



Big Bear Fire Authority

**BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY
NOTICE & AGENDA OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 9, 2024
10:00 A.M.**

To: Board Chair Larry Walsh
Director Rick Herrick
Director Bob Rowe
Vice Chair Kendi Segovia

Fire Chief Jeff Willis
Assistant Chief/Fire Marshal Mike Maltby
Director of Business Services Kristin Mandolini
Board Secretary Chardelle Smith
Authority Counsel Joey Sanchez
Local Media

CC: Director Michael Eagleson
Director Perri Melnick
Director Bynette Mote
Director Randall Putz
Director John Russo
Director Al Ziegler

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that a meeting of the Finance Committee of Big Bear Fire Authority will be held on Tuesday, January 9, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. This meeting will be held in the Emergency Operations Conference Room at Big Bear Fire Department located at 41090 Big Bear Boulevard, Big Bear Lake, California; said meeting being called pursuant to Section 54956 of the Government Code of the State of California for the purpose of considering the following matters:

OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

MOMENT OF SILENCE / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

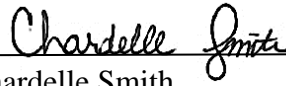
ROLL CALL

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 1. Review of Authority's Strategic Planning**
- 2. Review of Backfill of Vacancies at Overtime Rate of Time and a Half**

ADJOURN

I hereby certify under penalty of perjury, under the laws of the State of California, the foregoing agenda was posted in accordance with the applicable legal requirements. Dated this 4th day of January, 2024.



Chardelle Smith
Board Secretary

The Big Bear Fire Authority wishes to make all of its public meetings accessible to the public. If you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact Board Secretary Chardelle Smith at 909-866-7566. Notification prior to the meeting will enable the Fire Authority to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.



BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY AGENDA REPORT

Item No. 1

MEETING DATE: January 9, 2024

TO: Big Bear Fire Authority Finance Committee

FROM: Jeff Willis, Fire Chief *JW*

PREPARED BY: Chardelle Smith, Board Secretary *CS*

SUBJECT: **REVIEW OF AUTHORITY STRATEGIC PLANNING**

BACKGROUND

At the December 12, 2023 Regular Board meeting, during the Request for Proposal discussion item, it was agreed to have the Finance Committee review the Authority's vision, mission, and value statements. The Board agreed to give six months for strategic planning discussions to be held between administrative staff, labor, and board members.

DISCUSSION

Attachments A-F are from 2015 through 2017 when the strategic planning discussion amongst the Board were held. All of the document were held in draft form as focus was shifted towards increasing revenue through Measure I.

FISCAL IMPACT

None

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Finance Committee discuss and provide further direction to staff.

Attachment A: 2015 Strategic Summary of Staff and Labor meetings
Attachment B: 2015 Strategic Planning Overview
Attachment C: 2015 Strategic Planning Draft Vision and Mission Statements
Attachment D: 11/09/2015 Strategic Planning Background
Attachment E: 03/03/2015 Future Planning Discussion Document
Attachment F: 07/11/2017 Strategic Planning Presentation

Big Bear Fire Authority

Strategic Planning

Summary of Meetings with Management, Labor and Staff

Services for the Future:

- Fire Protection
- Fire Prevention
- EMS
- All Risk service agency
- Community Risk Reduction
- Community Outreach, Public Education, EMT Classes
- Improved technical rescue capability
- Hazardous Materials
- Hazardous Fuels abatement
- Fire Prevention Bureau – plan checking, business inspections, wildland prevention
- Disaster Planning / Training
- Safe Surrender
- Coordination / Support with other agencies
- Community Para-Medicine: Public / Health education during EMS calls
- Paramedics real time link to doctors to provide advanced medical treatment
- Explorer Program
- Emergency Rescue
- Wildland Prevention Plan and Wildland fire suppression
- Improved response times
- More Community involvement – attend community events
- Fire education to children / schools
- Better communication for current events
- Fire Drills for businesses
- Business Involvement / communication

Big Bear Fire Authority

Strategic Planning

Summary of Meetings with Management, Labor and Staff

Value to constituency:

