

Palmer Lake town meeting, Feb. 15

# Trustees see need for new Fire Department facility

By Jackie Burhans

The Town of Palmer Lake held a public meeting on Feb. 15 to discuss fire station needs, fuel mitigation, the proposed Verizon Wireless tower, and other issues.  
Fire station

The meeting started out with a tour of the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department facility, which was built in 1938. The firefighters demonstrated the tight fit of the truck bays by showing how mirrors must be folded back in order to move a truck in or out of the bay. The tour continued inside, with a visit to the combination living quarters/conference room/training center.

Trustees Shana Ball and Richard Kuehster explained that the building has issues with asbestos and lead as well as gas fumes from the truck bays. The town is searching for members for a citizens committee to discuss options for building and funding a new fire station or combined fire/police station. Municipal funding options include a bond, an increase in sales tax allocation for the fire and/or police department, or a grant.

### Mitigation

Fire mitigation grant coordinator Judith Harrington, along with Fire Marshal Margo Humes, is writing a proposal for a state grant to help the town and its residents with the cost of fire mitigation. This matching grant would provide three times the amount committed by individuals. Residents interested in doing fuel mitigation in 2014 can pledge a minimum of \$250 and then receive up to \$750 to do mitigation for one acre of land if the grant is approved.

The community can also pledge money to help miti-

gate the 400 acres of land owned by the town to reduce fire risk. The deadline to contact Harrington at 719-229-9635 is March 1 so that the grant can be submitted to the state by March 13.

### Verizon Wireless tower

Verizon would like to build a 60-foot cell tower at the rear of the parking lot near the fire station. It could be disguised as a tree or simply left as a plain tower. It would require a 12-by-26-foot shed to house equipment related to the tower. Verizon has made an initial offer of \$800 per month revenue to the town and indicated that the fire siren could be placed on the tower for better sound distribution.

Although Verizon's engineers indicated they were also considering a location by Palmer Lake Elementary School, a modification of the town height ordinance or waiver would have to be approved by the town if that location is chosen. Besides the revenue, another benefit to the town would be improved communications when fire or police personnel are near the reservoir. Verizon presented detailed information at the Feb. 19 Planning Commission meeting (see related article page 7).

### Other matters

- Other topics touched upon included:
- Recreational marijuana sales – No discussion. Voting will occur in the April 1 election.
  - Town Council election – All trustees and the mayor are up for re-election and most indicated that they were planning to run or in the process of making a final decision. The election will be on April 1, not April 8 as had been reported on the town website.
  - Labor Day Kinetics Jubilee – The trustees were urged to spread the word about this event, and more participation from Fire Department and local groups as well as people outside the Tri-Lakes area was suggested.

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The next Palmer Lake town meeting is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, March 15 at the Palmer Lake Town Hall. The date will be confirmed at the March 13 Town Council meeting.

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



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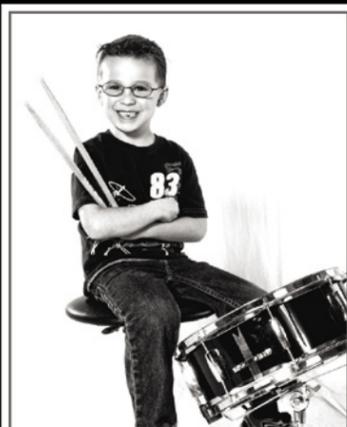
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