
**BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF
OCTOBER 1, 2019**

A Regular Meeting of the Big Bear Fire Authority was called to order by Vice-Chairman Green at 5:00 p.m., on Tuesday, October 1, 2019, at 41090 Big Bear Boulevard, Big Bear Lake, California.

OPEN SESSION

Moment of Silence: Observed

Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Director Walsh

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

Board Members Excused: Chairman Bill Jahn

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

The Fire Authority's Administrative Office will be closed:

- Monday, November 11, 2019 in observance of Veterans Day and will re-open on Tuesday, November 12, 2019 at 8:00 a.m.
- Thursday and Friday, November 28 and 29, 2019 in observance of Thanksgiving and will re-open on Monday, December 2, 2019 at 8:00 a.m.

PRESENTATIONS

1. **Oath of Office/Pinning, Nick Mercado, Firefighter/Paramedic**
Speaker: Chief Willis, Fire Chief

2. Promotional Pinning, Kevin Cole, from Firefighter to Engineer
Speaker: Chief Willis, Fire Chief

3. Goldspotted Oak Borer
Speaker: David Haas, Forester, CAL FIRE

Director Jackowski left the meeting at 5:14 p.m. and returned at 5:17 p.m.

Staff responded to questions from board members.

DIRECTORS' GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Linda Davies of Big Bear Lake presented a check for \$1,000 to the Department to be used for equipment as her way of helping the Department and showing her appreciation.

Bob Ybarra of Sugarloaf commented on the recognition of the new hire and the promotion earlier in the meeting. He expressed his appreciation to the Department for hiring such quality individuals. He stated how proud he was of the firefighters that serve our community, and publicly thanked them.

CHIEF'S REPORT

None

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

Speaker: Kristin Mandolini, Senior Finance Officer

The Financial report for year-to-date ending August 31, 2019 was presented.

CONSENT CALENDAR

FA1. Approval of Demands – Check Issue Date 07/01/19 through 08/31/19 in the amount of \$1,947,525.15

Item No. FA1 was Removed from the Consent Calendar.

FA2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from the August 6, 2019 Regular Meeting of Big Bear Fire Authority

FA3. Receive and File Big Bear Fire Department Monthly Activity Reports for July and August 2019

Action: Motion by Director Caretto, seconded by Director Putz to approve the balance of the Consent Calendar as follows:

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

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

FA1. Approval of Demands – Check Issue Date 07/01/19 through 08/31/19 in the amount of \$1,947,525.15

Staff responded to a question from a board member.

Action: Motion by Director Caretto, seconded by Director Walsh to approve Item No. FA1 as follows:

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

FA4. Formation of Big Bear Fire Authority Community Facilities District No. 2019-1 (BBFA Fire Suppression and Emergency Services)

Speakers: Jeff Willis, Fire Chief
Andrea Roess, Consultant, DTA
Lutfi Kharuf, Legal Counsel, Best Best & Krieger

Director Putz left the meeting at 5:40 p.m. and returned at 5:43 p.m.

Consultant Andrea Roess responded to a question from a board member.

- a. Board consideration of conducting a Public Hearing on the formation of Community Facilities District No. 2019-1 (BBFA Fire Suppression and Emergency Services).

Action: At the hour of 5:56 p.m., Vice Chairman Green opened the public hearing.

Members of the public spoke regarding the formation of a Community Facilities District (CFD).

- Steven Hoppe of Big Bear City stated that he would vote in favor of the CFD but added that he does not believe it will pass. He stated that the Board should not form the CFD until they have a contingency plan to keep the Sugarloaf Station open if the measure fails. Insurance companies are waiting for anything to justify canceling policies. Closing the station and waiting for another year for a vote will not work for insurance companies.
- Bob Ybarra of Sugarloaf stated that he supports the CFD and he believes the community is ready to move forward with the CFD. He is working with a volunteer group that is going door to door sharing the facts and trying to counteract the lies being spread. Volunteers are getting a great response. Off-duty firefighters are walking with them after they get off their shift. This community has grown over the past 15 years, yet there has been no increase in staffing. He stated that we need this CFD to support the Department, or this community could be another "Paradise."
- Patrice Duncan of Sugarloaf stated that she is the volunteer coordinator of a grassroots organization called Friends of Big Bear Fire Department that has partnered with Big Bear Professional Firefighters Association. They are also partnering with other agencies to help get the CFD message out. She stated that the CFD is brilliant and shares the burden fairly among residents, visitors and commercial businesses. While walking door to door, volunteers found large support once they were presented with the facts. The biggest challenge they face is the misinformation about the issues.

Action: At the hour of 6:07 p.m., Vice Chairman Green closed the public hearing.

Action: Board Secretary Dawn Marschinke reported that she received 13 protests. No majority protest has been received.

Discussion ensued among Board members regarding the possibility of seeking proposals from alternative service providers to provide fire and paramedic service, or other contingencies for providing service to this community, and moving forward with the

CFD in case the CFD fails at the ballot in March. Consideration was given to placing this topic before the Administrative Committee or the Ad Hoc Committee for further discussion.

- b. Board consideration of approving Resolution No. BBFA2019-008 establishing the Big Bear Fire Authority Community Facilities District No. 2019-1, and the boundaries thereof, and taking other actions relating thereto.

Action: Motion by Director Putz to send the discussion of the complete range of contingency options to the Administrative Committee and report back to the Board at the December Board meeting.