- Guaranteed, immediate response to fire and medical emergencies
- Fuels reduction
- Fire Agencies are government at its best – respond in 5 minutes
- “sense of security”
- Highly reliable system
- Right people, well trained, well equipped
- Working as a “Team”
- Fire House is the “pillar of the community”
- Assurance of safety
- Vegetation, structure, Earthquakes, flooding, snow load removal, EMS
- “trust in us being there when needed”
- They can ask us for anything
- Peace of Mind
- Great Customer Service with respect, courtesy and professionalism
- Prepare community for emergencies
- Making equipment / facilities last
- Quality, trained personnel
- Quick problem solving to people’s issues – follow through
- First aid, CPR, health questions come to front door
- Open Door to help public with their problems
- Blood Pressure, etc. after hours
- Prompt inspections
- Spending public’s \$ wisely

Big Bear Fire Authority

Strategic Planning

Summary of Meetings with Management, Labor and Staff

Core Values:

- Meeting the needs of our customers – they are paying for our services
- We are here 0800 to 0800 --- outward to the public
- The public will get our very best 24/7
- Duty, Honor, Commitment
- Integrity
- Maintaining the Trust of our Community
- Fiscally Responsible
- Absolute Duty to Serve and to Act
- Commitment to ourselves, our organization, our community
- Provide highest level of care by highest trained professionals
- Maintain Employee retention to better assure professionalism
- Serve with honesty, integrity, transparency, continued education
- Actions, not words
- It is an Honor to Serve
- Fiscally responsible
- Help our community as a whole, regardless of issue
- Be ethical and professional
- Be a department our community will be proud of
- Customer service
- Transparent
- Work as a Team
- Try for the top
- Medical / fire ready
- Community involvement

Big Bear Fire Authority

Strategic Planning

Summary of Meetings with Management, Labor and Staff

Vision:

- Unified communities valleywide
- A single elected governing board with one interest - fire
- Challenges, Prosper
- Inclusive stand alone fire agency
- Continue to build into a premier fire agency
- Ready to serve as called upon to serve
- Board, management, staff united in our vision - operationally, fiscally, politically
- Public: safety, security, they will take care of me
- Whatever obstacles we see in the future, look for opportunity to serve
- We don't say "that's not our job"
- Valleywide plus corridors
- Ready to serve our public beyond the valley as necessary
- Economy, weather based tourism
- Fulltime resident
- Stand alone Fire Dept – 1+ hours time for backup to arrive
- Expanded ems response
- Continued alignment of valley services to best serve all affected
- Electronic interconnection between customers and fire staff
- Electronic could be impersonal
- Virtual Doctor / Patient treatment via paramedic
- To consolidate and develop efficiencies for fiscal sustainability of fire protection and ems service delivery within the Big Bear Valley that exceeds our community's expectations

Big Bear Fire Authority

Strategic Planning

Summary of Meetings with Management, Labor and Staff

Mission:

- Meet the needs of valley through ever changing community needs
- Challenge younger staff to Core Values and Mission
- Similar to the police's: "Protect and Serve"
- Proudly serving Big Bear Valley
- Professionalism by professionals
- Higher levels of retention builds sense of community and community involvement
- Community safety
- To better our community
- Protecting Lives and Property
- The Big Bear Fire Dept commits to serving and protecting the lives and property of the Big Bear Valley community from fires and natural disasters and provide respectful EMS delivery by trusted, highly trained professionals.

Big Bear Fire Authority

Strategic Planning

OVERVIEW

Services for the Future:

- Emergency Medical Services
- Medical Services (How do we get paid for Community ParaMedicine?)
- Fire Protection / Suppression
- Fire Prevention / Education
- Emergency / Technical Rescue
- Hazardous Materials
- Hazardous Fuels Abatement and Future Maintenance
- Disaster - Planning , Response, Mitigation
- Community Outreach, Public Education
- Safe Surrender

Value to constituency:

- Guaranteed, immediate response to fire and medical emergencies
- “Sense of Security”
- Financially Stable and prepared for our Community’s Future
- Making our equipment and facilities last and spend the public’s \$ wisely
- Fire House is the “pillar of the community”
- They can ask us for anything
- Great Customer Service with respect, compassion, courtesy and professionalism
- We prepare our Community for emergencies
- First aid, CPR, health questions come to our front door
- Help to lower home / business insurance rates
- Increase property values

Big Bear Fire Authority

Strategic Planning

OVERVIEW

Core Values:

