



Above: (left) New Fire Chief Brent Newton takes the oath of office. **(right)** New Police Chief Jason Vanderpool takes the oath of office. *Photos by James Howald.*

The board debated proposed Ordinance 3 of 2016, which would allow chickens and ducks to be kept as pets in areas zoned for residential use. The ordinance as debated would allow up to six hens to be kept as pets. Roosters would not be allowed. Also, the ordinance specifies the chickens must be kept in a clean enclosure at least six feet from the property line. If the enclosure has wire sides, they must be buried at least 12 inches underground. The ordinance allows for mobile coops to be used. The ordinance also requires a \$21 annual fee, and prohibits the selling of eggs.

Parks and Recreation Trustee Paul Banta expressed concern about allowing six chickens to be kept.

The proposed ordinance was tabled until the meeting to be held on March 10.

Recovery Village to expand

According to Town Administrator Kathy Green-Sinnard, Ordinance 4 of 2015 would permit Recovery Village to expand its operation by building on foundations that already exist on the property. Because the buildings were originally approved as part of the Inn at Palmer Divide and the use for the buildings will change, the amendment to the original Planned Unit Development must be approved by the council, Green-Sinnard said.

Al Fritz, representing Recovery Village, said that 400 clients have been served at the facility since its opening, and demand is growing, leading the business to seek to add 52 beds in three new buildings. A swimming pool and outdoor courts would also be part of the expansion, according to Fritz.

No changes to outside lighting or parking would be needed, Fritz said. The new buildings and pool will increase Recovery Village's annual water use by 8 to 10 acre-feet, Fritz said, adding that the water will come from wells owned by Mission Training International.

In response to a question from Fire Trustee Rich Kuehster, Fritz explained that staff would be added to maintain the current ratio of patients to staff, even during the evening and night hours.

The board voted unanimously to approve the ordinance.

Budget reserves explained

Green-Sinnard gave the board a presentation on the town's budget reserves, focusing on what they are, how much they contain, and what they might be used for.

The general fund reserves consist of operating reserves, the Lucy Owen donation, the fire truck payment reserve, the general fund, and the road maintenance reserve, Green-Sinnard said. Operating reserves provide

cash flow for the town and have a balance of \$326,890, according to Green-Sinnard. The Lucy Owen donation is committed to building repairs and upgrades, and has a balance of \$24,258. The fire truck payment reserve has been set aside to pay for past fire truck loans, and has a balance of \$3,298. The general fund is unrestricted and has a balance of \$381. The road maintenance reserve comes from the sales tax dedicated to roads, and has a balance of \$178,485. Altogether, the general fund reserves have a balance of \$533,312, according to Green-Sinnard.

The water enterprise fund reserves derive from water revenues, and have a combined balance of \$1.56 million, Green-Sinnard said. These reserves include \$640,948 reserved for the construction of a new water tank and \$574,740 for operating reserves. \$241,505 for capital improvement projects and \$108,428 for water loan repayment are also part of the water enterprise fund reserves, according to Green-Sinnard.

The total of all reserves is \$2.09 million, Green-Sinnard said.

Green-Sinnard recommended that the Lucy Owen donation be moved to operating reserves, the fire truck payment be moved to the general fund, and the road maintenance reserve be moved to a new capital improvement fund. She also recommended that a new fund be set up to meet the required TABOR reserve amount. Green-Sinnard also proposed that the board consider creating a capital improvement fund from dedicated roads revenues, grants, and 2 percent of annual revenues.

In the area of water revenues, Green-Sinnard recommended moving capital reserves for water and water capital project reserves to the proposed capital improvement fund.

Creating a capital improvement fund will help the board and town staff plan and appropriate money, Green-Sinnard said.

Clark seeks funds to purchase land for park
County Commissioner Sallie Clark began her remarks by congratulating the town on revitalizing Palmer Lake.

Clark told the board that the county was working on purchasing a 63-acre property adjacent to Elephant Rock, to be used as a park. The asking price for the property,

which has a conservation easement, is \$330,000, Clark said. El Paso County Ballot question 1A will provide \$150,000 toward the purchase, and the Regional Park Fee fund will provide another \$150,000, according to Clark. In addition, Catriona Cellars has committed \$4,000 to the purchase, The Front Range Environmental Resource Coalition has committed \$3,000, and the Trust for Community Parks has committed \$1,000, Clark said.

According to Clark, the remainder of the purchase price will have to be raised from other donors.

Emergency Response Team now under County Commissioners

In his presentation, R.C. Smith pointed out that his Emergency Response Team, which is responsible for plans that mitigate the impact of emergencies, no longer reports to the Sheriff's Office, but is overseen by the county commissioners, as of Jan. 1, 2015.

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

The two meetings for March will be at 6:30 p.m. on March 10 and March 24, at Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent. Meetings are normally held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Information: 481-2953.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me.

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