

still under consideration: one from Franco Pisani and Lindsey Truitt and one from the Joy on the Rock, a church in Palmer Lake.

Pisani and Truitt told the board they wanted to use the property as a venue for weddings and other events, preserving and restoring the main building and perhaps moving the children's chapel as well. Pisani said his architect had inspected the site and he wanted direction from the board before committing to a more detailed analysis. Pisani said he envisioned having the site functioning as an event venue by the next bridal season and in later stages would add private suites and a chapel.

The board approved a motion to ask both Pisani and Joy on the Rock to present to the board at its next meeting.

At the May 25 meeting, Havenar said Joy on the Rock had withdrawn their proposal, but Pisani and Truitt were ready to present their plans for the property.

The materials for the meeting included biographies of Pisani and Truitt. In 1997 Pisani was the executive chef at The Villa in Palmer Lake. He left that position to become the food and beverage director at The Country Club at Woodmoor. In 2008 Jeff Hulsmann brought Pisani back to The Villa. Pisani now owns two restaurants in Old Colorado City—Paravicini's and Ristorante di Sopra. Truitt is a Colorado Springs native with 10 years' experience as an event coordinator.

Pisani and Truitt have named their project Star View Ranch.

John Nelson, the architect working with Pisani and Truitt, provided more details on the project. Nelson said his design would preserve the character of the old buildings. He said phase one would concentrate on the main building and phase two would involve moving two other buildings out of the flood plain to free up space for parking and for use as a park. He said one cabin

would be retained for use as a restroom. The boiler and its plumbing would be abandoned and forced air HVAC would be installed.

Pisani said he was happy to include the Parks Commission and the Fire Department in his planning and would like to participate in the master plan for the property. Pisani said he sought a 10-year lease, with two options to renew for 10 years. If the town decided to sell the property in the future, he asked for the option of a first refusal. He also asked that the town not allow any other food and beverage businesses on the Elephant Rock property.

The town can expect revenue from rent and sales tax, Pisani said. He committed to generating \$30,000 a year for the town after the first year of operation and said if revenues fell short of that amount, he would write a check to the town for the difference. He estimated \$1.3 million in revenue for the town over the 10-year term of the lease.

## History of lake and town presented

Linda Vier, Jeannine Engel, Jason Phillips, and Jeff Hulsmann presented a history of Palmer Lake at the May 11 board meeting. The presentation covers the geological history of the lake, the history of the town from the Long Expedition in 1820 to 1901, the fundraising efforts to benefit the lake beginning in 1994, the current water levels, and the work done to awake the lake.

The presentation is on the town's website here: [https://www.townofpalmerlake.com/sites/default/files/fileattachments/board\\_of\\_trustees/meeting/packets/7824/awake\\_the\\_lake\\_presentation\\_5-11-2023.pdf](https://www.townofpalmerlake.com/sites/default/files/fileattachments/board_of_trustees/meeting/packets/7824/awake_the_lake_presentation_5-11-2023.pdf).

## Special event permits

The board approved three special event permits:

- Pikes Peak Library District Story Time, to be held June 8 from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Village Green. Denise Gard will bring her dogs to help

tell the story of Dogs in the Wild.

- Palmer Lake Historical Society Father's Day Ice Cream Social, to be held June 18 from 2 to 4 p.m. in the Village Green. There will be live music, ice cream, and pie.
- Palmer Lake Arts Council Shakespeare in the Park, two shows to be held on June 24 at 1 and 6 p.m. in the Village Green.

Please bring a lawn chair or picnic blanket to all three events.

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The next board meetings are scheduled for June 8 and 22. See the town's website at [www.townofpalmerlake.com](http://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.

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## Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District, May 17

# Directors elected; ambulance sale approved

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District (BF-FRPD) meeting on May 17, the board elected two directors, approved the sale of a surplus ambulance, and heard about a mass casualty incident (MCI) drill and the development of a regional training consortium.

## Directors elected

Chairman Nate Dowden administered the oath of office to re-elected directors Vice Chairman James Abendschan and Treasurer Jack Hinton. Both directors were elected by decree and the May 2 election was canceled.

## Board nominates director positions

Board Secretary Donna Arkowski said that officially, the board needed to nominate board positions.

The following directors were unanimously nominated: Dowden—chair, Kiersten Tarvainen—vice chair, and Hinton—treasurer.

## Surplus ambulance sale approved

Deputy Chief of Operations Chris Piepenburg said Peyton Fire Protection District (PFPD) was interested in purchasing the surplus 2007 ambulance for \$5,000. The ambulance had about 285,000 miles less than the existing ambulance in service at PFPD, he said.

Hinton said the 2007 ambulance had been donated to Palmer Lake Fire Department in September 2020, but it was returned to the district. It is good to help neighbors, said Hinton. See [www.ocn.me/v20n10.htm#bffrpd](http://www.ocn.me/v20n10.htm#bffrpd).

The board unanimously approved the sale.