- We are here to meet the needs of the Public – They are paying for our services
- The public will get our very best 24/7 - Skilled Compassionate service
- Duty, Honor, Commitment, Integrity, Professionalism
- Maintaining the Trust of our Community
- Fiscally Responsible - Best Possible Service at lowest possible cost
- Cost effective, nothing wasted – people , equipment, time
- Absolute Duty to Serve and to Act
- Help our community as a whole, regardless of issue
- Be ethical and professional
- Be a department our community will be proud of
- Maintain a strong connection to our Community
- Consistently improving services through continuing education, advancing technology, modernization of equipment and facilities
- We are accountable for the Quality of Services that we provide.
- We preserve life and property
- A privilege to be able to serve

Big Bear Fire Authority

Strategic Planning

OVERVIEW

Vision:

- Unified communities valley wide
- A single elected governing board with one interest – one Fire Department
- Board, management, staff united in our vision - operationally, fiscally, politically
- Expanded Medical response
- Continued alignment of valley services to best serve all affected
- To consolidate and develop efficiencies for fiscal sustainability of fire protection and medical service delivery within the Big Bear Valley that exceeds our community's expectations
- The Big Bear Fire Authority is dedicated to being the best community full service fire and medical aid agency that meets and exceeds the changing needs of the Big Bear area through development, unity and teamwork.
- To provide the entire Big Bear Valley with the highest possible quality of fire protection, fire prevention and emergency medical services in an efficient and economical manner which realizes and enhances the value of each team member and consistently strives to improve service to our community.
- Consolidation of both Fire Depts into one efficient, cohesive, and responsive organization
- Provide the best public service through training, education and modern equipment
- Move our Fire Dept into the future through productive teamwork, open and honest communication, and transparent decision making throughout our organization
- Organization driven to provide a cost effective and efficient Fire Dept Department while honoring our values, accomplishing our mission and achieving our goals
- To provide consistent Fire and Emergency Medical Services throughout the entire Big Bear Valley as efficiently and cost effectively as we are able, while striving to provide the highest level of Service to our Community.
- It is the shared vision of the members of the Big Bear Fire Authority that through active training, maintaining a motivated work force, and equipping ourselves with the best in equipment and apparatus, we will provide the best protection possible in the field of fire protection, rescue services and environmental protection for those we serve.
- Find what we need, not what we want, prioritize

Big Bear Fire Authority

Strategic Planning

OVERVIEW

Mission:

- Protecting Lives and Property
- Meet the needs of our valley as our community continues to change
- Proudly serving Big Bear Valley
- The Big Bear Fire Dept commits to serving and protecting the lives and property of the Big Bear Valley community from fires and natural disasters and provide respectful EMS delivery by trusted, highly trained professionals.
- Our Mission, for the Big Bear area, is the protection of life and property through Education, Fire Prevention, Code Enforcement and the response of highly trained personnel.
- Provide emergency medical services; prevent the loss of life, loss of property and damage to the environment from the affects of fire, natural disasters or hazardous conditions.
- It is the Mission of the Big Bear Fire Dept to Preserve Life and Property, Promote Public Safety and Foster Economic Growth through Leadership, Management and Actions in our Community.
- Our goal is to protect the life and property of our customers – the citizens and visitors of Big Bear Valley- by providing Public safety, Fire Suppression, Fire Prevention and education, Advanced Life Support Emergency Medical Services and Hazardous Incident Mitigation, at the highest level of services in a courteous and ethical manner.

Big Bear Fire Authority

Strategic Planning

OVERVIEW

Other Comments:

- Merger Goal – Save \$ and same or better service.
- Make every \$ count
- As we approach the tipping point of not enough funds, need to prioritize
- Balanced Budget, Zero based budget,
- Where every minute counts, make every \$ count
- Always answering to the taxpayer
- Reinforce the benefits of consolidation as we move forward
- Regularly revisit Mission, Vision, Services; Annual review; Actual vs. Projected, prior to budget each year
- Hospital affiliation with Loma Linda ???
- What if Hospital closed ???
- How do we meet peak demand when all ambulances are tied up ???
- Recruit, prepare and mentor employees for the future within the Fire Dept
- We can't build our Dept for peak times. Peaks measured in weeks.
- Efficiencies, better managed / coordinated F.D.
- One valley great way to start
- From efficiency (not bigger now and need more \$)
- Avalon handles peaks in summer through multi agency staffing
- JPA with ambulance companies or county fire that they will be here at peak times and operates out of stations for 3 week peak periods – Xmas, 4th of July, etc.
- Outlying areas like Lake Williams, a long way from a Fire Station and a long way between fire hydrants, a second way out is needed, parked cars blocking traffic
- Balance decision of more capacity with Risk assumed with less capacity
- Balance ethical requirements with financial reality
- BB is different in demand levels vs. a non tourist community
- 5 min vs 12 min – Equal access to responses?
- Preparedness: We trust one another to prepare in such a way that puts the Safety, Effectiveness and Reputation of the Team and the Dept first.
- Leadership: We value the Development and Application of all Personnel's Leadership skills.
- Not trying to meet everyone's wants

