

meetings and to clear the way for the new board just elected in November. Finally, the board promoted a member of the Palmer Lake Police Department (PLPD) and granted a business license.

Budget hearing held; 2021 budget ready to be filed with state

Town Administrator and Clerk Dawn Collins opened the hearing by thanking Interim Town Administrator Bob Radosevich and Deputy Town Clerk Julia Stambaugh for their work on the budget and said a final version of the budget would be filed with the state in December.

Radosevich gave the board a quick summary of highlights and changes in the 2021 budget, including:

- An increase from \$500,000 to \$600,000 in the estimated revenue from sales taxes.
- A large increase in capital improvements funding to rehabilitate the Living Word Church building that was donated to the town.
- Funds added to pay for repair work needed on the Town Hall.
- An increase in workers compensation funding for all departments—2 percent for some departments and 5 percent for others.
- An increase in the wages for full-time firefighters.
- An increase in the roads budget of \$98,000 to fund needed roadwork.
- \$5,000 for repair work at the existing fire station.

Radosevich added that the new board could amend the budget on Dec. 10 if they choose to do so.

There were no comments from the public or the board.

Design for library ramp completed

At the October board meetings, Radosevich told the board that he had not received any bids on the ramp construction project because companies wanted to see a design on which to base their bids, and that he was working with a company to prepare a design.

At the Nov. 12 meeting, Radosevich told the board that Wells and West General Contractors (WWGC) had submitted a proposal for the ramp design, with the stipulation that WWGC would also do the ramp construction. The WWGC proposal specified \$6,756 for the design, \$3,000 for soil testing and permitting and a maximum of \$90,000 for actual construction for a total of \$98,756.

Radosevich said the Pikes Peak Library District appreciated the work the town had done on the ramp project. Trustee Mark Schuler asked Radosevich if the library district had made a commitment to reopen the library when the ramp is constructed. Radosevich answered the library district had budgeted funds for rent on the building and was excited about returning to Palmer Lake.

Trustee Susan Miner pointed out that the cost of the WWGC proposal was low and that she thought it would be counterproductive to delay the project by trying to find a lower cost bid.

The consensus of the board was to authorize Radosevich to continue with the WWGC proposal.

Yule Log hunt redesigned due to virus concerns

Niall Byrnes, speaking on behalf of the Yule Log Committee, filled the board in on changes made to the traditional event to keep participants safe from COVID-19.

Byrne told the board that the Yule Log hunt had been held in Palmer Lake for the last 87 years. This year, he said,

the traditional dinner held before the hunt would not take place and the traditional celebration would be simplified. The singing, storytelling, and celebration of the finder of the log would not take place, Byrne said.

The Yule Log will be hidden and there will be a bugle call to start the search at 1 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 13, and another when the log is found, Byrne said. The log will be returned using a UTV or personal vehicle rather than being pulled by participants. Masks will be required, and Byrne asked anyone not feeling well to skip the event.

Byrne asked the board to allow the use of the Town Hall kitchen and restrooms for the hunt. Wassail will be served in disposable cups outside the Town Hall. He said the COVID-19 level in El Paso County at the time of the celebration will determine the number of participants that can attend the outdoor event. The hunt will take place with proper social distancing in mind, he said.

The log will be burned in barrels outside, Byrne said, adding he would meet with the town's fire chief to ensure the safety of this portion of the celebration.

Social media will be used to notify the public of details of the event, Byrne said. The Palmer Lake Yule Log group on Facebook will provide details.

Trustee Susan Miner asked Byrne if the hunt could be videotaped, and Byrne answered yes. Trustee Glant Havenar told Byrne she was glad to hear the tradition would be maintained since the town's children had given up so much already due to the pandemic.

Board votes on housekeeping resolutions

Resolution 19-2020 authorizes a Memo of Understanding between the town and the Tri-Lakes Disc Golf Club that specifies that members of the club will take over maintenance of the disc golf course from the Palmer Lakes Parks Commission in exchange for the fees charged to use the course.

The board voted unanimously to approve the resolution, with the condition that a clause be added forbidding disc golf players to cross the railroad tracks to access the course.

