
**BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY
MINUTES FOR THE SPECIAL BOARD MEETING OF
January 29, 2018**

A Special Meeting of the Big Bear Fire Authority was called to order by Chairman Green at 3:03 p.m., on Monday, January 29, 2018, at 41090 Big Bear Boulevard, Big Bear Lake, California.

OPEN SESSION

Moment of Silence: Observed

Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Director Ziegler

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

Board Members Excused: Director Bob Jackowski
Director Karyn Oxandaboure

Staff Present: Jeff Willis, Fire Chief
Shirley Holt, Senior Finance Officer
Dawn Marschinke, Fire Board Secretary
Jamie Gustason, HR/Payroll Coordinator
Brian Parham, Battalion Chief

Other Member Agencies Present: Mary Reeves, General Manager, Big Bear City Community Services District

Vice Chairman Jahn arrived at 3:25 p.m.

PRESENTATIONS

- Discussion of possible organizational structure and funding models for the Fire Authority, Kathleen Rollings-McDonald, representing the San Bernardino County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)

Executive Director Kathleen Rollings-McDonald from LAFCO answered questions developed by the Fire Authority's Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee, as they may apply to the Fire Authority and member agencies when deciding organizational structures and funding models.

1. What options does the Fire Authority have for governing structures and can the governing structure be by appointment in an expanded district?
 - a. To keep the governing structure as-is, Ms. Rollings-McDonald recommends keeping the Fire Authority as-is; it is a functioning structure. However, to address funding issues, annexation of Big Bear City Community Services District (CSD) into Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District (FPD) is the easiest option. She stated that the Fire Authority does not have the ability to implement special taxes.
 - b. FPD is a subsidiary district of the City. The City Council sits as the Fire District Board. With the expansion, FPD can no longer be a subsidiary district.
 - c. The new Board does not have to be selected by District, but it probably would be.
 - d. FPD could expand to include CSD and potentially Fawnskin. The expanded district would have a choice of a governing structure and the number of board members defined in the expansion plan, and can be either:
 - i. Elected based on districts.
 - ii. Appointed by the Big Bear Lake City Council and the County Board of Supervisors (BOS) based on population within their boundaries, per Health and Safety Code 1.38.37. The BOS controls and makes appointment for all unincorporated areas. CSD can make recommendations, but CSD Board members cannot sit on two boards; therefore, they could not sit on the expanded district board and the CSD Board.
 - iii. Established through special legislation required at the state level to change the appointment process (this process is opposed by CAL LAFCO). Ms. Rollings-McDonald noted that Senator Scott Wilk wrote special legislation for Castaic and Newhall water districts to create a new valley-wide water agency in the Santa Clarita Valley where they defined their own electoral districts and governing board.
 - e. The ground ambulance service would also move to the FPD if CSD is annexed.
2. What are the Fire Authority's options for funding parity?
 - a. Chief Willis stated that ad valorem property tax revenues for CSD are 7.5% and 15.5% for FPD, of the 1% collected. When adding CSD's parcel

tax to their property tax, CSD and FPD come fairly close to equal. Ms. Rollings-McDonald stated that the only way to adjust equity is to change the parcel tax, but the general ad valorem is not going to change.

- b. A blended ad valorem rate across CSD and FPD is not a feasible alternative for funding.
 - c. Parity does not exist with ad valorem property tax. Neither end of the Valley will ever bring in the same amount of money.
 - d. The only way to get close to funding parity is to create a new or added parcel tax which is voted on by registered voters, not property owners. CSD could eliminate the existing parcel tax and create a new tax; or, add a second parcel tax over and above the first. According to Ms. Rollings-McDonald, each member agency would have its own tax measure and would have to support the parcel tax in separate votes for it to pass. Chief Willis stated that the Department's legal counsel advised that the Fire Authority can conduct a parcel tax vote using the existing authorities of its member agencies.
 - e. Ms. Rollings-McDonald recommends a flat parcel tax rather than percentage tax for perceived fairness by constituents. Most flat-rate taxes are the same for each parcel. Owners of multiple parcels can consolidate into one parcel; thereby, paying only one parcel tax rather than a tax on multiple parcels. This levels taxes out so that everyone pays the same tax.
 - f. Revenue and Taxation Code 99 provides that tax money coming from CSD to the Fire Authority will be based on existing cost of service. CSD is obligated to move that parcel tax to the FPD based on the tax code.
 - g. Retirement liability would move to the annexing agency. If San Bernardino County Fire (County Fire) annexed the Fire Authority, the retirement obligations would move to County Fire.
 - h. A parcel tax could be approved in the FPD jurisdiction, then CSD could be annexed. CSD would inherit the parcel tax through annexation if less than 25% of registered voters protest the annexation. If 25%-50% protest, it goes to an election. If greater than 50% protest, the annexation is terminated.
3. What are LAFCO's thoughts on peripheral communities in an expanded district?
- a. LAFCO believes there should be a single fire agency for the Valley as a whole, including Fawnskin. There would be great value in this model.
 - b. If the Fire District desired to expand through annexation of Fawnskin, and San Bernardino County Fire desired instead to annex the Fire District, LAFCO is responsible for evaluating both plans for service equally.
 - c. In 2005-2008, during the County Fire reorganization, County Fire committed to not objecting to the annexation of territory within another independent fire service provider's sphere of influence, although that

