

both districts are de-Gallagherized, said Jones. See the TLMFPD article on page 18.

Financial report—June 30

Popovich read the financial report as of June 30 and highlighted the district's bank balances:

- The Community Bank Fund has \$253,592.
- The Wells Fargo Public Trust Fund has \$1.226 million.
- The district had a total of \$1.480 million as of June 30.

Popovich also said the district received 100% of the requested reimbursement grant for COVID-19-related expenses for a total of \$91,809, and the district received \$50,000 for the last awarded portion request for \$48,000. Additional expenses have been identified and a request for reimbursement is being initiated, bringing a total of \$93,000 for COVID-19 expenses from 2020, said Popovich.

Gunderman asked if the recent rescinding of statewide executive orders might affect reimbursements for COVID-19 related expenses.

Powell said the following:

- Gov. Jared Polis rescinded some executive orders relating to COVID-19 on July 8, but he did not rescind the statewide state of emergency, and his July 8 executive order expressly re-activated all of the local government disaster response plans, and nothing has changed with regard to local government.
- Due to the uncertainty swirling around the surging COVID-19 Delta variant, it may be premature to rescind any declaration with schools returning in the fall, un-

less the statewide state of emergency is rescinded before then.

The board accepted the financial report as presented, 3-0.

2022 budget process

Jones requested the board appoint a budget officer and approve the budget calendar for the 2022 process and said the following:

- The district will receive a projected property tax revenue figure for 2022 from the county assessor in August.
- The board must be ready to raise discussion points, and a work session in September should be held to develop the budget.
- The draft budget will be reviewed in October and be available for public review through the November board meeting with final board approval in early December.

The board approved Jones as the chief budget officer, 3-0.

Unification status

Jones said Emergency Services Consulting International Project Manager Dan Qualman will visit Wescott and Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District on Aug. 5-6 and requested the board be available to meet with Qualman.

Cell tower request

Jones said the district received two requests from cell phone companies looking to lease land at Station 2 for the positioning of a commercial cell tower. It may be worthwhile to consider the request to gain about \$1,000 per month in additional annual revenue, but the process is long and complicated, said Jones.

Powell said pursuing a contract



Above: Interim Fire Chief Warren Jones (left) administered the oath to Lt. Matthew Gibbs and paramedics Charles Ragland (right) and Rachael Peters (far right) at the badge-pinning ceremony that took place before the board meeting in the bay at Station 1, with family and friends and the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District board members on July 20. Board Chairman Mark Gunderman also administered the oath to all three staff members at the beginning of the regular board meeting. Photo courtesy of Stacey Popovich.



would depend on how cooperative the cell tower company will be and if acceptable terms can be negotiated, but sometimes terms are not workable and the cell tower company will want uninhibited access to the property 24/7, and easements and licensing will be required. A request for their standard form agreement and asking if they are open to negotiations and revisions to their contract would be the first step, said Powell.

Gunderman said more information will be needed before the board can determine if the proposal is worth pursuing, but it will be time consuming, and the district has many other prior issues going on.

Jones said, "The district has many irons in the fire," and he instructed Powell not to pursue the matter any further.

Station 3 update

Jones said the board will need to make decisions and provide direction on the future of Station 3. Despite costly repairs and the inoperability of the station, the battalion chiefs are accommodated at Station 3 during shifts, but public perception and legal issues may be a factor and an appraisal would be needed, said Jones. See www.ocn.me/v21n7.htm#dwfjpd.

Powell recommended Fleece refrain from participating in the conversations regarding Station 3 for the time being.

Gunderman said the discussion should be revisited in August when an-

other board member could join in the discussion.

Note: Fleece owns property that borders Station 3 and recused himself from the board discussion in June.

Future meetings

Jones said the board will continue to conduct meetings in a semi-virtual format until the district COVID-19 Command Team, led by Battalion Chief Sean Pearson, deems it is safe to resume in-person meetings with public attendees at Station 1. In the interim, all information presented at regular and open board meetings is available to the public upon request, said Jones.

Note: OCN used a telephone recording for the purpose of writing this article and was unable to write a complete article due to sound quality issues and participants failing to identify themselves.

The meeting adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

Meetings are usually held on the third Tuesday of the month at Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr., at 7 p.m. Due to COVID-19 distancing protocols, meetings are held virtually for public attendees. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 17 at 4 p.m. For updated virtual meeting joining instructions and agendas, visit: www.wescottfire.org or call Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich at 719-488-8680.

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Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, July 28

2020 audit accepted; Wescott unification

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) board meeting on July 28 held in-person and via Zoom, the board received a "clean opinion" on the 2020 audit and updates on the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) unification process, the Station 1 remodeling project, and the future training center.

Director Tom Tharnish was excused.

2020 audit presentation

Mitch Downs and Amber Stoops of Osborne, Parsons & Rosacker LLP, CPA, presented the draft 2020 audit to the board. Downs said the following:

- The district underspent by \$1 mil-

TLMFPD (Cont. on 20)

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