

Woodmoor Improvement Association Board of Directors, Sept. 26

Fire district presents information on ballot measure

By Harriet Halbig

Battalion Chief Greg Lovato of the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District and Franz Hankins of the firefighters association spoke to the Woodmoor Improvement Association (WIA) board Sept. 26 about the November ballot measure to increase funding for the district.

Lovato explained that the district encompasses 64 square miles with a population of approximately 24,000, of which over 9,000 reside in Woodmoor. The Woodmoor Fire Department merged with the Tri-Lakes department in 2005. The district provides fire protection by nationally certified firefighters and advanced life support and ambulance services, having been awarded the 2011 EMS service of the year by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

The district also offers residential fire mitigation inspections, commercial fire inspections, a fire prevention program contacting all elementary school students, and a senior safety program.

The district is funded primarily by property taxes. Assessed property values in the district have remained flat or declined since 2008.

Lovato said that the department has been maintaining services over the last three years by using its capital reserves. Maintenance of fire stations and vehicles has been cut back, as have administrative costs. The district wishes to maintain its current staff of 36 and three stations.

Lovato said that, as a public servant, he may inform the public of the possible results of passage or failure of Ballot Initiative 5C, but may not influence their votes.

Franz Hankins of the firefighters association said that the district will have yard signs available to all who are willing to display them, and he or another representative would be available to speak.

WIA Board President Jim Hale said that the WIA's attorney advised him that the association is legally entitled to express an opinion. Upon hearing that failure to pass the initiative would result in closing the Woodmoor Fire Station, he said that the safety of Woodmoor is at stake due to the longer response times that would result. This in turn could affect insurance costs for Woodmoor residents.

The board passed a resolution to support the passage of Ballot Initiative 5C and to assist the district in informing the public.

Firewise report

Jim Woodman, chair of the association's Firewise Committee, reported that his committee wishes to take advantage of the community's heightened awareness of fire danger following the Waldo Canyon Fire and encourage

homeowners to be educated in what they can do to protect themselves and prepare for an emergency. He expressed concern that people's interest will wane now that we are getting some rain and during the winter months. The goal is to motivate them when spring arrives and they are able to do fire mitigation in their neighborhoods.

In past years, homeowners were encouraged to reduce fuels in their yards through the offer of grant funds to help with the expense. The Waldo Canyon Fire added a sense of urgency to these efforts.

Woodman explained two initiatives to the board. The first of these, Fire Adapted Communities, focuses on fire-resistant building materials. The second, Ready, Set, Go, is an initiative by the Colorado Fire Marshal's Association and the Colorado State Fire Chiefs Association.

Woodman said that WIA could join Ready, Set, Go at no cost and be able to use the organization's printed materials and other resources. He said that this would be much less expensive than trying to generate the materials.

Woodman said that the Forestry Committee's budget proposal for 2013 would include funding for informational publications and reproduction of the DVD of the fire marshal's program the previous month. He pointed out that information on wise use of materials could also be used by the Architectural Control Committee.

The board passed a resolution for WIA to join Ready, Set, Go.

President's report

Hale thanked the Firewise Committee for its efforts.

He said that the Woodmoor Public Safety garage has been completed and that, as a result of having to replace a gas line ruptured during the construction, it was necessary to dig up the area along the front of the Barn. That area of the property is now being re-landscaped, removing flammable junipers, putting in new sidewalks, and adding a seating area.

The board approved a motion to spend up to \$24,700 for improvements to the Barn, including repairs to the deck, roofing, siding, and lighting. This amount includes a contingency in the event that mold or other problems surface. The board confirmed that any work will be approved by the Architectural Control Committee and utilize "firewise" principles.

In other reports, homeowners association Manager Matt Beseau said that the association is still lacking 684 signatures for the approval of the declaration of covenants. He said that door-to-door solicitation and phone calls have not been effective, but that the staff continues to ask all homeowners who come into the office whether they have indicated their approval. Two staff positions

remain vacant.

Treasurer Nick Oakley reported that association expenses are 9.9 percent below budget for the year.

Forestry Director Eric Gross reported on the increased number of lot evaluations conducted by his committee members for both forest health and fire mitigation. He said that the number of slash piles resulting from mitigation has decreased, but they remain a hazard.

Homeowner Lisa Hatfield presented the board with information about training for Community Emergency Response Teams, which is offered free of charge for groups of 15 or more individuals. This training is offered by the El Paso County Sheriff's Office. Hale said that the idea sounded promising.

The Board of Directors of the Woodmoor Improvement Association meets at 7 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month in the association's Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Drive, Monument. The next meeting will be held on Oct. 24.

Harriet Halbig may be reached at harriethalbig@ocn.me.

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September Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

Rain fell with abundance during September, but most of it accumulated over two days, with mainly dry conditions for the majority of the month. Precipitation from those two events allowed us to receive higher than normal amounts for the month, but with all the sunshine in between temperatures averaged slightly warmer than normal. We didn't receive our first widespread freeze of the season yet, so we are about two weeks behind normal on that. However, temperatures fell to the low to mid-30s on several mornings.

September started off mild across the region, with scattered showers and thunderstorms each afternoon and evening. High temperatures reached into the 80s each afternoon from the 1st through the 4th, about 5 to 10° warmer than normal for this time of the year. And with abundant clouds around during the overnight hours, temperatures stayed mild at night as well, only dipping into the 50s. The showers and thunderstorms that developed each afternoon and evening around the region were pretty hit and miss, with the heavier rain, up to a half inch, occurring on the east side of the Palmer Divide where a little more moisture was available to work with.

Quiet and mild weather held steady over the region during the first full week of the month. Highs continued at above average levels, with 80s on the 4th, upper 70s on the 5th, and 80s again on the 6th. Finally, some relief showed up in the form of a cold front that moved through just after midnight on the 7th. This brought sharp cooling and plenty

of clouds. Scattered rain showers developed that afternoon as well, as highs struggled to reach upper 60s. Clear skies returned quickly the next day, bringing a nice feel of fall to the region over the weekend, with seasonal temperatures each afternoon. The longer nights, clear skies, and cooler air mass allowed temperatures to drop into the 30s and low 40s across the region.

The second week of September started off sunny and mild, with highs staying at above normal levels on the 10th and 11th. However, much needed moisture visited the region as a strong low pressure system moved out of the desert Southwest through the Four Corners region starting late on the 11th. This storm followed a perfect path for bringing moisture to us, with low pressure developing to our southwest. This provided upslope wind flows to the region, drew moisture into the area, and combined with the dynamics (lift) of the storm to produce steady rain over the region. Wednesday the 12th was wet, with an inch of rain accumulating over the region. For the most part the rain fell steady throughout the day, perfect for a nice deep soaking.

The cold front that came through kept temperatures on the chilly side, with highs holding the low 40s most of the day, making for a raw, wet afternoon and reminding us that winter weather isn't too far away. Morning lows reached into the low and mid-30s on the morning of the 14th, just missing our first freeze of the season. The storm moved out of the region the next day, with temperatures below normal under mostly sunny skies. A steady climb in

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