
**BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF
August 3, 2021**

A Regular Meeting of the Big Bear Fire Authority was called to order by Interim Chairman Green at 6:10 p.m., Tuesday, August 3, 2021, at 39707 Big Bear Blvd., Big Bear Lake, California.

OPEN SESSION

Board Members Present

Chairman Randall Putz
Vice Chairman John Green
Director Rick Herrick
Director Alan Lee
Director Perri Melnick
Director Bynette Mote
Director Karyn Oxandaboure
Director John Russo
Director Larry Walsh
Director Al Ziegler

Board Members Absent:

Others Present:

Jeff Willis, Fire Chief
Assistant Chief/Fire Marshal Mike Maltby
Acting Board Secretary Chardelle Smith
Director of Business Services Kristin Mandolini
General Counsel Joseph Sanchez

OPEN SESSION

CLOSED SESSION PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS: (Any member of the public is entitled to speak on Closed Session Agenda items. If you wish to address any other items listed on the Agenda, you must do so during Open Session.)

CLOSED SESSION

1. **Public Employee Performance Evaluation (Government Code §54957)**
Title: Fire Chief

2. **Conference with Labor Negotiators (Government Code §54957.6)**
Agency Designated Representative: Joseph Sanchez, Legal

Unrepresented Employee: Fire Chief

REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION

At the hour of 4:00, p.m., Interim Chairman Green adjourned to Closed Session.

At the hour of 6:07, p.m., Interim Chairman Green Adjourned Closed Session.

At the hour of 6:10, p.m., Interim Chairman Green re-opened Regular Session

OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

Moment of Silence: Observed

Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Director Herrick

ROLL CALL

REPORT ON CLOSED SESSION

No reportable action.

NEW BUSINESS

FA8. Fire Authority Board Reorganization - Selection of the Chair and Vice Chair

Board nominations and selection of Chair and Vice Chair.

Speaker: Interim Chair John Green

Chairman David Caretto resigned his position on June 18, 2021; therefore, it was agreed that the Chairman position stay with a Director from the Fire Protection District until the next reorganization of Chair and Vice Chair at the end of the calendar year.

Interim Chairman Green called for nominations of Chairman to serve the remainder of the calendar year.

Action: Director Herrick nominated Director Putz to serve as Chairman for the remainder of the calendar year; seconded by Interim Chairman Green and was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Herrick, Lee, Melnick, Mote, Oxandaboure, Putz, Russo, Walsh,
Ziegler, and Green
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

Nominations for a new Vice Chairman were not taken because Vice Chairman Green agreed to stay in his position until the next reorganization of Chair and Vice Chair at the end of the calendar year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

The Fire Authority's Administrative Office will be closed Monday, September 6, 2021, in observance of Labor Day and will reopen on Tuesday, September 7, 2021.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Recognition of Promotions

- Engineer Shawn Sutherland
- Engineer Jordon Willis

Speaker: Chief Willis

2. Apparatus Spec Committee Update

Speaker: Norman Dykesten

DIRECTORS' GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Director Green thanked Captain Norman Dykesten and the apparatus spec committee for all their hard work.

Director Russo agreed with Director Green and congratulated the committee. He also questioned how the Engine will be transported to the Department.

Director Mote thanked Captain Norman Dykesten for all their hard work.

Director Ziegler questioned where the three companies are based out of and congratulated on their hard work.

Director Herrick thanked the Apparatus Spec Committee for their hard work.

Director Oxandaboure thanked Caption Norman Dykesten for all their hard work.

Director Lee thanked Captain Norman Dykesten and the Apparatus Spec Committee for their dedication. He also thanked the Fire Chief for creating the opportunity for allowing the firefighters and professional staff to have hands on during this time. Director Lee invited his colleagues to the Community Unity Event being held on August 19th from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Veterans Park. This event is intended to celebrate the community and full-time residents.

Director Melnick thanked Captain Norman Dykesten and is looking forward to working with everyone.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Patrice Duncan, resident of Sugarloaf, stated there was a great turnout for National Night Out. She gave an update on the creation of the Big Bear Valley Fire Safe Council. With assistance from Laura Dyberg, Mountain Rim Fire Safe Council, a public meeting was held at Fire Station 281 in Big Bear Lake to engage community interest to re-establish the Fire Safe Council. There were 12 community members from Big Bear Lake, Big Bear City, Sugarloaf, and Fawnskin, as well as representatives from Bear Valley Electric and Big Bear Fire Department. A consensus was reached to move forward with a formation of a steering committee to seek out volunteers, create a Board of Directors and finalize a 501C3 non-profit status. Patrice gave an overview of what a Fire Safe Council is. Fire Safe Councils are well established across the mountain tops of San Bernardino such as Mount Baldy, Mountain High, Lake Arrowhead, and Green Valley Lake. These councils collaborate with organizations and government agencies with the primary role of education and communication in advance of a disaster. Fire Safe Councils are able to apply for State and Federal grants to assist residents with wildfire mitigation. The next Big Bear Fire Safe Council community meeting is August 24th, 2021 at 12 p.m., held at Fire Station 281, Big Bear Lake.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Speaker: Chief Willis

