

**DWFPD
(Cont. from 7)**

Wescott budget saw savings in overtime expenses.

- The staffing program from each district has been combined, and that has saved Wescott around \$3,000.
- Seven spare laptops from TLMFPD are now being used for reporting at Wescott, saving thousands of dollars if they were to be purchased today.

Saving a little here and there will add up significantly in the end, said Bradley.

**COVID-19
hit employees hard**

Bradley said positive cases of the COVID-19 among TLMFPD staff had been going in waves, just like it had across the country. Throughout 2021 when the national infections spiked, so did the infections among the district staff. The latest wave was significant, and personnel were forced back to cover gaps on shifts, but the burden is lessening now, said Bradley.

Kovacs said the staff had been out sick in ones and twos and someone is sick on any given day, but we have a contingency plan and the district will be adequately covered.

**American Medical
Response (AMR) departs**

Kovacs said that the American Medical Response (AMR) 582 ambulance had a commitment with Wescott until the summer of 2022, but AMR departed from Wescott Station 4 (formerly Station 1, Gleneagle Drive) due to staff retention and recruitment issues. He also said:

- Many AMR employees are now gaining employment at local hospital emergency rooms due to the nursing shortage and likely for the additional \$15 per hour, or they moved out of the state, or were hired at fire departments that provide ambulance services.
- TLMFPD and Wescott received more AMR mutual aid requests for service in the first 12 days of 2022 than the whole of 2021.
- The AMR staffing shortage is a national problem, and fire departments nationwide are putting old ambulances back into service because AMR is unable to fill its obligations.
- TLMFPD has two ambulances in service and has moved the reserve ambulance into Station 4, and the districts have verbal commitments from Black Forest, Falcon, Franktown, and Larkspur Fire Departments to provide ambulance service.

Kovacs said the AMR situation

caught the district off guard but should a third ambulance be needed for peak hours; two paramedics are available in the district offices. About 400 to 500 additional EMS calls annually would be the “impedance” needed to permanently staff a third ambulance in the combined district, and the needs continue to be monitored, said Kovacs.

Bradley said the EMS calls began rising in December and further escalated in January, but the district is covered and a new ambulance is scheduled for delivery in February. The new ambulance will be front line, and the ambulance brought out of reserve will remain at Station 4 and staffed when needed, said Bradley.

Gunderman said, “The crews must be exhausted with all those busy nights.”

Wildland fire updates

Secretary Larry Schwarz requested updates on the mitigation efforts, the pending wildfire town hall meeting, and the Marshall Fire in Boulder County on Dec. 30.

- Kovacs said the following:
- The grassland and flat topography that surrounded the Marshall Fire were not the pine trees, scrub oak, forest fuel, and steep terrain that is the majority of the district, but the topography did not really contribute to the Marshall Fire; it was exclusively driven by 100-mile-an-hour winds, and not really a vegetation fire so much as it was a home-to-home conflagration.
 - The district has a strong commitment to the wildland urban interface problem, and that is why the district will take delivery of a Type 3 Wildland Engine in 2023.
 - The Division Chief of Community Risk/Fire Marshal Jamey Bumgarner has established a robust mitigation effort in neighborhoods and is fielding phone calls from HOAs to secure a date on the calendar for a chipping event. The district also provides individual multi-point home inspections to identify deficiencies and make recommendations to homeowners. See www.tlmfire.org or call 719-484-0911.
 - The district will be establishing three pre-plans in time for the 2023 wildland fire season for Forest Lakes Metropolitan District, Woodmoor, and Red Rocks Ranch.
 - The district anticipates about 12 pre-plans to assist incident commanders and

- company officers in making informed decisions, in the event of a wildland fire or another major incident. See www.ocn.me/v21n10.htm#tlmfpd.
- The district is planning to repurpose the Wescott volunteers and add some new volunteers to help with chipping days and to establish a seasonal hand crew to assist with wildland mitigation efforts.
 - Battalion Chief Scott Ridings is conducting a community risk assessment for the accreditation process and, knowing how

significant a risk wildland fire is to the community, the district is doing everything possible to ensure what happened in Boulder County does not happen here.

Schwarz said the following:

- He had been talking to his neighbors about mitigation efforts, and the surrounding scrub oak and juniper under decks, although beautiful now, could be turbulent fuels in the future.

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