

**MONUMENT
(Cont. from 7)**

Multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan update approved

Tharnish asked the board to approve the Pikes Peak Regional Office of Emergency Management (PPROEM) Hazard Mitigation Plan. The intent of the plan is to protect people and property from hazardous events caused by nature or humans. The update is an improvement of mitigation strategies based upon past disasters, risk assessments, and the impact to the community. It was prepared in accordance with FEMA requirements. The document can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/yytw8hlo>.

To be eligible for some federal grants, including the Stafford Act fire mitigation and hazard mitigation grants, this plan must be approved every five years. Assistant to the Town Manager Erica Romero represented the town and spoke during tonight's meeting. Romero confirmed that although the plan mentions pandemic measures, there will be a separate pandemic/epidemic plan prepared and distributed shortly. Romero said the biggest changes to the document involve linking the town's website to emergency management sites. She also said an evacuation plan will be drafted in the future. Tharnish said his biggest fear is a fire coming up and over Mt. Herman and into the town.

Trustee Ron Stephens was

concerned the plan might negate the resolution the board passed during its Jan. 11 meeting regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. Though it has no legal standing, resolution 08-2021 states, "The board of trustees does not support COVID restrictions that would shut down businesses in the town of Monument."

Some of the objectives identified for improvement include:

- Improve existing emergency notification systems for reliability and redundancy.
- Facilitate and ensure communities and businesses have actionable emergency operations plans and continuity of operations plans.
- Improve community education programs to increase awareness of hazards and mitigation opportunities.
- Establish and improve information sharing between all the various jurisdictions.

The plan was approved 6-0.

Public comments

Resident Jeff Lewis said, "Kudos to the Monument Board of Trustees for listening to the community," regarding the recent COVID-19 resolution it passed. He said businesses and the public should decide for themselves how to handle the pandemic. Lewis suggested there are many more COVID-19 cases than are being listed on government websites, proposing people who are infected

recover on their own without making their situation public.

Bidding process discussion

Clark asked the board to reconsider portions of the town's purchasing policy so that more businesses can be a part of the bidding process. Although the policy was just updated and approved at the Aug. 17 board meeting, she asked specifically about the requirement to select the lowest bidder. My "personal experience [is] that the lowest bid and highest bid are sometimes not the best bids to take all the time," she said.

The policy requires competitive bidding if the cost of the project is \$5,000 or more. Foreman reminded the board the town is not required to select the lowest bid as Clark was suggesting, saying, "We always go with

the highest qualified lowest bid." The policy reads, "The Town also reserves the right to select the lowest and/or best bidder as determined by the town in its sole discretion."

The meeting adjourned 7:52 p.m.

The Monument Board of Trustees usually meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first and third Mondays of each month at Monument Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road. The

next regular meeting is scheduled for Feb. 16. Call 719-884-8014 or see www.townofmonument.org for information. To see upcoming agendas and complete board packets for BOT or to download audio recordings of past meetings, see <http://monumenttownco.minutesondemand.com> and click on Board of Trustees.

Allison Robenstein can be reached at allisonrobenstein@ocn.me.



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In 2020, Lewis-Palmer School District 38 accomplished significant work while navigating numerous COVID-related complexities.

- Student-focused learning continued
- New online platforms implemented
- Free meals distributed
- Devices and hotspots provided
- K-5 literacy resources enhanced
- 2012B series bonds refinanced saving area taxpayers \$1.9 million between 2021-2029
- Consistent family and community support and encouragement shared
- Grace Best facility master plan work initiated
- Holiday compensation for D38 staff provided
- Deferred maintenance projects plan developed
- Monument Academy partnership strengthened
- D38's Strategic Plan guided the year's work

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