Gary Nelson, president of Emergency Incident Support (EIS), said the nonprofit organization he leads would have thankfully received the am-

bulance as a donation if PFPD had not been interested.

## Mass casualty incident drill

Dowden asked if a regional MCI training event was scheduled.

Piepenburg said the district was involved with active-shooter refresher training taking place that week with Monument Fire District, Monument Police Department, Palmer Lake Police Department and El Paso County Sheriff's Office. The district had attended previous events and will also participate in a large-scale MCI drill in June, involving multiple agencies region-wide to include area hospitals. The regional drill was developed by EMS Battalion Chief Sean Pearson and EMS Coordinator Stephanie Soll of MFD, he said. See MFD article on page 17.

Nelson thanked the board for the great work they do and said EIS will support the MCI with logistics, catering, and rehab support. The group's 35 volunteers will act as mass casualties. The MCI regional drill will be held at Don Breese Stadium at Lewis-Palmer High School, Monument, from June 12 to 16, he said.

## Financial report

Hinton said as of April 30, the district had about \$3.5 million in total assets, and that includes \$1.3 million for General Operations and the reserve funds:

- Money market deposit account, \$137,235.
- Emergency reserves fund, \$236,751.
- Capital improvement fund, \$193,803.
- TABOR reserve fund, \$137,400.

The district received \$471,744 in property and specific ownership taxes, and about \$6,044

in ambulance revenue. The 2022 Pierce Enforcer 4395 has a loan for \$356,731 and is shown in the total assets for the district. The true district assets are shown in the 2021 audit conducted in 2022. The district has spent about 31% of the predicted annual budget year to date, about 2% less than anticipated, he said.

The board unanimously accepted the financial report as presented.

## Wildland deployment reimbursements

Hinton requested Administrative Officer Rachel Dunn record the wildland deployment reimbursements received and the month the deployments occurred on the balance sheet. He explained the deployment line on the balance versus actuals sheet now lists deployments separately to show net income or losses. The precise breakout will provide a true depiction of how much the district makes or loses on deployments. State wildland fire deployment payments can take about six months to receive, and Federal Emergency Management Agency payments could take up to a year. The district had yet to receive payment of \$45,128 for the last deployment, he said.

Dowden requested a better breakout on the balance sheet because the \$380,060 listed on the balance sheet as receivable income was for deployments billed last year that had not been received.

Piepenburg said it is unfortunate the billing process for wildland deployments is not easy. The bills are loaded into the system and sent to a reviewer and turned around in 30 days. If the reviewer does not send the bill back for correction, the correction is made by the district before being re-submitted to another reviewer.

The return process can happen again after being reviewed by another agency. If the process proceeds without delays, it can take just 30 days, he said.

Dunn said billing is usually submitted within 7-14 days, but typically 90% of the bills are returned due to incorrect Government Services Administration rates (per diem reimbursement rates). The deploying crews are required to have a resource order before responding to a fire. The coding process is the last step in the process and involves clarification from the agency responsible for fighting the fire. The bills can be returned at any phase in the process, but once accepted by the state, payment is usually received in 14 days, she said.

Dowden said the reimbursement process is a laborious paper chase.

Hinton thanked Dunn and said the breakout on the balance sheet will allow careful monitoring of deployment reimbursements, help the board make educated funding decisions, and assist with budget planning. The wildland deployment reimbursements are negative year to date, he said.

If the district submits the bills on time, it will not be cut off, and eventually it will receive payment, said Piepenburg.

## Department report

Dunn said the following:

- The 2005 mid-mount ariel ladder truck was received April 28 and is housed in the bay at Station 1.
- The district received new uniforms.
- Students at "The School in the Woods" received wildfire education.
- Remodeling work continued in the training room.

## Operations update

Piepenburg said the district re-

sponded to 10 fire-related calls and 53 Emergency Medical Service (EMS) calls in April. The district assisted Falcon Fire Protection District with a residential structure fire in Falcon and extinguished a small RV fire within the district. In April, the district deployed two crews to the Gageby Creek Fire, Las Animas/Bent County, for 72 hours with a Type 3 and 6 apparatus. A crew also assisted with the Rampart Range Fire, Teller County, for 24 hours in April, he said.

## Training update

Piepenburg said staff had completed a combined total of about 1,281 training hours in April:

- Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD) Fire Academy attended Live Fire behavior training in April at the district training center, and the students were scheduled to return for additional training May 20-21 and again for two days in June before graduation.
- Staff completed the ongoing monthly North Group EMS Airway training with Centura Health and MFD EMS staff.
- MFD worked on second-floor Live Fire training for three days.
- The district is joining a regional training consortium with MFD, CSFD, and possibly Fort Carson Fire Department in the future. The consortium is a path to training and working together more often, with similar training structures and mind set. The district regularly trains with MFD.

Hinton asked if districts with similar terrain and vegetation are taken into consideration

**BFFRPD (Cont. on 16)**