

the budget.

Donala IGA signed

MSD signed an intergovernmental agreement with Donala Water and Sanitation District effective Dec. 1. Under the six-month contract, Donala will provide sanitary sewer operations and ORC licensing services to MSD. An additional six-month extension may be requested. MSD will pay \$50,020 annually for Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) monitoring and up to three visits per week to the four lift stations. Additional special work or emergencies are billed at \$97.50 per hour. Background: Since July, MSD has lost District Manager Mike Wicklund and Interim District Manager Erin Krueger. This means ORC day-to-day tasks have been largely completed by GMS Inc., MSD's consulting engineer, but this is not sustainable. See www.ocn.me/v20n10.htm#msd.

The board continued to be concerned with a 10% overhead charge because the dollar amount

is unknown. The agreement was unanimously approved.

Dispute over OCN reporting

The board asked OCN to revise its article about MSD's November meeting, which reported that MSD failed to publicly post its budget before the November meeting. The board held the public hearing on the budget during that meeting. When Hamilton said the board did everything necessary under statutes, contention arose with OCN over how the public was able to inspect the draft of the 2021 budget before the public hearing since the office has been closed for COVID-19 restrictions.

Note: The officially approved minutes for the November MSD meeting read, "President Hamilton stated not posting the draft budget on the district's website was an oversight and the proposed 2021 MSD budget would be available for anyone to see." Board members posted a paper copy of the budget on the MSD office windows after the November

meeting.

See MSD's Letter to the Editor, "We expect fair and accurate reporting" on page 22. Also see <https://ocn.me/v20n12.htm#msd>.

The board went into executive session at 10:09 a.m. for discussions of personnel issues and conference with the district's attorney. Upon completion of the executive session, the district's attorney Joan Fritsche said no actions were taken.

Monument Sanitation District meetings are normally held at 9 a.m. on the third Wednesday of the month in the district conference room at 130 Second St., Monument. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Jan. 20 at 9 a.m. See <https://colorado.gov/msd>. For a district service map, see <https://colorado.gov/pacific/msd/district-map-0>. Information: 481-4886.

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Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, Dec. 2 and 5

New fire chief selected; 2021 budget approved



Left: The Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District's new Fire Chief Andy Kovacs will be sworn in Jan. 4. Kovacs served as deputy fire chief for the Brighton Fire Rescue District, and before that he was with the Orange County Fire Authority in California for 29 years. Photo courtesy of the TLMFPD.

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) board meeting on Dec. 2, the board approved several resolutions and schedules for 2021 and held an executive session. On Dec. 5, the board chose a replacement fire chief.

Board Vice President Roger Lance was excused at the Dec. 2 board meeting.

New fire chief chosen

On Dec. 5, the TLMFPD board met in person at the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development and Visitor Center along with Fire Chief Chris Truty and consultant Mark Risen of Prothman Co. executive recruiters to interview and discuss the final six candidates for the position of fire chief. The interviews and discussions were available to the public via YouTube live feed. See www.ocn.me/v20n12.htm#tlmfpd.

The fire chief search process began in August after Truty announced in July his intention to retire at the end of 2020, after serving seven years as the fire chief of TLMFPD. See www.ocn.me/v20n8.htm#tlmfpd. After the interviews and board discussions, the board voted 6-1 to accept and hire Andy Kovacs of Loveland as the replacement fire chief.

Note: Truty notified OCN that Kovacs formally accepted the position of TLMFPD's new fire chief on Dec. 11. Kovacs will officially begin his duties on Jan. 4 and will be sworn in at a special board meeting that evening. For Zoom meeting joining instructions, see www.tlmfire.org.

2021 final budget approval

Truty said that since the last draft budget discussion, the final numbers had not changed. However, the district received the final evaluation statement from the Office of the El Paso County Assessor for the 2021 property tax assessment, and an additional \$10,000 in projected revenue will be added to the final total budget. Total budget expenditures are \$11.4 million.

The board approved 6-0 by roll call vote the following resolutions:

- Resolution 2020-06, 2021 Final Budget Approval summarizing expenditures and revenues for each fund adopting a budget for 2021.
- Resolution 2020-07, 2021 Budget Appropriations to approve Resolution 2020-0 appropriating sums of money to the various funds and spending agencies.
- Resolution 2020-08, 2021 Property Tax Levy to approve Resolution 2020 levying property

taxes at 18.4 mills for the year 2021, to help defray the costs of government for the TLMFPD 2021 budget year. See www.ocn.me/v18n1.htm#tlmfpd.

2021 schedules

The board approved 6-0 in three separate motions the following schedules:

- 2021 Fee schedule—remains unchanged for 2020.
- 2021 Wage schedule—includes a 2% increase for all employees with no change in rank differential formulas for 2021.
- 2021 Board of Directors meeting schedule—see www.tlmfire.org/board.

Collaborative Meet and Confer Plus Agreement

Treasurer John Hildebrandt said the Collaborative Meet and Confer Plus Agreement with the TLMFPD Local 4319 has been in effect for the past year and will now be extended for two years from January 2021 through December 2022.

Truty said that in the year the agreement has been in place, the district and the union have continued good dialogue and now have a document to reference. "Kudos" to Lt. Franz Hankins for its success, and the union has ratified the agreement, said Truty. See www.ocn.me/v19.n9.htm#tlmfpd.

The board approved the agreement in a roll call vote, 6-0.

Farewell comments

Truty said the last seven years had been impactful for him and although he has thoroughly enjoyed his role as fire chief, at times it had been more difficult in some ways than he originally expected. He thanked the staff for being wonderful to work with, and the board for being outstanding and working together as a team and for supporting the staff and allowing him to throw ideas at them, thus enabling the department to grow, making TLMFPD one of the premiere departments in southern Colorado.

He thanked the community and the board for placing their trust in him and for allowing him to take care of the community in a way he thought he could best comply.

Hildebrandt thanked Truty and said that, from where the department was in 2013, he was proud of all the accomplishments that had been achieved since Truty has led the department.

COVID-19 issues discussed

Truty said the following:

- A second COVID-19 positive case on shift had occurred and all precautions are being taken.
- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, fire departments are not likely to be the first to receive the vaccine, but they are included in the first tier of the vaccine distribution.
- The vaccine may be administered at a local hospital due to the ultra-low cold storage requirements for the two vaccines.
- The El Paso County Health Department has been notified of staffing numbers, and a vaccine will be available for each staff member at TLMFPD.

Executive session—land use

The board moved into 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 negotiators relative to district property.

Truty informed OCN that no actions were taken post executive session.

The board adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Meetings are usually held on the fourth Wednesday of each month. The next regular meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Jan. 27 at TLMFPD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. For information on Zoom meeting joining instructions and upcoming agendas, visit www.tlmfire.org/board or contact Director of Administration Jennifer Martin at 719-484-9011.

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