Big Bear Fire Authority

Strategic Planning

Draft Vision and Mission Statements Recommendation for next Steps in Strategic Planning

Draft Vision Statement:

- Big Bear Fire Authority will provide our unified community with a professional, Full Service, Fire, Medical and Emergency Services Agency in the most cost effective manner possible.

Draft Mission Statement:

- “Protecting Lives and Property”

Recommendation for next Steps in Strategic Planning:

- Based on the Fire Authority Board’s agreed upon:
 - Services for the Future,
 - Vision Statement, and,
 - Mission Statement,

produce a draft Strategic Plan for the Fire Authority which presents the Authority’s:

- Current Capability and Capacity,
- Current Service Demand,
- Projected Future Service Demand, and,
- Necessary Future Capability and Capacity.

Big Bear Fire Authority

Strategic Planning

Definition:

Strategic Planning is an organization's process of defining its strategy, direction and sphere of influence, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy.

Board: Here's where we want to go. **Strategic Plan:** Here's how we get there.

Background:

May & early June – Chief and Michael met with:

- Management and Employee Reps
- All 10 Board Members

Discussed and captured:

- Services provided
- Value to our constituents
- Core Values
- Vision Statement
- Mission Statement

June 15 Board Meeting:

- Board reviewed –
 - Complete Summary / Overview of Input received
 - Draft Vision Statement
 - Draft Mission Statement
- Board gave direction to revise Vision / Mission to Chief and Michael

June 24 Board Meeting:

- Board meeting delayed due to Chief responding to Lake Fire

VISION STATEMENT

- Future Based
- Meant to Inspire
- “Where is our business going ?”
- Show our Future Direction to employees and constituents
- What will success look like for the Big Bear Fire Authority ?

Revised Draft Vision Statement:

Recognizing that we are a 4 season Resort Community, within a unique mountain environment, Big Bear Fire Authority will anticipate and meet our Community's future service demands by proactively and strategically planning and developing our abilities and resources.

MISSION STATEMENT

- Present Based
- “Why do we exist ?”
- “What do we do ?”

Revised Draft Mission Statement:

Big Bear Fire Authority protects the Lives and Property of our Community by providing a Professional, Full Service, Fire, Medical and Emergency Services Agency in the most cost effective manner possible.

Draft Motto:

“Protecting Lives and Property”

Future Planning Discussion Document March 3, 2015



Big Bear Fire Authority

Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District Future Planning Discussion Document

March 3, 2015

Executive Summary

This document and subsequent information will be used as the basis to complete the consolidation process for the Big Bear Fire Protection District. At this point in the process, the basic operational and administrative functions of the Big Bear Fire Department have been merged and are operating in a cohesive, well functioning organization. The next phase will involve the necessary decisions and direction for the JPA Board of Directors to move forward in the following areas:

- **Geographical Boundaries**
- **Political Organization**
- **Fire Department Organization**
- **Organizational Financing**
- **Employee Considerations**

The above list is not by order of importance but merely used a reference point for considerations.

Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District Future Planning Discussion Document

March 3, 2015

Introduction

In 2012, a Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (JPA) created an agency to be known as the Big Bear Fire Authority, AKA Big Bear Fire Department, utilizing the combined organizations of the Big Bear City Community Services District (BBCCSD)/Big Bear City Fire Department and the Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District. In 2014, the BBCCSD exercised the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) process to annex an area on the east end of the Big Bear Valley, commonly known as Baldwin Lake, into the BBCCSD for fire and life safety protection only. The Baldwin Lake area has also now been included in the service area of the Big Bear Fire Department.

As proposed in 2011, there were to be three components to the consolidation process to provide valley-wide fire and life safety services to the Big Bear Valley. The steps involved in the consolidation process were intended to be implemented with well thought-out decisions that made logical sense in terms of fiscal impact, operational efficiency, and the ability to proceed in an orderly manner to permit continued daily operation of the Big Bear Fire Department without undue stress or interruption.

