
**BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF
October 5, 2021**

A Regular Meeting of the Big Bear Fire Authority was called to order by Chairman Putz at 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, October 5, 2021, Pursuant to Government Code Section 54953(e)(1)(A), relating to a proclaimed State of Emergency.

OPEN SESSION

Board Members Present

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

Board Members Excused:

Director Rick Herrick
Director Alan Lee

Others Present:

Jeff Willis, Fire Chief
Assistant Chief/Fire Marshal Mike Maltby
Board Secretary Chardelle Smith
Director of Business Services Kristin Mandolini
Captain Norman Dykesten
Engineer Andrew Crane
Engineer Bill Schlosser
Authority 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

At the hour of 4:32, p.m., Chairman Putz adjourned to Closed Session.

At the hour of 4:48, p.m., Chairman Putz Adjourned Closed Session.

At the hour of 5:00, p.m., Chairman Putz re-opened Regular Session

OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

Moment of Silence: Observed

Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Chairman Putz

ROLL CALL

REPORT ON CLOSED SESSION

No reportable action.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

The Fire Authority's Administrative Office will be closed:

- Thursday, November 11, 2021 in observance of Veterans Day and will re-open on Monday, November 15, 2021, at 8:00 a.m.
- Thursday, November 25, 2021 in observance of Thanksgiving and will re-open on Monday, November 29, 2021, at 8:00 a.m.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Recognition for 5 Years of Service

- Firefighter/Paramedic Elijah Covarrubio
- Firefighter/Paramedic Robert Stapp
- Firefighter/EMT Ross Winfield

Speaker: Chief Willis

2. Apparatus Spec Committee Update

- On-Site Pre-Construction for Pierce Type 1 Structure Engine

Speaker: Norman Dykesten

3. Preparedness and Response to Wildfires

Speaker: Chief Willis

DIRECTORS' GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

None

CHIEF'S REPORT

Speaker: Chief Willis

Chief Willis provided an update on the Ambulance Operator model. At this time, the Department has 12 Ambulance Operator employees. The Department has been awarded two separate grants allowing 19 new blue-tooth capable handheld radios to be purchased to replace the outdated radios in use today. Chief Willis stated FEMA has recently updated their parameters of Covid-19 eligible items to be reimbursed and Cal OES has assigned a representative for assistance during the reimbursement application process. Chief commented on the recent fraudulent charges that was discovered on October 19, 2020.

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

Discussion Ensued:

It was asked if those involved in the fraudulent charges are operating across state lines, does that not become a federal offense?

Chief Willis answered

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

None

FIRE AUTHORITY CONSENT CALENDAR

- FA1. Approval of Demands – Check Issue Date 07/01/21 through 08/31/21 in the amount of \$2,507,408.20**
- FA2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from the August 3, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Big Bear Fire Authority.**
- FA3. Receive and File Big Bear Fire Department Monthly Activity Reports for July and August 2021.**
- FA4. Acknowledge Receipt of Annual Inspection Report for Certain Educational and Residential Structures**

Board consideration of adopting Resolution No. BBFA2021-005 acknowledging receipt of inspection report and designates October of each year as the designated time for the Board of Directors to receive the annual report for the prior year.

It was asked if code enforcement from the City of Big Bear Lake and San Bernardino County are handling the Air B&B etc. inspections, or does the department handle them?

Chief Maltby answered.

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

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

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

None

PUBLIC HEARING

None

NEW BUSINESS

BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY DISCUSSION ITEMS

FA5. Approval of Amendment No. 4 to Fire Chief Employment Agreement

Board consideration to authorize the Chairman of the Board to execute, Amendment No. 4 to the Fire Chief Employment Agreement that extends the Fire Chief's contract through June 30, 2025.

Speaker: Chairman Putz

Chairman Putz read aloud the amendment that extends the existing provision of the current employment contract to June 30, 2025. The Fire Chief will receive a 9% salary increase retroactive to July 1, 2021. The base salary is increased to \$201,613.30, annually. Subsequent years of July 2022, and July 2023, the Fire Chief will receive additional 3% raise each year based on satisfactory performance. The Fire Chief may be intitled to a cost of living increase each year based solely on the Board discretion.

Chief Willis expressed his thanks and support from the Board. He corrected the fiscal impact to \$201,617.30.

On behalf of the Board and the community, Chairman Putz thanked Chief Willis for his continued service.

Action: Motion by Director Walsh; seconded by Vice Chairman Green, to approve staff recommendation to authorize the Chairman of the Board to execute Amendment No.4 to the Fire Chief's employment agreement.

Said motion was approved by the following vote:

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

FA6. Tax And Revenue Anticipation Note from First Foundation Bank

Board consideration of adopting Resolution No. BBFA2021-006 and authorizing to enter into agreement between the Authority and First Foundation Bank for borrowing of funds for fiscal year 2021-22.

Introduction: Chief Willis
Speaker: Ms. Mandolini

Chief Willis stated the purpose for this stemmed from the overtime through payroll due to Covid-19 cases within the department, which resulted in vacancy backfill at an overtime rate, as well as injuries within the department, and the impact from mutual aid due to a very busy fire season. This is to cover the cash flow until the property tax revenue and ambulance revenue are received.

Ms. Mandolini gave an overview of the loan. It will not exceed 2 million dollars, it has an interest rate of 2.85%, and the unused portion will be charged a quarter of a percent interest. The department utilized legal and municipal advisors during the planning process.

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

Discussion Ensued:

It was asked why the department was requesting such a large amount, knowing the full amount would not be used and having a fee attached for the unused amount. Also asked was how much the consultant's cost was. It was requested that during the next budget discussion, the target for increasing the reserve account be addressed.

