

ment of Public Works; Meggan Harrington, director of the Department of Planning and Community Development; and Brandi Williams, representing District 3.

Holly Williams said the county is one the most populated counties in the country. It has over 737,000 residents, a larger landmass than the state of Delaware, and more veterans than the total population of 53 counties in the state. The top 10 services and budget priorities that are provided by the county include: human services, public health, veteran services, clerk and recorder, assessor, elections, pretrial services, jail,

district attorney, and coroner. The strategic objectives of the county are infrastructure, including roads, stormwater, and parks; service quality with a qualified workforce dedicated to continuous improvement; and community trust, health, and safety.

The Pikes Peak Promise published Oct. 11 represents a comprehensive initiative to bring together elected officials, law enforcement, and community partners, uniting their efforts to tackle critical issues of the county. The initiative hopes to cultivate a safer, more affordable community through legislative action and commu-

nity engagement. For more information, go to [www.elpasoco.com/transformational-pikes-peak-promise-initiative-unveiled-local-leaders](http://www.elpasoco.com/transformational-pikes-peak-promise-initiative-unveiled-local-leaders)

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NEPCO normally meets at the Woodmoor Barn every other month on the second Saturday. The next regular member meeting will be on Jan. 13, 2024, from 10 a.m.-noon. For more information, go to [nepco.org](http://nepco.org)

Marlene Brown can be reached at [marlenebrown@ocn.me](mailto:marlenebrown@ocn.me).

**Woodmoor Improvement Association, Nov. 15**

**Board approves 2024 budget and increased dues, hears residents' concerns**

By Jackie Burhans

At its November meeting, the Woodmoor Improvement Association (WIA) board approved its 2024 budget and increased annual dues. The board also heard concerns from residents about public use of the land at the edge of their properties.

President Brian Bush was absent.

**2023 budget and dues increase approved**  
Treasurer Connie Brown reported that annual dues are proposed to increase to \$291, just shy of a 3% increase compared to the 2023 rate of \$283. Vice President Peter Bille noted that the primary driver of the increase was inflation. Commons Area Director Steve Cutler noted that the cost increase of maintaining common areas was more than 3%. The board voted unanimously to approve the increase.

The board moved and seconded the motion to approve the 2024 budget. During the discussion, Forestry Director Cindy Thrush noted that she had sent an email to the board expressing that she felt the budget was out of balance between public safety, forestry, the common area, and The Barn. She noted that 50% of the funding goes to public safety while only 3% goes to forestry and 12% to common areas. She acknowledged that she was looking for more money in her area.

Bille noted that WIA had to balance its budget, and it estimates revenues from dues based on historical payment rates. Outside of that, it is challenging to estimate fees for construction and remodeling and covenant violation fines. The board is comfortable that there will be money coming in in those areas, and he encouraged Thrush to continue to bring requests to the board for consideration.

Thrush replied that her larger concern is where people place value on their amenities. She didn't know if WIA had done a survey of its residents. Architectural Control Director Ed Miller said that the highest priority is Woodmoor Public Safety (WPS), noting that initially, dues for WPS were separate and that the community overwhelmingly approved combining the dues. He said without WPS, there would be more crime. Thrush asked if the percentage of the budget allocated to WPS could be scaled back from 50% to 30%. WPS Chief Kevin Nielsen noted that the vote to combine the dues raised the total assessment and said that if WPS' budget were cut, the WPS portion of the assessment would have to be decreased.

Bille said WIA gets good feedback from residents, and he feels comfortable that public safety, fire mitigation, and common areas are the top three priorities. He again encouraged Thrush to come to the board with any funding requests. The board approved the 2024 budget, with Thrush voting no.

**Resident concerns**

Two residents appeared before the board, handing it a packet of information and showing a slide show of their properties to demonstrate their concern. The adjacent properties have addresses on the southeast end of Lake Woodmoor Drive and Lakeview Lane respectively, and their concern is with people parking on Lake Woodmoor Drive both in the county right of way and on their property.

Leah Grady, whose property is on Lake Woodmoor Drive, said she has been a resident for six years and that she and her husband had agreed to allow WIA to place a sign on their property. There was a pullout on their property when they purchased it, but the parking problem has become dramatically worse since 2022, she said. Grady spoke with Architectural Control Committee Administrator Bob Pearsall, who acknowledged the problem. She was under the impression that WIA was working on the problem, but no further work or communication happened. Grady noted that construction vehicles parked on both the county right of way and on her private property during the repaving of Lake Wood-

moor Drive. Other people park on the property and smoke and leave cigarette butts, she said. Nielsen had informed her it was up to her to put private property signs on her land. Woodmoor Water and Sanitation Department had to come in to repair a damaged fire hydrant and replace some water lines. She has called El Paso County Commissioner Holly Williams and the Department of Public Works multiple times without getting a solution. Grady expressed frustration with her interactions with WIA and the county over two years, saying she is only interested in solving the situation. Barbara Roeder, who owns the adjacent property, said they are asking for assistance, cooperation, and guidance.

Public Safety Director Brad Gleason noted that the county owns and is responsible for the street and has a right of way of 40 feet on either side of Lake Woodmoor, which is larger than the typical eight feet. WIA has no control over that, he said, and is very limited in what it can tell people they can do in a public right of way, just as they are limited in what they can tell people they can do on their private property. Gleason said if they had signs indicating where the private property was, they could get license plate numbers and call the sheriff.

Grady suggested she wanted to solve the problem by placing bushes or boulders that could be moved if needed later. Bille said WIA could not plant on county property. Grady noted that many of her neighbors had landscaped up to the street and that the county had said they don't monitor or enforce rules in their rights of way. Gleason said the best thing for the homeowners to do was to talk to Pearsall and Cutler to make sure they are complying with covenants on their property, but that WIA could not tell them what to do or not do in county property.

**Board reports**

- Gleason noted that the United Services Automobile Association (USAA) insurance company had accepted fault for the damage to Woodmoor Public Safety's vehicle. He said that a meeting had been held with the adjuster, and parts had been ordered, but he did not know how long it would take.
- Brown reported there were 63 unpaid accounts.
- Covenants Director Per Suhr reported that there were no violations in October; there were seven issues resolved through friendly communication with two unfounded complaints.
- Miller noted that 67 projects had been submitted in October, with 57 approved in the office, nine approved by the Architectural Control Committee, and one disapproved. Year to date, the number of submitted projects is 535, which is a 5.3% decrease from the prior year. The project approval rate is 98.9%.
- Thrush reported that there had been 11 Forestry/Firewise visits in October. She anticipated that all the mitigation matching funds available would be used, and WIA is looking for additional funds for 2024.
- Cutler said that the sprinkler system at The Barn community center was shut down for the winter, and common area fire mitigation was completed by Oct. 2. Additional work was planned at The Point on Nov. 28-30, weather permitting, and the final portion of the trail at The Preserve was completed.
- Bille, on behalf of Bush, requested that trash cans be pulled in once trash has been picked up.

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The WIA Board of Directors usually meets at 7 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month in the Barn at 1691 Woodmoor Drive, Monument. The next meeting has been moved to Wed., Dec. 13 due to the holidays.

The WIA calendar can be found at [www.woodmoor.org/wia-calendar/](http://www.woodmoor.org/wia-calendar/).

woodmoor.org/wia-calendar/. WIA board meeting minutes can be found at [www.woodmoor.org/meeting-minutes/](http://www.woodmoor.org/meeting-minutes/) once approved and posted.

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

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