Phase One

The first phase involved the combining of the administrations of the Big Bear City Fire Department and the Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District. At the time this phase was initially considered, the Fire Chief for the Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District had left for another organization and there existed a need to either hire for the position or look at staffing alternatives. With the direction from the Big Bear City Community Services District Board of Directors and the Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District Board of Directors, the Fire Chief became a shared position between the two organizations. This effort resulted in cost savings and increased efficiency for both organizations.

Phase Two

The second and current phase of the consolidation has included the combining of all current fire and life safety services into a single organization. This step has resulted in personnel from both agencies wearing the same uniforms, working together regardless of employing organization, renumbering of equipment and fire stations to reflect a single organization, and countless other measures that for all outward appearances reflects a single fire organization. This phase has improved response times and eliminated the over or under assignment of

Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District Future Planning Discussion Document

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personnel and apparatus to emergency incidents by utilizing the closest available resource without regard to political jurisdiction and allowed flexibility for Big Bear Fire Department managers to staff resources with personnel from either agency in a much more efficient manner.

Phase Three

The third and final phase of the consolidation process will be the primary focus of this document. The decisions and direction provided by the members of the Fire Authority Board of Directors to the Fire Chief will be used to continue the consolidation to conclusion with the end result being the expansion of the existing Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District.

This third phase of the consolidation process is recognized by all involved parties as the most challenging and will be the most difficult to accomplish. Thus clear direction to the Fire Chief from the Fire Authority Board of Directors is warranted regarding the scope and manner of services the consolidated Big Bear Fire Department will deliver to the communities served once fully consolidated.

Geographical Boundaries

It is proposed that the geographical boundaries of the Expanded Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District (Appendix "A") will be the same as the existing response boundaries of the Ambulance Operating Area. The total area of this consideration is approximately 258 square miles (including the community of Fawnskin). This is generally considered to be Lakeview Point on Hwy 18 to the west, Barton Flats on Hwy 38 to the south, the Nelson Ridge east of Baldwin Lake on the east, and the CSA 70 boundary on Hwy 18 near the Mitsubishi Cement Corporation to the north. While the above identified boundaries are not specific at this time, for an initial discussion, this area is readily identifiable. Further definition of boundaries will require much more specific work. The current Big Bear City Fire Department protects approximately 31 square miles with the recent inclusion of the Baldwin Lake community while the current Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District is 9 square miles.

Also of note, national forest land in the San Bernardino National Forest that is within the proposed Expanded Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District will remain the overall responsibility of the U.S. Forest Service. While the U.S. Forest Service is primarily providing fire protection for areas generally considered to be wildland, the Expanded Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District will be the primary responding agency for emergency medical related incidents, traffic

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accidents on maintained and non-maintained roadways. The existing Mutual Aid Agreements with the U.S. Forest Service and each parent District will be replaced to reflect authority having jurisdiction once the Expanded Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District is created.

The other area of note, at this time, is the community generally known as Fawnskin, which is not included in the proposed boundaries of the Expanded Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District. This area is roughly defined as the north shore of Big Bear Lake along Hwy 38 from Division west to Lakeview Point on Hwy 18. Big Bear Lake itself, below the high water mark (top of Big Bear dam), will also not be included in the proposed Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District. The San Bernardino County Assessor's Office records will be used to delineate the specific areas included in the Fawnskin community.

The Expanded Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District will be responsible for ambulance requests to the Fawnskin community under the requirements of the Inland Counties Emergency Medical Agency (ICEMA).

The community of Fawnskin and the water area of Big Bear Lake are currently receiving fire and life safety protection from the San Bernardino County Fire Department. This arrangement will remain in place until such time that it may be determined that the Fawnskin community could be better served by the Expanded Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District and that the contribution of the Fawnskin community to the proposed Expanded Big Bear Lake Fire Protection would benefit the expanded district.

Political Organization

The current Fire Authority Board composition is currently represented by the Board of Directors of the Big Bear City Community Services District and the Board of Directors of the Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District, a subsidiary District of the incorporated City of Big Bear Lake, for a total of ten (10) members. There are numerous other appointed and elected boards throughout the Big Bear Valley with a majority of these other boards having an established membership of five (5) (Appendix "B").

