

sion and how to deploy the town's remaining Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) funds to assist the town's restaurants.

The board also decided when to hold its retreat.

Due to audio problems with the recorded stream of the meeting, the remarks of Krob were inaudible and are therefore not included in this article.

#### Resolution responding to CDPHE debated

Bass and the trustees first considered passing a resolution opposing CDPHE's decision. Collins pointed out that the CARES Act requires municipalities receiving funds to abide by state guidelines and directives and

recommended against passing a resolution, because that might jeopardize the funds the town could receive.

Havenar emphasized the urgency of helping restaurants to survive and pointed out that the town's restaurants provided an essential service because the town has no grocery store or gas station, and food delivery is complicated by the fact that town residents pick up their mail at the Post Office and may not have street numbers posted on their homes.

Bass said the town's small size and distance from area businesses present challenges.

Trying to obtain a variance from the CDPHE decision was discussed, as was writing a letter to Gov. Po-

lis asking for assistance keeping the town's restaurant's open.

Following this discussion, the board did not move forward with the resolution.

#### Board debates best use of CARES funds

Collins told the board that the town has \$54,000 in CARES funds remaining. There had been discussion of using those funds to complete the replacement of the ramp to the town library, a project that would require an amount approximately twice the CARES funds to complete.

Collins told the board that in the first allocation of CARES funds, all the restaurants who applied received funds, which were capped at \$6,500 per restaurant. She added that the remaining funds had to be dispersed by Dec. 30.

Initially, the board proposed splitting the CARES funds between restaurants and the library ramp project. Havenar pointed out that the library included the town's historical society and provided services to home-schoolers and the elderly. Mutu also emphasized the importance of the library.

Collins asked the board for direction on how to allocate the funds.

Padgett, who owns a local restaurant, emphasized the need to protect the town's economy and the importance of getting CARES funding to businesses as quickly as possible.

Havenar suggested using an event like the town's Winter Fest to support restaurants by turning the lake into a skating rink and having restaurants serve food to visitors.

Marina LaRiva, owner of La Rosa, a local restaurant serving New Mexican dishes, told the board about the challenges she had faced to keep her business afloat and asked that the town take some pressure off of restaurant owners by providing language for signs that restaurants could use to make sure customers understand what constraints on dining were put in place by town government rather than the restaurant owner.

Padgett told the board that 80 percent of restaurants in El Paso County would likely close permanently by February.

Bass asked the board what portion of the CARES funds should go to businesses and what portion to the library ramp project. Dividing the funds equally between the two items was the starting point, but as

the discussion progressed the need to keep businesses afloat gradually displaced the library ramp project. Farr pointed out that businesses provide tax revenue to the town, which is not true of the library.

Bass suggested that businesses closest to shutting their doors be given a higher priority. This was a different criterion than was used in the original distribution of CARES funds, and Stuth said she thought it was unfair to change the criteria between distributions. Collins felt the criteria would need to change for the second distribution since the first round did not include loss of revenue as a factor.

Bass said other funds could be found in the budget to rebuild the library ramp and argued he did not want to lose the support of the library district for returning the town's library to service.

Collins said that the timeline to distribute funds was very short, and that businesses would need to apply by Dec. 23 since the administrative office was closed on Dec. 24 and the funds needed to be disbursed by the end of December. Collins added that the funds could only be used to address business expenses incurred due to the virus and that loss of revenue did not qualify a business to receive funds. She used rent and payroll as examples of expenses that would qualify.

As the discussion progressed, the necessity of supporting business gradually took priority over the library project, and the board eventually decided to deploy as many of the funds as possible toward businesses and to look elsewhere in the budget for money for the library project.

The board decided to cap funds going to a business at \$6,500, as it had done on the first distribution. Businesses who applied would receive funds on a first-come, first-served basis.

#### Board retreat scheduled

The board decided to hold its retreat on Jan. 7 and 8.

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The Board of Trustees is scheduled to hold two meetings in January 2021, on Jan. 14 and 28 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](mailto:jameshowald@ocn.me).

Jackie Burhans can be reached at [jackieburhans@ocn.me](mailto:jackieburhans@ocn.me).

#### Who do you Love? Cat or Dog!



Support our TLWC virtual fundraiser. All proceeds will enable us to support the non-profits in our community

#### Tri-Lakes Women's Club Virtual Contest

From Jan. 14<sup>th</sup> 6am to Feb 14<sup>th</sup> 9pm

Mountain Time

<http://gogophotocontest.com/whodoyoulovecatordog>

Enter your cat or dog!

\$10 per Entry

USA Only

Votes \$1 Each

Prizes:

Grand Prize: \$150

Top Dog: \$100

Purrfect Cat: \$100

Second Place Cat/Dog: \$50

Third Place Cat/Dog: \$50

More prizes listed on the website.

## D38 LEADERSHIP:

**We are now 11 months into "two weeks to flatten the curve." Our students are failing their classes. They are isolated and depressed. Even when they were able to "see" each other this past fall, they couldn't actually see each other, because they had to wear masks that have been shown – by Colorado's, New York's, California's and Sweden's experience – to make no difference.**

**Some outspoken teachers made it clear they were never going to be satisfied with any protective measures you came up with to prevent the spread of this virus. But they signed up, and you allowed them to sign up, to teach and have their children attend in-person, anyway.**

**We no longer care that some of these vocal people are loved, or amazing teachers. Their unreasonable demands are destroying our kids and making teaching impossible for other amazing teachers who are stuck accommodating the extremism of people who should have never been in your buildings in the first place. Teachers who cannot risk exposure need to resign and be replaced by teachers who can do the job — even if it means our children are taught by less experienced teachers. That is how damaging this situation has become.**

**We call on you take immediate steps to provide FULL-TIME, NO-MASK, IN-PERSON LEARNING to all D38 students, K-12, who need it and the taxpayers who are paying for it. Notify staff and parents that exposure to viruses is a natural consequence of participating in society, and it is up to them to protect themselves, their children, and vulnerable family members. We willingly accept those risks and we want our school district back.**

- Concerned D38 Parents and Taxpayers

**FULL-TIME, IN-PERSON LEARNING NOW!**

### D38 BOE (Cont. from 1)

local health officials and that although schools were not considered super spreaders of the COVID-19 virus, districts must abide by county ordinances.

Director Matthew Clawson said that remote learning is not the district's best option and hopes that secondary schools can return full time in person soon.

Taylor commented that his takeaway from the meeting with health officials was that, although all wish to return in person full time, we must abide by the rules. The availability of a new vaccine alleviates some fear, but it will be a time before all can be vaccinated.

In his Superintendent update, Somers first offered condolences to

the family of Ron Philips, a 2019 Lewis-Palmer Hall of Fame honoree and former English teacher and coach at Lewis-Palmer High School.

Somers thanked the many district employees in departments such as food services, maintenance, bus drivers, and custodians for their continued efforts to maintain the district. He especially commended the nursing staff in their efforts at contact tracing.

Somers said District 38 was one of the few able to keep elementary schools open full time during the past semester. He said that the beginning of the second semester will be delayed by a week to provide additional training of the teachers regarding distance learning. The teachers will