Resolution 20-2020 defines policies to regulate the use of the town's electronic sign on Highway 105, specifying the sign will be used for government news, meeting announcements, public safety warnings and public emergency information regarding fire, parking, or traffic.

Town staff will oversee the content and program the sign. Any proposed content will be provided to town staff two weeks prior to the date of display via a form. The staff has the right to deny requests depending on available space and the content provided.

The board voted unanimously to approve Resolution 20-2020.

Resolution 21-2020 authorizes the Palmer Lake Fire Department (PLFD) to accept the donation of an ambulance. Fire Chief Christopher McCarthy told the board the ambulance was a 2007 type 1 ambulance with 80,000 miles, donated by Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District (BFFRPD). McCarthy said the PLFD was looking for a refurbished stretcher and would need to staff the ambulance.

Trustee Schuler thanked BFFRPD for the donation and applauded McCarthy for his diligence in finding solutions for the town.

The board voted unanimously to approve Resolution 21-2020.

Resolution 22-2020 authorizes the town to adopt the revised employee handbook distributed to the board in October. It was approved unanimously.

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Board addresses four ordinances

Ordinance 16-2020, relating to raising chickens within the town boundaries, and Ordinance 19-2020, relating to keeping goats within town boundaries, were both approved by the board. The ordinances were the result of lengthy debates in previous months.

Ordinance 16-2020 specifies a minimum of 3 square feet of space in the coop and eight square feet of outside space for each chicken. The board voted unanimously to approve this ordinance.

Ordinance 19-2020 specifies at least 100 square feet of open space per goat, the open space being at least 25 feet from any residence or other building. Trustee Schuler voted no; all other trustees voted to approve.

Ordinance 18-2020, which would replat a portion of Hermosa Creek, was tabled until the next board meeting on Dec. 10

Ordinance 17-2020 concludes a lengthy discussion of vacating the town's right of way on a portion of Eaton Road. The board voted unanimously to approve the ordinance.

Police sergeant promoted to lieutenant

Sgt. Adam Lundy of the Palmer Lake Police Department (PLPD) was promoted to lieutenant. Police Chief Jason Vanderpool administered Lundy's oath of office.

Business license granted

The board unanimously approved a

business license for Tri County Construction Services at 677 B Highway 105. Owner Donavon Johnson told the board his company does commercial and residential remodeling work, as well as minor repairs, concrete work, and skid loader work.

The Board of Trustees is scheduled to hold one meeting in December, on Dec. 10 at 6 p.m. at Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent. Meetings are normally held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Information: 481-2953.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me.

Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

A proposed rezoning that should be of concern to all Black Forest and Tri-Lakes Residents

The owner of 12740 Black Forest Rd has requested rezoning from Agricultural (A-5) to Commercial (CC-5) to accommodate 12,300 sq. ft. of office buildings built specifically for a wholesale-only commercial business. This rezoning is not about "mixed use development." It would create a dangerous precedent and potentially open a floodgate of commercial rezoning requests.

If that happens, the next step could be annexation of Black Forest by the City of Colorado Springs enticed by the prospect of higher commercial property tax revenues. You might think annexation couldn't happen, but Colorado Springs has already taken much of the land bordering Black Forest and has studied annexing Black Forest many times.

The more voices of opposition, the stronger the case against rezoning. Voice your opposition NOW. This zoning change is already in review and county planners will be making their recommendation to the Planning Commission in the coming weeks.

Email county planner Rad Dickson at raddickson@elpasoco.com or send to Rad Dickson, c/o El Paso County Planning and Community Development, 2880 International Cir, Suite 110, Colorado Springs CO 80910.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

THE HOLIDAYS ARE GREAT FOR BUYING OR SELLING A HOME! CALL ME IF YOU WOULD LIKE HELP WITH YOUR REAL ESTATE GOALS! BUY THIS BEAUTIFUL 2.6 ACRE LOT IN FLYING HORSE NORTH AND BUILD YOUR DREAM HOME TO CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS IN 2021!

Please call me for more information!

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