

Phillips asked what CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) funds would cover in this situation. Somers said that two additional days of teacher training before school starts, cleaning supplies, signage, and Personal Protective Equipment would be covered. These funds can be used through Dec. 31.

Monument Academy must also follow state and county guidelines, but how they do it is up to them.

Board Director Chris Taylor said that a part of the district's strategic plan is to ensure comprehensive crisis planning and that the district has done this thoroughly.

The board agreed to resume work on the strategic

plan once the school year is underway.

NOTE: An updated back-to-school plan has been posted at www.lewispalmer.org/backtoschool2020. Click on "July 28 Back-to-School Update."

Harriet Halbig may be reached at harriethalbig@ocn.me.

Monument Academy School Board, July 15 and 16

Board passes torch, discusses opening

By Jackie Burhans

The Monument Academy (MA) School Board held an in-person work session at The Woodmoor Country Club on July 15 to pass the torch from outgoing board members to incoming members and to prepare for reorganization. The MA board also met in-person at Monument Town Hall on July 16 for a regular meeting to discuss plans for opening in the fall. Both meetings were held offsite because of work at the elementary campus and included the option for attendees to participate via Zoom.

Passing the torch

MA board members, including incoming members Ryan Graham and Misty McCuen, met with continuing board members and outgoing members Mark McWilliams and Mike Molsen to provide a handoff for continuity and to discuss the rules and organizational structure for the coming year. Finance Director Marc Brocklehurst attended in person. Chief Operating Officer Christianna Herrera and other attendees connected to the hybrid meeting via Zoom.

After introductions, outgoing board members discussed their perception of the school and its board. Molsen said that MA has an awesome administration staff and has hired great people. He said the board did hard work to get rid of the bad situation they inherited. He said his concern was that charter schools are targeted by people who don't like charter schools and recommended a book called *Charter Schools and Their Enemies* by Thomas Sowell.

Molsen felt that people were coming after charter schools, and new board members should keep an eye over their shoulder. When asked why, he said that it was a power struggle and that "our way of life is being pursued by socialists" which he found very scary. His particular interest is in the Exceptional Student Services group, and he felt that MA does a great job with special needs kids.

McWilliams noted MA was one of the first charters opened after Colorado passed a law allowing

them. He said that in his first two years, the board was mostly there to approve things and provide oversight,



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