

- trict's Regional Training Center.
- In 2018, the district documented 850 hours of training, and in 2020 there were more than 5,000 hours of training.
 - The Training Center building has not been finished, and one of the projects for this year is to install stairs for the second floor, in line with the district trying to get a professional career academy going.

Annual meeting schedule
Resolution 2021-01—a resolution notifying the public

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via the BFFRPD website of the scheduled board meetings and dates—was proposed. The board approved the resolution, 4-0. See www.bffire.org.

Executive session

An executive session was held to discuss staffing and the exclusion process. The board moved into the executive session 24-6-402(4)(e) to determine positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations.

Board Secretary Donna Arkowski notified OCN that no actions were taken after the board exited the executive session, and the board had immediately adjourned

at 9:36 p.m.

Meetings are usually held at 7 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at BFFRPD Station 1, 11445 Teachout Road, Colorado Springs. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Feb. 17 at 7 p.m. For updates and minutes, visit www.bffire.org.

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at nataliebarszcz.ocn.me.

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, Jan. 27

100-day plan; COVID-19 vaccinations; staff awards

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) board meeting on Jan. 27, the new fire chief updated the board on his promised 100-day plan, the board received an update on staff vaccinations, and multiple staff recognition awards were announced.

- 100-day plan**
- TLMFPD's new Fire Chief Andy Kovacs said his 100-day plan has now been shared with the board and the line staff. The goals promised within the first 30 days of the 100-day plan have been met as follows:
- A meeting with the new union president, Engineer Jody Thorpe, established a scheduled monthly meeting to discuss any issues related specifically to Local 4319.
 - Has met with President John Hildebrandt to discuss the fire district's history, budgeting, management style, and some of the board's expectations.
 - To identify and report any current "cannot wait" issues. There aren't any at the moment.
 - Provide regular communication, meeting with each shift through station visits, written communication, and focus group conversations, especially through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kovacs said there are more objectives for his first 100 days, and beyond that a comprehensive review of the 2019 Master Plan and a review of some internal documents that enforce some policies and procedures. Director of Administration Jennifer Martin said to the board, "Thank you to the board on behalf of the staff for bringing Chief Kovacs to the district, so far he is a good fit, so thank you!"

Vice President Roger Lance thanked Kovacs for allowing Emergency Incident Support (EIS) to park its 28-foot kitchen trailer at Station 1. The "all-volunteer" emergency services support group had nowhere to park the trailer that can feed up to 400 people per hour during emergency events. "At Station 1, EIS knows it is safe and secure," said Lance. Note: EIS used to store its vehicles at Wescott Station 3.

- Chief's report**
- Kovacs said B Shift, Engine 3 responded to a residential fire alarm in December. The crew was intuitive enough to contact the homeowner and used the Ring door camera to assist in locating a key to gain access without damaging the property. Upon entering they discovered a small fire in a malfunctioning dishwasher. The in-home fire alarm system is credited for preventing a larger fire.
- Kovacs gave an update on the executive staff report for December and said the following:
- Deputy Chief Randy Trost continues to participate in the I-25 emergency working group meetings.
 - Firefighters Garrett O'Hara, Jay Bruchis, and Nathan Boyce are performing exceptionally well at the fire academy.
 - All officers have completed their Blue Card certification—a system for communicating paths and objectives for incident commanders. The district



Above: Former TLMFPD Fire Chief Chris Truty receives a plaque presented by firefighter Matt Godson on behalf of Local 4319 on Jan. 4 at Station 1. Also, board President John Hildebrandt presented Truty with a Michael Garman firefighter sculpture from the Board of Directors. Truty retired in December 2020 after serving 41 years in fire service and seven years as fire chief at TLMFPD. *Photo by Natalie Barszcz.*

- has three instructors to help certify in the region.
- Efforts continue to coordinate joint training with Palmer Lake Fire Department.

COVID-19 staff vaccine update

Deputy Chief Randy Trost said the COVID-19 vaccine program is voluntary and staff members make known their own desire to be vaccinated. The district does not have specific numbers on how many personnel have already received the vaccination.

UC Health is collecting data to identify adverse vaccine reactions, said Division Chief of Training Jonathan Bradley.

Bradley said an informal survey conducted in mid-January communicated to all the Colorado fire agencies showed about 50% participation with the COVID-19 vaccine for both firefighters and EMS, and that same percentage is reflected nationwide. There are still a lot of questions about the vaccinations and their benefits and a lot of data needs to be collected about the efficacy rate of the vaccination, Bradley said. That may create additional compliance, he said.

Service awards and "Chief's coin"

2020 recipient recognition

- Kovacs recognized the following staff members for their tenure of service with TLMFPD:
- Fifteen years of service: Tony Tafoya, Mike Rauenzahn, Jody Thorpe, and Keegan Black.
 - Ten years of service: Steve Peters.
 - Five years of service: Braden Stoenner, Derek Thorne, and Keith Barker.

Kovacs said, "The proudest moments and most enjoyable duties the fire chief can have is to recognize employees that have contributed to the success of the organization for a long time, and to give recognition to folks doing amazing things under extraordinary circumstances." Kovacs announced the following 2020 recognition awards:

- Paramedic Stephanie Soll and firefighter Christian Schmidt were formally recognized for a professional pregnancy emergency response in July 2020 involving a birth of twins with severe complications. "Credit is duly deserved for keeping both babies and mother healthy," said Kovacs.
- "Firefighter of the year" was awarded to firefighter Jay Bruchis, who is enrolled in the paramedic recruit academy and was recognized by his peers

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