commitment has not yet been tested, except for the Baldwin Lake annexation. County Fire did object to that annexation.

- d. LAFCO favors local control for critical services like the fire service.
- e. Arrowbear, Running Springs and Green Valley Lake are a single sphere of influence. LAFCO would not try to bring them into an expanded fire district.

4. How would LAFCO decide which ending structure prevails, e.g. San Bernardino County vs. an expanded fire district.
 - a. LAFCO would evaluate the Authority's plan for service. In that evaluation, LAFCO would make sure they are protecting the community. LAFCO looks at sustainability, growth, disadvantaged services areas. LAFCO can: 1) approve, 2) modify and approve or 3) deny a plan.

Chairman Green called for a break at 4:45 p.m. and called the meeting back to order at 4:55 p.m.

Discussion ensued amongst Board and Staff on how to proceed based on the information provided by Ms. Rollings-McDonald. The Board pondered the question of remaining as the existing Joint Powers Authority or with an expanded district with CSD annexation into the FPD. The Board agreed that appointments to the Board without special legislation will not be considered. Annexation with special legislation would take about one year. A tax measure would take about 1 ½ years.

ACTION: Chief Willis will confirm Fire Authority's ability to conduct a parcel tax vote with special legislation to determine Board structure.

ACTION: Chief Willis will map out the opinions that he has heard from the Board and bring it back to the Ad Hoc Committee for further work.

- Concept presentation and discussion on Citizens' Committee for Effective Fire Response, Chief Willis

Chief Willis presented the origins and need for established standards of cover for communities. He explained a process that has been discussed with the Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee of working with leaders in the community to help establish this Department's acceptable standards of response coverage and asked the Board for approval to start this process; ultimately, with the goal of a portion of the community group moving forward to advocate for a tax measure to fund the desired standards of response coverage.

- PulsePoint presentation and discussion, Battalion Chief Parham

Battalion Chief Parham gave a presentation to the Board of a mobile application-based tool that empowers individuals, within covered communities, with the ability to provide life-saving assistance to victims of cardiac arrest. Application users who have indicated they are trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) are notified if someone nearby is having a cardiac emergency and may require CPR and lets them know where the nearest Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is located. The user can then initiate CPR until an EMS team arrives.

Businesses and citizens of the Valley are asked to register their AED equipment with Big Bear Fire Department so that those locations can be added to the PulsePoint application.

This is a national registry and notification system that is being rolled out through ConFire, San Bernardino County's operational area dispatch provider. A community day that includes demonstration to local officials will be announced soon.

CONSENT CALENDAR

FA1. Fiscal Year 2017-18 Mid-Year Budget Adjustment

Board consideration of approving a mid-year budget adjustment for FY 2017-18 to support the new Air Ambulance program and consultant services for activities to implement and fund the Fire Protection Master Plan.

FA2. Authorization to Submit Request for Proposals for Consultant Services to Assist with Potential Preparation of Ballot Measure and Accompanying Activities to Implement and Fund the Fire Protection Master Plan

Board consideration of authorizing Staff to issue a Request for Proposals for consulting services to assist the Fire Authority in potential preparation of a ballot measure, outreach and accompanying activities to implement and fund the Fire Protection Master plan.

Motion by Director Herrick, seconded by Director Caretto to approve the Consent Calendar, and is approved as follows:

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

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

None.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further new business to come before the Fire Authority at this session, Chairman Green adjourned the meeting at 6:33 p.m.

Dawn E. Marschinke

Dawn E. Marschinke, Board Secretary

MINUTES APPROVED AT THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 6, 2018