

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

January 2024



Happy New Year!

As we put 2023 to rest, the Board of Trustees is exceedingly grateful for your trust over the past year and looking forward to a prosperous future with the opportunity to fine tune what we have started together.

As we begin 2024, I asked several board members to look back and speak to what they were most proud of as a new board in 2023. Overall, many accomplishments were prominent in their minds. The Board of Trustees is proud of prioritizing and embracing our challenging budget constraints. This board put forth a budget that not only balances but encompasses difficult decisions. We have set forth a process to plan for current needs, future growth, and necessary Town infrastructure. Trustee Dreher stated, "this has been a huge accomplishment and one that we look forward to adapting as 2024 progresses."

This board embraced the restructuring of the water usage rates and tiers. Our purpose was to facilitate a water fund that will sustain our operational expenditures while planning for the future of water infrastructure and growth needs. The framework was implemented while placing significant emphasis on annual review to ensure a balanced and thriving water fund as we progress into the future needs of water. Trustee Ball stated, "I am most proud of the way we raised the water rates in a manner that addresses future needs while taking care to make the new rates affordable for our citizens."

The Board of Trustees spent a significant amount of time considering options for the Elephant Rock property. The intent with accepting this property is to give back to the citizens for generations to come and the board took this gift to heart. Trustee Farr is most excited about the trail connecting the property to the upper part of town and sees the benefit of collaborating with the Parks Commission for years to come! As bridges are built and installed, this property will become easily accessible to enjoy.

Additionally, the board is very pleased with the way our town has collectively embraced new recreational marijuana sales. We look forward to continued growth and prosperity of increased sales revenue in 2024.

My commitment continues to be to engage state and county legislators in representing the vision for the future of Palmer Lake. This is of paramount importance and something I have worked hard on all year. As a board, we continue to build relationships by serving in many capacities within the region. Officials participate in Pikes Peak Area Council of Government, Pikes Peak Regional Building Department, Colorado Municipal League, the El Paso County Community Development Advisory Board and Board of Health, to name a few. Having a seat at the table with state-wide organizations, Palmer Lake is becoming known as a positive partner in the future of Colorado. The board members are committed to working alongside a multitude of organizations to unlock future opportunities for Palmer Lake. Establishing a positive presence within our greater community is extremely important to Palmer Lake's collective voice in developing our niche in the region.

I continue to hold weekly office hours by appointment and am available for questions, concerns, or to simply chat and get to know someone. Many board members are committed to joining me and are available to meet with you as well.

In 2024, we will continue to refine systems and policy and will begin strategic planning for the future of Palmer Lake. Areas of focus will include the maintenance and improvement of existing structures; prioritizing capital improvement projects including roadway, storm water and drainage plans; updating land use code; pedestrian connectivity; and seeking focused grant planning. Future workshops with town departments as well as advisory commissions will be forthcoming. "It takes as much energy to wish as it does to plan." Taking a hard look at the challenges for the future of our community should be embraced rather than ignored or feared.

The board encourages citizens to get involved, ask questions, and bring an optimistic vision to town meetings, which are held on the second and fourth Thursday of the month. The live stream link is available at www.townofpalmerlake.com as an alternative to attending in person. You may also write to the board at info@palmer-lake.org. We welcome your thoughts and value your concerns. This board is committed to transparency, working collectively as a governing body, and being accessible to the citizens of our community.

Make the month of January amazing, spread joy as you journey a new year, and continue to love your neighbors. I am so proud of our community. In the words of Mr. Rogers, "If you could only sense how important you are to the lives of those you meet: How important you are to the people you may never even dream of."

We are Palmer Lake, and together we can move mountains!

Mayor Glant