Ms. Mandolini answered.

Action: Motion by Vice Chairman Green; seconded by Director Walsh, to approve staff recommendation authorizing Resolution No. BBFA2021-006 and to enter into an agreement between Authority and First Foundation Bank.

Said motion was approved by the following vote:

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

FA7. Purchase of Pierce Arrow XT Mid Mount Tower from South Coast Fire Equipment

Board consideration of approving purchase from South Coast Fire Equipment, approve staff to execute a purchase contract, draft up loan documents and contracts, and return the documents to the Board for approval at the December 7, 2021 Regular Board meeting.

Introduction: Chief Willis
Speaker: Captain Dykesten

Chief stated this was presented to the Administrative Committee on Thursday, September 29. The Apparatus Spec Committee has been meeting since February to properly spec out the purchase of a new ladder truck. This purchase will give the department two ladder trucks total, the one in use now will be put into reserve.

Captain Dykesten, Engineer Schlosser, and Engineer Crane presented a power point presentation regarding the potential purchase of a new ladder truck from Sutphen, Ferrara, or Pierce.

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

Discussion Ensued:

Questions asked were at maximum reach, what is the maximum allowed pounds in the basket, is there a safety mechanism in place during fire personnel going up or down the ladder, is there a system available for a movable tether, and what is the process and cost to complete the outfitting of the truck and be placed in service.

Captain Dykesten answered.

Appreciation and thanks were given to the Apparatus Spec Committee for all their hard work.

Director Ziegler stepped away at 6:46 p.m., returned at 6:51 p.m.

Vice Chairman Green off line @ 7:20 p.m. back at 7:21 p.m.

Action: Motion by Director Walsh; seconded by Director Melnick, to approve staff recommendation to execute a purchase agreement for the Pierce Arrow XT Mid Mount Tower, draft up loan documents, and contracts.

Said motion was approved by the following vote:

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

FA8. Potential Establishment of Standing Finance Committee

Board consideration of establishing a Finance Committee or appoint a special purpose Ad-Hoc committee with assignments that are finance centered.

Speaker: Chief Willis

Willis stated this is direction from the Board at the August 3 Regular Board meeting. This is regarding the cross over between operational vs financial discussion. He asked if the department should continue with the Administrative Committee to focus on all discussion of the department, form a Finance Committee to discuss financial issues only, or form an Ad-Hoc Committee to discuss specific tasks of finance?

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

Discussion Ensued:

Some Board members expressed a desire for a Finance Committee. With a Finance Committee, the budget and other items of purchase can be given more focus and looked at in more depth. It was suggested for scheduled quarterly meetings to discuss finance items.

The Board gave direction to staff for a pros and cons of having a Finance Committee separate from the Administrative Committee and bring that data to the December 7th Regular Board meeting for more discussion.

A vote was not taken as there was a request for more information.

FA9. Discretionary Pass-Through Charges and Cost

Board consideration to provide further direction to the Fire Chief regarding discretionary charges borne by the Authority.

Speaker: Chief Willis

Willis mentioned at the August Board meeting, it was discussed to move the Fire Authority Board meetings to Hofert Hall. He was asked to meet with the City Manager and request the City to absorb that cost. Willis stated to date he has not met with the City Manager because there are also costs from the Community Services District that the department is not asking to be absorbed.

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

Discussion Ensued:

It was mentioned the Fire Authority Board meetings were moved from Hofert Hall due to cost. A question was asked how much Hofert Hall is to facilitate an Authority Board meeting. It was suggested the cost and expenses to the department be looked at as hard cost vs soft cost and if the soft cost could be absorbed from that entity.

Staff were directed to continue with appropriating costs and allow the managers to continue discussion about hard vs soft cost.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A Fire Authority Administrative Committee Meeting was held on September 30, 2021, via zoom, represented by, Director Herrick, Director Mote, and Director Ziegler.

DIRECTORS' CLOSING COMMENTS

Director Ziegler stated an Administrative Committee meeting was held recently, Vice Chairman Green was out of commission so Director Mote took over and did a fantastic job. He thanked Director Mote for stepping up and handling that. He made note that he won't be here the next few weeks due to a scheduled knee replacement.

Director Walsh stated he thought we moved our meeting place to save money and in the foul weather months, it makes it difficult to drive across town.

Vice Chairman Green apologized to the Administrative Committee for not being in attendance. He mentioned he just had surgery and thought he could make it.

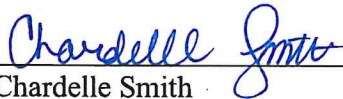
Director Mote- Thanked Al and mentioned we missed you, John. She stated Director Herricks take away from the Administrative Committee meeting was to continue the request to allocate the funds rather than having general reserves.

Director Oxandaboure commented about holding the meetings at the City vs the Fire Station. This meeting would end at 10:30 if started at City Hall. The meetings are held earlier at the Fire Station.

Chairman Putz suggested we consider the meeting location discussion issue at a future point. Putz mentioned several Board members were at League of California City's Annual conference in Sacramento. There were two occasions he randomly came across people who shared experience with our fire organization personnel. One was with our County Fire Chief who complimented our organization and our Fire Chief. It was good confirmation of our organization. The other was at an event, the speaker shared how he and his family were in Big Bear this last winter and his wife had a snow playing accident. The gentleman went at length regarding the good care he received from our fire personnel for his wife, his children, and himself. He thanked all of Big Bear Fire for their good work.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Fire Authority at this session, Chairman Putz adjourned the meeting at 8:27 p.m.



Chardelle Smith
Board Secretary

APPROVED AT THE MEETING OF DECEMBER 7, 2021