-around lane north of the station.

Vehicle capital

Truty said \$165,000 is budgeted to replace brush truck 2242 with a wildland-capable model and that \$150,000 had already been budgeted for 2020 and was postponed due to COVID-19. The district will use the same specifications as El Paso County Wildland Fire Management.

A replacement ambulance is budgeted for \$225,000 from the General replacement plan for the fourth quarter of 2021 due to the high mileage on an existing ambulance. To maintain a positive balance in this fund through 2032, \$150,000 is budgeted annually, with vehicle purchases staggered.

The district has also designed a 15-year Capital fleet replacement plan through 2037 that proposes budgeting \$325,000 per year for the next 10 years. The plan includes a 10-year lease-purchase plan for a replacement tower ladder truck in 2023. Any additions to the plan would require a greater contribution to achieve the goal, and if the Amendment B de-Gallaherization fails, the district would also need to revise the funding for the capital improvement fund. See www.ocn.me/v220n10.htm#tlmfpd.

Further revision would be needed should another organization merge with TLMFPD, said Truty.

Equipment capital

Truty said that in anticipation of the El Paso/Teller 911 Authority installing station alerting systems on all fire stations in both counties, the district is budgeting \$70,000 for station alerting.

The district is budgeting \$335,000 to replace the district's entire stock of Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) equipment.

Wages/benefits

Truty said an unopposed 2% increase in wages is still being proposed with no change in rank differentials. However, the union is requesting additional compensated time off, which would be discussed in executive session.

IT subscriptions

Truty proposed the department migrate to a new fire department management system called ESO. ESO is a system that would allow incident and EMS reporting to be combined and would interface with the hospital patient management system allowing better access for the district's EMS billing company. The initial cost would increase the budget by \$25,000, which includes training and transition costs that would not be in subsequent budgets.

Amended 2020 budget

President John Hildebrandt opened the public hearing on the amended 2020 budget and hearing no public comment for or against, moved to close the hearing. In a roll call vote the board approved the amended 2020 budget as presented, 6-0. See www.ocn.me/v20n10.htm#tlmfpd.

Staffing for Advanced Life Support

Truty said that two years ago the district was struggling to hire EMS/Paramedics and the decision to train existing staff was made. The district currently has three firefighters that are just finishing with Paramedic Training School, and next year, two EMS/Paramedics will train to be firefighters, giving the department five more firefighter/paramedics. The goal is to have enough EMS/Paramedics for 24/7 Advanced Life Support.

Fire Chief Search Committee

Hildebrandt gave the following update:

- Prothman Consultant Mark Risen received 37 applications for the fire chief position and is narrowing down the applications.
- A meeting via Zoom teleconference will be conducted with the Fire Chief Search Committee on Nov. 12 to narrow the field and recommend five to seven finalists. This meeting will not be held in public.
- Finalists will be announced at the Nov. 18 board meeting.
- Interviews for the final candidates will be conducted at TLMFPD with the board and the Fire Chief Search Committee with Risen in early December.

Truty said that if the timelines are met, a decision could be made by mid-December.

Chief's report

Truty gave the following updates:

- A grant of \$20,000 has been received from the state for COVID-19 expenses, which includes waived sick leave. The department has not had any positive COVID-19 tests since testing began.
- The county is moving to Level 2—Safer at Home COVID-19 restrictions on Nov. 4 and could move to Levels 3 or 4 in the following weeks. See www.covid19.colorado.gov.
- The district offices are currently half-manned with the remaining chiefs working from home.
- The district is exploring options for a larger meeting area within the district for future board meetings during the increase of COVID-19 cases.

- The annexation of Station 1 is now completed and recorded with the county, and the well water also becomes part of the Town of Monument. The next step is to dissolve the boundaries between Station 1 and the adjacent 15-acre property purchased in May 2020. See www.ocn.me/v20n5.htm#tlmfpd.

- There has been some interest in the sale of surplus Suite 103, and one offer has been made. The district offices moved to Suites 102/104, 16055 Old Forest Point in September.

Truty thanked the following on behalf of the department:

- Tim Geitner, Colorado House representative for District 19, delivered a flag that has been flown over the Colorado State Capital Building in recognition of National First Responder Day on Nov. 28.
- The \$1,000 "Ready, Set, Go!" grant donated by the National Fire Protection Agency to the Red Rock Ranch Home Owners Association (HOA) for fire mitigation has been donated directly to TLMFPD at the request of the HOA members.
- A plaque was awarded to Randy Estes and Darlene Johnson for the use of their home and property for firefighter training. TLMFPD and neighboring departments gained 200 hours of training due to the rare and generous donation before the building was demolished.

The regular board adjourned at 8:30 p.m. and moved into executive session.