Chief Willis provided an update on the Ambulance Operator Model. At this time, we have 13 ambulance operators employed. He informed the Board an Ordinance will soon be introduced that will reference both City of Big Bear Lake and San Bernardino County Ordinance that will allow a Notice of Pendency to be placed on the title of the properties that continue to have a wood shake/shingle roof. He updated the Board stating the Department has expended \$53,646 towards Covid-19 expenses. To date, the Department has been reimbursed \$31,939 and is actively seeking reimbursement revenues at every opportunity.

Staff responded to questions from board members. Board members provided comment.

Discussion Ensued:

Concerns towards the wood shake/shingle Notice of Pendency's were expressed. One comment was why can the Department remove a hazardous tree without owners' consent, after letters are sent following Department policy regarding the issue, but the Department can't do the same with a shake/shingle roof. It was stated that the cloud on the title could sit for 20-30 years along with the shake/shingle roof before something is done. Also questioned were rooftops covered in pine needles, is there a current ordinance in place regarding such issues?

Chief Willis and Legal Counsel Sanchez answered.

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

Speaker: Kristin Mandolini, Director of Business Services

The year-to-date Financial Report through June 2021 was presented.

FIRE AUTHORITY CONSENT CALENDAR (FA2 was removed for further discussion)

- FA1. Approval of Demands – Check Issue Date 05/01/21 through 06/30/21 in the amount of \$2,021,878.36**
- FA3. Receive and File Big Bear Fire Department Monthly Activity Reports for May and June 2021.**
- FA4. Board Approval to Rescind Resolution No. BBFA2015-011 and adopt a Resolution to Appoint and Designate a New Fire Authority Board Secretary. Board consideration of Resolution BBFA2021-003 to appoint Chardelle Smith to serve as Secretary of the Board of Directors of the Big Bear Fire Authority, and rescind Resolution No. BBFA2015-011.**

Approved the following Resolution entitled:

RESOLUTION NO. BBFA2021-003

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY, A CALIFORNIA JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY, APPOINTING AND DESIGNATING AN AUTHORITY SECRETARY AND RESCIND RESOLUTION NO. BBFA2015-011.

Action: Motion by Director Herrick, seconded by Director Mote to approve the Consent as follows:

AYES: Green, Herrick, Lee, Melnick, Mote, Oxandaboure, Russo, Walsh, Ziegler, and Putz
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

FA2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from the June 1, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Big Bear Fire Authority.

Director Walsh noticed under Others Present, General Counsel Joseph Sanchez and Legal Counsel Isabel Safie were at the meeting when they were not in attendance. Staff was directed to update the minutes by removing them from the document before finalizing it.

Action: Motion by Director Walsh, seconded by Director Oxandaboure to update the minutes from the June 1, 2021 Regular Meeting as follows:

AYES: Green, Herrick, Lee, Melnick, Mote, Oxandaboure, Russo, Walsh, Ziegler, and Putz
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

PUBLIC HEARING

FA5. Public Hearing of Proposed Ordinance BBFA2021-001 Authorizing Establishment and Adoption of Ambulance Service Fees

Board consideration of conducting a Public Hearing to adopt Ordinance No. BBFA2021-001 that increases an Ambulance Service Fee schedule for Big Bear Fire Authority based on rates set by Inland Counties Emergency Medical Authority (ICEMA).

Speaker: Kristin Mandolini, Director of Business Services

Ms. Mandolini stated every year, ICEMA publishes allowable rates for Ambulance services. This year, the rate increased by 5%.

Action: At the hour of 7:13 p.m., Chairman Putz opened the public hearing. Hearing no public comment, at the hour of 7:13, Chairman Putz closed the public hearing.

Action: Motion by Director Green; seconded by Director Walsh, approving staff recommendation to wave the full reading and adopt Resolution No. BBFA2021-001 adopting the increased Ambulance Service Fee Schedule.

AYES: Green, Herrick, Lee, Melnick, Mote, Oxandaboure, Russo, Walsh,
Ziegler, and Putz
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

NEW BUSINESS

BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY DISCUSSION ITEMS

FA6. Auction of Surplus Fire Apparatus and Miscellaneous Equipment

Board consideration of authorizing the Fire Chief to discharge the five vehicles and miscellaneous items as surplus equipment and authorize the Fire Chief to sell at auction to the highest bidder. Proceeds from the sale will be deposited to the Authority's General fund.