Action: Amended Motion by Director Herrick, seconded by Director Putz, to approve Resolution No. BBFA2019-008 and direct the Administrative Committee to look into contingencies to the CFD and bring results back to the full Board when ready:

RESOLUTION NO. BBFA2019-008

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY, A CALIFORNIA JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY, ESTABLISHING THE BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY COMMUNITY FACILITIES DISTRICT NO. 2019-1 (BBFA FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY SERVICES), AND THE BOUNDARIES THEREOF, AND TAKING OTHER ACTIONS RELATED THERETO

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

- c. Board consideration of approving Resolution No. BBFA2019-009 calling a special election and submitting to the voters of Community Facilities District No. 2019-1 a proposition with respect to the annual levy of special taxes within said Community Facilities District No. 2019-1 to pay the costs of certain services to be provided by the Community Facilities District No. 2019-1 and establishing an appropriations limit for said Community Facilities District No. 2019-1.

Action: Motion by Director Caretto, seconded by Director Walsh, to approve Resolution No. BBFA2019-009

RESOLUTION NO. BBFA2019-009

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY CALLING A SPECIAL ELECTION AND SUBMITTING TO THE VOTERS OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES DISTRICT NO. 2019-1 (BBFA FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY SERVICES) A PROPOSITION WITH RESPECT TO THE ANNUAL LEVY OF SPECIAL TAXES WITHIN SAID COMMUNITY FACILITIES DISTRICT TO PAY THE COSTS OF CERTAIN SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED BY THE COMMUNITY FACILITIES DISTRICT AND ESTABLISHING AN APPROPRIATIONS LIMIT FOR SAID COMMUNITY FACILITIES DISTRICT

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

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

FA5. Fire Authority 2020 Meeting Calendar

Board consideration of approving the proposed 2020 Board Meeting Calendar and adding two Budget Workshops on April 15 and May 20, 2020.

Action: Motion by Director Jackowski, seconded by Director Caretto to approve staff recommendation.

Director Caretto stated that he had a conflict and will be unavailable for the two scheduled meetings in April.

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

DIRECTORS' CLOSING COMMENTS

Director Ziegler stated that he met with a top San Bernardino County official. He is concerned about the direction the County is taking in considering eliminating the County Road Commission, the County Park Commission and Berm Removal for the Sugarloaf area. Now our Board is looking at eliminating the local fire department. He does not like the idea of us losing local government and he cannot believe what he heard tonight from the Board and where they are headed. At some point we need to wake up and do the right thing.

Director Putz said that to better understand the San Bernardino County options, he watched the County Board of Supervisor's meeting from last week and read multiple articles in order to understand the financial situation the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District is facing. He was told by a person from the County that they would not want to be part of the County if they were us considering the budget woes they are going through. The County is also considering an additional parcel tax. He stated that it could be a good idea to have a contingency plan but be mindful of not letting that contingency plan get in the way of the current effort we have. These matters move very slowly and that is by design to let the public weigh-in. It is not realistic to think we will have all the answers to these contingency questions in a month or two considering it has taken years to get to this point. He also stated that he did not want a contingency plan to get in the way of what the Department is doing with the CFD. It is not realistic to have an answer to these questions in the limited timeframe we are working with. We need to give the citizens the opportunity to vote for what service they want and what they want to pay for.

Director Oxandaboure stated that what the Department is putting on the ballot is what the community has asked for. That is for the visitors, businesses and ski areas pay their fair share. This is so important. Having been on the Ad Hoc Committee, she believes this is the best option.

Director Caretto thanked everyone who has come out to all these meetings. He knows it is hard to sit through all this discussion.

Director Walsh pointed out that our consultants say that Big Bear is a conservative community and they do not look favorably on the measure passing. He added that he does not want to wake up on the morning of March 4th and not know what our next step is.

Director Herrick stated that he looked forward to the Administrative Committee meeting.

Director Russo stated that he too sat on the Ad Hoc Committee, and after three years of discussion, he believes this is the best way.

Director Jackowski said that the election in March will give the Board a great deal of direction in which way it should be going.

Vice Chairman Green thanked the public and community volunteers and for going door to door to educate residents on the issues. We will continue with outreach and public education. He asked Chief Willis, considering all the insurance cancellations, did the Department's ISO rating change?

Chief Willis responded, no. The Department's public protection class remains the same. The Department moved from a Class 4 to a Class 3 as a result of consolidation. However, insurance companies decided to spread the risk throughout California because of the recent fires in the west. He does not know what the answer is but stated it should be clear if insurance companies are canceling insurance, a logical response should be to increase fire protection and community risk efforts.

Vice Chairman Green further commented that it is not something that we are doing here that is driving insurance prices up. Our ISO rating has come down thanks to the hard work of the fire department which should result in lower rates. Unfortunately, we are tied to other communities across the State. As a result of other devastating fires within the State, insurance companies are spreading the cost.

Director Jackowski stated that he got insurance at a better rate for his new house and does not know what the problem is.

Director Ziegler stated that there is no way he would like to see the East end of the Valley go to County. We have got a choice and he is responsible for what happens on the East end and what they might want to do. If the City of Big Bear Lake ever wants to go their own way, the East end has a say if they want to go to County. They still have the property and buildings.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Fire Authority at this session, Vice Chairman Green adjourned the meeting at 7:01 p.m.



Dawn E. Marschinke, Board Secretary

APPROVED AT THE MEETING OF DECEMBER 3, 2019