



Above: Willow Springs Ranch vicinity map courtesy the Town of Monument.

Tim McConnell, representing Willow Springs Ranch LLC, said there are now fence guidelines in the homeowners association documents and no on-street parking will be allowed. Mayor Pro Tem Kelly Elliott asked, "The metropolitan district will be surveilling the area?" Mayor Don Wilson asked if the town's code enforcement officer can enforce something that doesn't align with the town's codes.

Initially, McConnell said the police would enforce the parking requirement.

"It would have to be in our code book," said Town Manager Mike Foreman. "If it's above our standards and we don't have a way to enforce it in codes, we wouldn't be able to enforce it."

Wilson asked how many houses will be built next year. McConnell said infrastructure should be built by the spring or summer with the anticipa-

tion that 230 homes will be built afterward.

The request was approved with only one no vote from Trustee Laurie Clark, who gave no reason.

Budget 2021

Treasurer Rosa Ooms and Foreman have been holding monthly budget workshops with the board for several months to flesh out the 2021 budget and discuss any issues. Each department has specific needs to meet plus supplemental requests. The draft 2021 budget may be found at <https://tinyurl.com/y37wqn-hc>. Some items to note in the draft budget:

- Employees will receive a 5% cost-of-living salary adjustment. Medical benefits will be through Kaiser once again, with a 1.4% decrease in premiums. There is no change in premium costs for dental and vision benefits.

- General Fund revenue is expected to be \$6.488 million for 2021. In the draft budget, expenses currently exceed revenues, which may be due to project estimates versus actual costs.
- The largest number of new projects will be in Public Works using an infusion of \$22 million from the sale of debt. This fund will be the conduit through which this money is funneled to pay for projects. These include a new water tank and pipeline, and booster station upgrade. For a complete list of these projects, see <https://www.ocn.me/v20n10.htm#mbot>.
- The Capital Projects Fund will include \$800,000 in grant money for Jackson Creek Parkway improvements.
- The Community Development fund will get a \$110,000 allocation from the general fund. The Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development, and Visitor Center will collect \$25,000 from this fund. Resident Ann Howe asked about this payment but did not receive an answer.
- The Stormwater Drainage Impact Fund has a balance of \$60,000, which will only be used for small projects as they arise during the year or be saved for larger projects.

The board went into executive session at 7:18 p.m. to receive legal advice information from the town attorney. No decisions were made afterward, and the board adjourned for the evening.

Allison Robenstein can be reached at allisonrobenstein@ocn.me.

Monument Board of Trustees, Nov. 16

Newest well will bring in additional ground water

By Allison Robenstein

During its Nov. 16 regular meeting, the Monument Board of Trustees approved the start of drilling a new town well. The trustees also adopted a restated 2020 budget and appropriated the associated funding into the proper accounts. An ordinance to change election dates was approved, assuming the vote canvassing is complete.

Trustee Jamy Unruh had been present at the beginning of the meeting but had technical difficulties that prevented her from participating or voting.

New well approved

Public Works Director Tom Tharnish asked the board to approve \$624,000. The money will be used to contract with Layne Christensen to drill and case the newest town well. Well 10 will be drilled adjacent to water treatment plant 4/5. Tharnish said this is the beginning of the water projects slated for completion over the next three years with the insertion of COP capital into the budget.

Mayor Don Wilson confirmed this well will be a temporary replacement for Well 9, which has been experiencing

high radium levels. The state is working with the town to fix these issues. See <https://www.ocn.me/v20n4.htm#mbot>. Tharnish said he expects this well to be drilled and operational by March or April.

The ordinance passed with Trustee Laurie Clark voting no without giving a reason.

Restated 2020 budget and fund appropriation

An ordinance adopting a restated budget and a second for appropriation of funds were brought before the board.

Town Treasurer Rosa Ooms said a restated 2020 budget is necessary due to numerous changes after it was approved in December 2019. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been cutbacks in expenses for projects that cannot be completed. The town also received almost \$500,000 in CARES Act funding that was not originally accounted for, and recently sold \$22 million in certificates of participation to fund public works projects.

During discussions, Trustee Jim Romanello appeared puzzled, asking why the board couldn't just approve the 2021 budget right now. Ooms said the two resolutions relate to this year's budget not the 2021 budget. Also, by statute the draft budget must be available to the public, and they must be given notice of the budget hearing before any approvals can occur. The 2021 budget hearing is set for Dec. 7.

At the time of this writing, the 2021 draft budget is available through the town's Documents on Demand website at <https://tinyurl.com/y37wqn-hc>.

Resident Ann Howe asked why the budget restatement had not been made public before the meeting. However, the board packet was available last week, before the meeting, and Ooms said the

notice had been published in a local newspaper. "I'd like to know the status of the embezzlement and recoup funds that have been embezzled," Howe asked referring to an ongoing investigation by the El Paso County Sheriff and the FBI over town funds.

The request passed 5-1 with Clark voting no without a reason given.

Once the restated budget was approved, the associated money had to be appropriated into the correct funds via ordinance. Resident Howe asked how the COP money would be accounted for in the budget. Ooms said the town's auditors recommended the money be placed into the Water Enterprise Fund, since most of the projects would have come out of this fund anyway. Then, the money will be transferred to the 2A Water Fund to pay for completed projects. Howe also wanted an accounting of the CARES Act funding, over half of which was given to local businesses in the form of \$10,000 grants.

During discussions, Clark said, "I commend Mrs. Ooms for the great way she has revamped our systems in the accounting department and the ways that she has made better

what has happened in the past. She has done a phenomenal job." Then Clark subsequently voted against the ordinance. It passed with a vote of 5-1.

No more April elections for the town

Completing a formality, the board approved changing the town's election from April to November as was approved by the voters. Town Attorney Andrew Richey said the ordinance will not go into effect until after the election canvass is complete. The ordinance passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

The Monument Board of Trustees usually meets at 6:30 pm on the first and third Monday of each month at Monument Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road. Call 884-8014 or see www.townofmonument.org for information. To see upcoming agendas and complete board packets for BOT or to download audio recordings of past meetings, see <http://monumenttownco.minutesondemand.com> and click on Board of Trustees.

Allison Robenstein can be reached at allisonrobenstein@ocn.me.

Palmer Lake Board of Trustees, Nov. 12

Public hearing on 2021 budget held

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans

The Palmer Lake Board of Trustees (PLBOT) met only once in November, on Nov. 12. The second meeting, typically held on the fourth Thursday of the month, was cancelled to accommodate the Thanksgiving holiday.

At the Nov.12 meeting, the board held the public hearing

for the town's 2021 budget. The trustees heard an update on the project to rebuild the ramp to the town's library and heard a presentation on how the town's Yule Log hunt would be redesigned to address concerns about the COVID-19 virus. The board voted on four resolutions and four ordinances to wrap up issues that had been debated in previous

Septic System Leach Field Failure Experts

- Standing water
- Sewage odor
- Back-ups
- Preventative maintenance

Call us before you spend thousands and dig up your yard.

Minimally Invasive!!

FREE Septic Checkup!
719-394-9080

Advanced Septic • www.advancedsepticco.com

• POLE BUILDINGS • GARAGES
• SHOPS • BARNES & MORE!

100% FINANCING!

• Zero Down!
• Call 24/7

719-622-3336
1-800-833-9997 • steelstructuresamerica.com

STEEL STRUCTURES AMERICA.com
POLE BUILDINGS & ALL STEEL