Executive session

The board moved into an executive session pursuant to CRS 24-6-402(4)(e) to determine positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations; developing strategy for negotiations; and instructing negotiations.

Truty informed OCN after the board returned to the regular open session that no decisions or motions were made.

Meetings are usually held on the fourth Wednesday of each month. The next regular meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Nov. 18 at TLMFPD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. The board abides by social distancing recommendations. For information on Zoom meeting joining instructions and upcoming agendas, contact Director of Administration Jennifer Martin at 719-484-9011 or visit www.tlfire.org/board.

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El Paso Board of County Commissioners, Oct. 6, 13, and 27

Initial 2021 budget hearings held

By Helen Walklett

During October, the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) heard proposals for the 2021 county budget. The commissioners also made decisions relating to various developments.

Preliminary balanced budget

The county Financial Services Department presented the preliminary balanced budget at the Oct. 6 meeting.

Nikki Simmons, county controller, told the commissioners, "This is a much better situation than any of us thought we were going to be in when we started looking at COVID in March, April, May, projecting for a severe economic downturn, reductions in county taxes." She continued, "Our revenue collections have continued to come in much better and closer to budget than we anticipated so this is a much better story that I'm about to tell you than I thought I was going to be here telling you five months ago." The county has seen stronger sales revenue than anticipated, due in part to online sales.

The approximate \$403 million budget includes allocations for facility upgrades, public roads, public health programs, and other improvements. The proposal includes \$3 million in match funding for the I-25 Gap Project.

As part of the budget setting process, county departments and offices presented their critical needs to the commissioners at the Oct. 20 and 22 BOCC meetings. A further budget meeting is scheduled for the Nov. 17 BOCC meeting and members of the public are encouraged to take this opportunity to express their views. The preliminary balanced budget and all supporting documentation can be viewed on the county website at <https://admin.elpasoco.com/financial-services/budget-finance/county-budget/>

The final budget vote will be held at the BOCC meeting on Dec. 8.

Special use approval for Black Forest property

At its Oct. 13 meeting, the BOCC approved a special use request for a detached accessory living quarters at a 29-acre Black Forest property on the west side of Herring Road, a quarter of a mile to the north of Shoup Road.

The request by property owner Craig McDermott was for a 1,773-square-foot accessory living space where 1,500 square feet is the maximum size allowed without approval from BOCC. The accessory living quarters will be located within a 4,983-square-foot building that has not yet been constructed. On lots of 2.5 acres or more, an accessory structure can be up to twice the size of the main building. The main house in this case is 2,077 square feet, which would allow for an accessory structure of up to 4,154 square feet. However, in June 2020 the applicant received administrative relief approval for the building to exceed this size. The living quarters part of the building will be occupied by extended family members; the rest of the building will be used as a garage and storage space.

The request was recommended for approval by the El Paso County Planning Commission at its hearing on Sept. 17. See https://www.ocn.me/v20n10.htm?zoom_highlight=mcdermott. The item was approved by the BOCC as a consent item, meaning there was no further discussion.

Waiver for Flying Horse North property approved

At their Oct. 27 meeting, the commissioners voted unanimously to approve a request by Douglas Stimple for a waiver of the section of the county's land development code that requires a primary use to be established before an accessory use. Stimple requested that he be allowed to build a garage and accessory living quarters before constructing a primary residence

at a 3-acre property on Longwall Drive in the Flying Horse North development. The request was also for a significant portion of the driveway to be constructed in advance.

The proposed 5,615-square-foot accessory building would have 1,825 square feet of habitable space and 4,690 square feet of garage/workshop. Stimple stated in his letter of intent that this building was already designed and ready for permit. The intention is to use it to store the materials needed to build the main house, the plans for which are still being developed and are anticipated to be complete by June 2021. The main house will take two years to build. The waiver is set to expire in October 2023 to ensure that the main house is constructed as proposed, although a one-year extension can be requested.

Other decisions

Oct. 13—the commissioners approved the final acceptance of certain streets within the Forest Lakes Filings 2A and 3 subdivisions into the county road maintenance system. The streets involved are Pelican Bay Drive, Lake Mist Drive, Blue Pearl Court, Lake Front Drive, and Waterfront Drive. At the same meeting, the commissioners approved the preliminary acceptance of Coronado Beach Drive and Captiva Beach Lane in The Beach at Woodmoor subdivision.

Oct. 27—approved an amendment to the county's contract with Wilson & Co. to enable the company to continue to provide its civil engineering planning and design services for a drainage system for Gleneagle Drive, Struthers Road, and North Gate Boulevard.

Oct. 27—approved an agreement between county and Academy School District 20 to provide school resource officers for the year to June 30, 2021.

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