

---

**BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY  
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF  
JUNE 18, 2019**

---

A Special Meeting of the Big Bear Fire Authority was called to order by Chairman Jahn at 5:00 p.m., on Tuesday, June 18, 2019, at 41090 Big Bear Boulevard, Big Bear Lake, California.

**OPEN SESSION**

Moment of Silence: Observed

Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Director Caretto

Board Members Present: Chairman Bill Jahn  
Vice Chairman John Green  
Director David Caretto  
Director Rick Herrick  
Director Karyn Oxandaboure  
Director John Russo  
Director Randall Putz  
Director Larry Walsh  
Director Al Ziegler

Board Members Absent: Director Bob Jackowski

Others Present: Jeff Willis, Fire Chief  
Mike Maltby, Assistant Chief  
Kristin Mandolini, Senior Finance Officer  
Dawn Marschinke, Board Secretary

**PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS**

None

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

*Any person may appear and be heard in support or opposition to the proposals at the time of the meeting. If you challenge the action in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues which you or someone else raised at the public meeting described in the notice or in written correspondence delivered to the Fire Authority at or before the public meeting.*

**DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS**

**FA1. APPROVAL OF AN ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE TO ACHIEVE DESIRED LEVEL OF SERVICE**

Board consideration of approving an assessment structure to Strengthen Service and initiate consultant work to develop a rate and method of apportionment for establishment of a Community Facilities District (CFD).

Speaker: Chief Willis

This item was brought back before the board for consideration of the changes that were made to the assessment structure for establishment of a CFD, per the board's direction at the Board meeting on June 4, 2019. Specifically, the board asked the Ad Hoc Committee to reconsider:

- The assessment percentage rate per square foot increasing residential and decreasing the commercial rate, to potentially make them the same
- A fee for vacant residential and commercial parcels

The Ad Hoc Committee is recommending the board approve the assessment structure as presented in Item No. FA1. The biggest differences from the structure presented on June 4 are as follows:

- Residential property assessment increased from .05 per square foot to .06 per square foot
- Commercial property assessment decreased from .10 per square foot to .06 per square foot
- Residential and commercial vacant property assessment was added and at \$35 annually
- Hotel, motel, timeshare and private home rental assessment was reduced from \$115 to \$78

**Board discussion ensued:**

Chief Willis explained that there would be an exemption for property owners that are classified as low-income seniors. For the purposes of this CFD, low-income is based on the "low-income" level established by San Bernardino County. The Ad Hoc Committee recommends the age to be considered a senior be set at 62 years.

A new development fee would be established when a property goes from a vacant to improved parcel or additions to existing structures are done. This fee is paid when pulling a permit. This CFD assessment is .76 per square foot for new residential and commercial construction, based on usable interior space. The total estimated revenue from this source will help answer the future response obligations caused by new construction. Revenue would be targeted towards the cost of new facility and fleet capital items. This anticipated revenue is based on

full build-out of total current vacant parcels with an estimated average 2,000 square foot new building. There are restrictions as to what impact fees can be used for, primarily they are for capital improvements with some limited exceptions. Further restrictions could be placed on the fees to ensure they are spent only for facilities, engine and truck if the board desires.

**Public comment ensued:**

Members of the public spoke regarding the proposed Community Facilities District.

Chief Willis responded to questions:

- The CFD will likely be tied to the Consumer Price Index and considered by the board each year.
- The Ad Hoc Committee has not addressed the issue of providing an exemption from the CFD for low-income disabled persons on a fixed income.

**Board discussion continued:**

The comment was made that of the \$750,000 proposed as Big Bear Mountain Resorts (BBMR) resort tax for the CFD, this should be all inclusive, and not charge them a separate fee for their commercial buildings as well.

Senior Finance Officer Mandolini responded that the impact of removing the commercial building charge for BBMR would be approximately \$40,000.

It is recommended that the Ad Hoc Committee consider the option of including low-income disabled persons along with the low-income senior. And, if the impact is too large, perhaps the Committee could consider reductions, rather than a full exemption.

There are still some numbers that need refinement. Therefore, this is may not be the final CFD assessment structure that will be put to the vote in March. However, based on the looming deadline, the Ad Hoc Committee established this baseline CFD. The Ad Hoc Committee will continue to work out further details based on board recommendations. Approving this structure gives direction to staff and to the consultant on how to proceed. And this will be the default structure if the board is unable to work out further details by the August 6, 2019 Board meeting. Any of the Ad Hoc Committee recommended revisions will come back before the board for approval. If nothing new is approved prior to August 6, this will be the final plan.



**Action:** Motion by Director Putz, seconded by Director Green to approve staff recommendation as follows:

1. The board approve the assessment structure presented in Attachment A, Strengthen Service, to initiate consultant work for development of a rate and method of apportionment required to be finalized by the August 6, 2019 board meeting as part of the CFD development process.
2. The board approve the CFD to include an exemption for low income seniors.
3. The board authorize the inclusion of an annual cost adjustment tied to the consumer price index.
4. The board authorize the inclusion of impact fees for new construction at time of building permit issuance to help meet future capital purchase needs.
5. Authorize the Fire Chief to further discuss with business stakeholders, alternate means and methods of visitor charges to support service demand from this population demographic.

**Board discussion continued:**

This past winter has been a very successful winter for the business community who benefited from increased visitor traffic and increased income. The Fire Authority has not fared as well. They have had an increase in incident demand with flat funding. One of the advantages of adding a component to the department's revenue source that is based on a Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) is that there is the ability to adjust funding based on visitor levels. And this provides an opportunity to create a measure that is palatable to the business community and provides the opportunity for businesses to support the valley and not be put in a position where they are exploiting the rest of the community. There is a gas pedal that can be used to encourage visitors to come to Big Bear and there is a brake pedal that can be used if the community infrastructure is unable to pace with visitor demand. We are having these discussions now because the visitor impact is out of balance with existing infrastructure. This tax measure should help the community step-up and lay the groundwork to enjoy a robust visitor population.

The Fire Authority has received letters from BBMR and the resort rental industry objecting to how the CFD was structured after the June 4 Board meeting. Discussions are ongoing.

**Action:** Motion was approved by the following vote:

AYES:	Caretto, Green, Herrick, Oxandaboure, Putz, Russo, Walsh, Ziegler, and Jahn
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	Jackowski
ABSTAIN:	None

**DIRECTORS' CLOSING COMMENTS**

Vice Chairman Green thanked the staff and the Ad Hoc Committee for the hard work they have done so far. There is more fine tuning that can be done, but for the baseline, we are looking pretty good.

Director Walsh commented that he does his best to do a thorough review of the board packet to understand what the board is doing and prepare himself for board meetings. It behooves him to not make hasty decisions when talking about millions of other people's money. He was stressed when he arrived and found two handouts that he did not have access to for review.

Chief Willis reiterated the items the Ad Hoc Committee will look at as potential modifications for the assessment structure of the CFD:

- Low Income Component: Consider adding disabled persons to the low-income exemption and also look at a reduced rate as opposed to an exemption for seniors and disabled.
- BBMR Total Contribution: Consider the .06 assessment square footage assessment of BBMR commercial buildings along with the flat fee for a total dollar contribution tied to the number of responses to the resorts.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Fire Authority at this session, Chairman Jahn adjourned the meeting at 5:45 p.m.



Dawn E. Marschinke, Board Secretary

APPROVED AT THE MEETING OF AUGUST 6, 2019