

larger than usual and will have to be approved each year.

The board also discussed and approved additional exceptions to the school board Monument Academy Class Size Policy #1523 (<http://bit.ly/ma-1523>) for several middle school classes. Policy 1523 states says sixth to eighth

grade will not exceed 110 students. The sixth and seventh grade are at those limits, with 10 people on the waiting list for both grades. Eighth grade is expected to be 95 students. Don Griffin asked for a one-year exception to bring the limit up to 118 per grade or 24 students per class in those three middle school grades. After the October count day, Griffin suggested that the board might want to permanently change this policy to the higher number. After a discussion on availability of lockers and crowded halls during passing time, the board unanimously approved the request.

Board report highlights

- Treasurer Sonya Camarco reported the receipt of \$7,900 in Impact Aid revenue from the federal government for the education of military or federally-connected children. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 passed by the Obama Administration appropriated additional money to fund Impact Aid. MA had not seen this revenue since 2013.
- MA has about \$30,000 left over in reserves after approving spending on the field in a previous meeting. MA is not mandated to have reserves, so it feels that the reserve is adequate.
- The budget is flat with an expectation of an increase

in PERA and health insurance costs along with a 1.6 percent increase in per pupil revenue. There is no money for teacher salary increases even without use of the reserves for the field.

- The mid-year teacher survey had suggestions for improvements to the property to be listed publicly with contact information. There was positive feedback from elementary teachers and mixed results from the middle school around homework amounts and iPad use. The board discussed the learning curve associated with the first year of implementing technology. There will be a town hall on April 7 to discuss iPad use with parents; a survey on this has been sent to parents and teachers.

The Monument Academy usually meets at 7 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month in the school library at 1150 Village Ridge Point, Monument. The next meeting will be on April 14. Information on the MA School Board, including schedule, minutes, committee and finances, can be found at <http://www.monumentacademy.net/school-board>.

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Monument Board of Trustees, March 7

Water rates increase approved

By Lisa Hatfield

At the March 7 meeting, the Monument Board of Trustees went into executive session for two hours to consult with their attorneys about two topics: legal questions regarding the methadone clinic litigation, and "the purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer, or sale of any real, personal, or other property interest."

Then they voted 3-2 to approve the first year's worth of the newly proposed Town of Monument water rates increase that has been under discussion since October, but they did not approve the series of automatic rate increases through 2021 recommended by town staff to help build the emergency half-million dollar reserves fund or help pay back \$435,000 borrowed from the town's general fund. The new rates will apply only to customers in the Town of Monument water service area west of I-25, which has about 1,000 accounts.

Mayor Pro-Tem Jeff Kaiser and Trustee Kelly Elliott were excused.

"Bleeding" will slow for town water enterprise fund operations, but other goals at risk

Public Works Director Tom Tharnish and Forsgren Associates water engineer Will Koger presented a new water rates increase structure proposal. Tharnish explained that the increases over the next five years would allow the town

to accomplish its goals of making the water enterprise operation and management fund self-sustaining, building a reserve for emergencies, providing money to transfer back to the general fund, and providing revenue for needed capital repair and replacement expenditures.

However, after the special Feb. 22 workshop where stakeholders and members of the business community presented specific alternative options for the town staff's financial analysis, public comment at the March 7 meeting indicated they had expected to see several alternate proposals on March 7. See www.ocn.me/v16n3.htm#photos.

After an hour of discussion, the trustees approved an amended version of the proposal that only included the first year of higher rates but not the rest of the recommended automatic annual increases. See charts showing new 2016 base and volumetric rates for town water customers on the facing page.

If it had been approved in its entirety, the March 7 proposal would have covered 21 percent of costs for 2016 and then increased every year through 2021. Koger said, "That 21 percent is not ideal, but it is workable, given that there would be an increase to 27 percent in 2017, you can sort of live with the 21 percent for one year." The 79 percent remainder of the revenue needed would need to come from volumetric water use rates, which vary in wet and dry years as customers vary their water consumption.

In October and January, Koger, Tharnish, and Town Manager Chris Lowe had presented two other proposals, both of which met with public opposition for including base rate and volumetric rate increases that were too steep and would cause hardships for people on low or fixed incomes and those with larger meter sizes (such as commercial businesses). Other public comments said the new rates proposed were unfair to people who used less than the 6,000 or 3,000 gallons of water included in those proposed monthly base rates. Those plans would have met 60 percent or 32 percent of those same costs, respectively, if

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Hollenbach Inducted into Society of The Sons of The American Revolution

William "Will" Hollenbach, a student at Lewis Palmer High School, was recently inducted into the Society of The Sons of The American Revolution (SAR).

Ten generations ago, three of his direct ancestors fought in the Revolutionary War in eastern Pennsylvania.

Johannes "Nicholas" Höllenbach, from whom Will inherited his last name, served with two other Revolutionary War patriots, Hans Leonhard Knecht and Lorentz Holben whose great granddaughters later married into the Hollenbach family.

The Sons of the American Revolution is a fraternal and civic society composed of lineal descendants of the men who wintered at Valley Forge, signed the Declaration of Independence, fought in the battles of the American Revolution, served in the Continental Congress, or otherwise supported the cause of American Independence.

Will's older brother, Ethan, also inducted into the SAR, will become the 3rd generation of military officers upon his graduation from CU Boulder next spring as a second lieutenant in the US Air Force. Both are sons of David and Dana Hollenbach of Monument.



Will Hollenbach

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