Speaker: Jeff Willis

Chief Willis stated with the recent board approval of purchase and replacement of certain fleet vehicles, this now requires the discharge of aged and worn vehicles. It is also known that there is a shortage in number of ambulances staffed daily County wide. Other fire agencies within San Bernardino are looking to purchase ambulances because they do not own any. When there is draw down in the ambulance private sector, the fire department can place firefighters on the ambulance and continue to serve the community.

Discussion Ensued:

A question was asked how the selection of an auctioneer is handled as well as timeframe and management during this process?

Chief Willis answered.

Action: Motion by Director Walsh; seconded by Director Mote, amending staff recommendation and to sell surplus to another fire agency within San Bernardino County, or to sell at auction to the highest bidder.

Said motion was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Green, Herrick, Lee, Melnick, Mote, Oxandaboure, Russo, Walsh,
Ziegler, and Putz
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

FA7. Revision of Big Bear Fire Authority Bylaws

Board consideration of approving change to the Bylaws regarding meeting location and time, as presented in Attachments A and B.

Speaker: Jeff Willis

Chief Willis stated at the June 1st Regular Board meeting, staff was directed to book Hofert Hall for future Board meetings. This now requires change in the Bylaws to reflect the change in governance, address, and meeting time.

Staff responded to questions from board members, Board members provided comment.

Discussion Ensued:

A question was asked regarding the fees for using Hofert Hall as well as if the meetings could go back to 5 p.m. rather than 6 p.m. It was suggested the City of Big Bear Lake absorb the fees of Big Bear Fire Department use of Hofert Hall as well as the contracted amount for indexing and archiving of meetings. It was generally expressed this was thought to be a temporary meeting location until Fire Authority Board meetings could be held at Station 281, Headquarters.

Director Ziegler stepped away at 7:18 p.m., returned at 7:24 p.m.

Action: Motion by Director Lee; seconded by Vice Chairman Green, amending staff recommendation and to request the City of Big Bear Lake to absorb the cost as an in-kind service of Big Bear Fire Authority use of Hofert Hall, or default to attachment a and b.

- The Chief was directed to discuss fees for use of Hofert Hall with the City Manager.

Said motion was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Green, Herrick, Lee, Melnick, Mote, Oxandaboure, Russo, Walsh,
Ziegler, and Putz
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

FA9. Appointment of a Standing Administrative Committee

Board consideration of the Board Chair to select one director to fill the vacant seat, who will assist in the further development of further Department strategies, and for the Board approve the appointments by vote.

Speaker: Chairman Putz

Chairman Putz called Director Mote for appointment of the vacant position in the Administrative Committee for the remainder of 2021.

AYES: Green, Herrick, Lee, Melnick, Mote, Oxandaboure, Russo, Walsh,
Ziegler, and Putz
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

FA10. Appointment of a Fire Code Appeals Board

Board consideration of the Board Chair to select one member from the Fire Authority Board, if necessary, to fill the vacant seat, along with the Chairman, as the Appeals Board. Pursuant to Section 108.1 of Ordinance No. BBFA2014-001, and for the Board approve the appointments by vote.

Speaker: Chairman Putz

The Bylaws of the Fire Authority state the Chairman of the Board shall serve on the appeals board, therefore, by default, Chairman Putz was placed on the Fire Code Appeals Board.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

DIRECTORS' CLOSING COMMENTS

Director Lee advised the Board that he has had discussions with Big Bear Lake residence who strongly support the Fire Department. A concern is the Fire Department currently underfunded. He states there may be a citizen initiative to increase the TOT collected by the City of Big Bear Lake to 4%, with 2% of that going to the Fire Department. That will amount to \$1.6 - \$2 million dollars a year. Wildfires knows no boundaries. Our priority is the security and safety of this community. Director Lee requested Chief Willis make himself available to speak to the community regarding this potential income and how it can benefit the Department.

Director Herrick announced Congressman Jerry Lewis recently passed away on July 15. Jerry was the Chairman of Appropriations in Washington and loved Big Bear. He requested the meeting be adjourned in the name of Congressman Jerry Lewis.

Director Mote requested an update on a recently discussed issue within closed session.

Vice Chairman Green congratulated Chairman Putz with his new position as Board Chair and welcomed Director Mote to the Administrative Committee. He also welcomed Director Melnick and suggested she meet with Chief Willis to discuss the Fire Departments history and how it became one agency.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Fire Authority at this session, Chairman Putz adjourned the meeting in the name of Congressman Jerry Lewis at 7:42 p.m.



Chardelle Smith
Acting Board Secretary

APPROVED AT THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 5, 2021