

of the regular board meeting set for that date.

Fire protection services authorized

In response to a request from El Paso County for the town to provide fire protection services to a small area of unincorporated county land at 5250 Eisenhower Dr., near Limbaugh Canyon, the board approved resolution 75-2023, which authorizes Fire Chief John Vincent to sign an agreement committing to provide the requested services.

Road standards amended

The road standards specified in the town’s municipal code have come under consideration during the board’s recent discussion of regulating use of the town’s undeveloped rights of way. Havenar expressed concern that the existing standards might require property owners to build costly roads to access their property.

The board voted unanimously in favor of Ordinance 23-2023, which removes the require-

ment that all roads be paved, and instead specifies that new roads must comply with county standards, which allows for less expensive roads to be built if usage will be low.

Executive session

The board meeting was preceded and followed by an executive session to consider the possible sale of public property, an asbestos estimate claim, the town administrator’s evaluation and contract, a personnel matter, and a Police Department claim.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Dec. 14. The board will have one regular meeting in December to accommodate the Christmas holiday. See the town’s website at www.townofpalmerlake.com to confirm times and dates of board meetings and workshops. Meetings are typically held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at the Town Hall. Information: 719-481-2953.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me. Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

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Monument Town Council, Nov. 6, 2023

Supplementary budget items and signs ordinance discussed

By Chris Jeub

One regular meeting of the Monument Town Council took place in November, and the regularly scheduled second meeting was cancelled for the Thanksgiving holiday. Issues covered in the four-hour meeting included symbolic gestures and police force promotions, local government initiatives and financial insights, budget talks, and the town’s temporary sign ordinance.

Israel support and police advancement

Mayor Mitch LaKind steered discussions toward a motion to change the town’s lighting to blue and white throughout the second week of November, a gesture aimed at showing solidarity with the State of Israel. The proposal was approved by the rest of the councilmembers and direction given to Town Manager Mike Foreman.

Police Chief Patrick Regan brought positive news with the announcement of promotions and swearing-in of key personnel, including Christine DeRienzo and Joe Barraza to sergeant positions, along with the welcome of Chris Sullivan to the Police Department.

Local initiatives and financial insights

Lu Ann Pyatt presented a comprehensive overview titled “Meet the Local Government Team.” Key points included the provision of a free State Geographic Information System (GIS) system for tax understanding, the team’s role in ensuring the functionality of the sales tax system processing \$209 million per month, and the educational focus behind the 139 audits conducted last year. Residents were directed to explore tax-related information on tax.colorado.gov.

Max Mojab from Piper Sandler provided insights into the Investment Portfolio of the Town of Monument. The 2023 performance review showed promise, with an estimated revenue of about \$250,000. Mojab expressed confidence in a projected 2024 revenue of \$500,000 from investments.

Budget talks

Director of Finance Mona Hirjoi presented the 2024 budget and 2023 amended budget, sparking some fervent discussions. Notable points of attention included Foreman’s proposal for a new line item for a PR contractor, resulting in a \$30,000 reallocation from the supplemental budget. Mayor LaKind expressed surprise at the revelation of a \$300,000 allocation for upgrades to the 259 Beacon Lite Building, leading to discussions about the availability of grants and the necessity for more comprehensive data in the budget presentation.

Employee concerns took the spotlight during the budget discussions, with some expressing

the need for part-time jobs to make ends meet. Councilmember Steve King delved into the intricacies of the merit pay system, revealing that over 90% of employees receive merit pay. However, concerns about the budget’s transparency emerged, with Mayor LaKind expressing dissatisfaction and Councilmember Ken Kimple echoing the call for better data. LaKind and the rest of the council began calling the preliminary budget a “wish list” to where voting would take place in December.

Temporary signs controversy

A significant portion of the meeting ignited with a debate over the town’s temporary signs ordinance. King read a letter accusing Amy Stephens, wife of former Councilmember Ron Stephens,

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S’more holiday fun: Fox Run Park



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Fuel Church

Location: Meeting at Mountain Community Mennonite Church
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TIME: Sunday Service in-person at 11:00am

Live service streaming on fuelchurch.org at 11:40am

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