The current Fire Authority Board provides a strong representation from both the unincorporated community services district on the east end of the valley (Big Bear City Community Services District) as well as the incorporated city on the west end of the valley (City of Big Bear Lake). These two geographic areas include a majority of the proposed service area. The other included proposed service areas are in unincorporated areas, primarily within the San

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Bernardino National Forest jurisdiction with some private land ownership but also some federally owned property.

As the consolidation discussions continue in the third phase, the Fire Authority Board may wish to look at alternatives to representing the constituents within the proposed expanded fire protection district (Appendix “C-1 through 3”). The alternatives may include:

- Utilize existing JPA members and geographical participation
- Election of a board of directors from specific areas within the expanded fire protection district (zones or districts)
- Election of a board of directors at large within the fire protection district
- Appointment of a board of directors representing geographical areas within the fire protection district

Fire Department Organization

The Big Bear Fire Department, through the first two phases of consolidation, has developed and implemented an organization that has been able to continue to provide fire and life safety to the Big Bear Valley. The Big Bear Fire Department has combined Administrative functions, created multiple new positions to better serve the communities, realigned equipment and facilities, created new working relationships with other government organizations (CAL FIRE specifically), and generally streamlined operations to utilize available resources in the most cost effective manner to meet the needs of the communities served.

As the consolidation process progresses into phase three, there is a need for the Fire Chief and the Fire Authority Board to address immediate, near term, and future organizational needs. Most likely, this would include additional Administrative support for needs and responsibilities resulting from the expanded fire protection district organization as well as the desire to reclassify existing positions within the organization to better reflect the workload requirements from the new expanded organization.

As consolidation efforts progress, consideration must be given regarding the current capacity and capability of the Big Bear Fire Department measured against current service demand. The Fire Chief, Governing Board, and community must work together, anchoring on the strengths achieved through consolidation, while at the same time, continue discussions and considerations for needed steps to improve any identified shortfalls.

Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District Future Planning Discussion Document

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During the past several years, the City of Big Bear Lake, Resort Association, Chamber of Commerce, other local associations, and multiple media have very successfully marketed Big Bear as a four season resort destination. The effect of this community positioning and marketing is drawing visitors year round. We are likely experiencing a demographic shift in our visitor population from that of those that choose to relax in their mountain cabin and casually stroll out into the community and surrounding forest to a visitor population that is more active and aligned with outdoor sport recreation. As Big Bear continues down that path of becoming a four season resort destination, increased demand for emergency medical services should be anticipated and responded to by considering steps to increase Fire Department capacity over the next couple of years (Appendix "D").

Consideration also needs to be given regarding fire suppression capability and capacity of the Big Bear Fire Department. A reasonable approach for this consideration should be to align with required fire flow for any given occupancy.

Fire flow requirement is the amount of water needed to extinguish a fire in a given occupancy. The fire flow requirements of a commercial occupancy are significantly higher than that of a residential occupancy. The fire flow is stated in gallons per minute for a specific time.

The needed fire flow directly correlates with the resource needs within a fire department. The number of pumping fire engines that will be needed to deliver the necessary gallons per minute as well as the number of fire fighters required to handle hose lines. Handheld hose lines typically deliver 100-250 gallons per minute. Each hose line requires one to three firefighters to operate. It follows that the higher the required fire flow, the more firefighters will be required.

Recognizing that most staffing decisions rest with the Fire Chief, there is a cause and effect relationship with staffing and available funding. There may be a desire to staff additional equipment or to increase staffing on existing equipment, but there needs to be the funding to accomplish these changes.

Additionally, as the Fire Authority Board is determining the direction for the Expanded Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District, the Fire Authority Board should also recognize that while the population of the Big Bear Valley has been fairly static for a number of years, it is the responsibility of the Fire Chief, and therefore the governing board, to anticipate population growth and service request needs into the future.

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The recent purchase of the ski resorts by a new and much larger corporation could quite easily translate into an increased number of residents and residential structures, additional commercial interests, increased number of visitors, and therefore, an increased demand for service. Likewise, the demonstrated growth in the Big Bear Valley has been and most likely will continue to be in an easterly direction as well as in the Moonridge area. At the present time, there are discussions regarding what service levels to anticipate in the Baldwin Lake, Erwin Lake, and Moonridge communities and how best to develop facilities to accommodate these needs. As the expanded fire protection district is discussed, the service needs and funding for these areas should be included in the overall decision making processes.

Organizational Financing

There are two current methods in place for financing the existing Big Bear Fire Department through the JPA (Appendix "E").

The existing funding source comes from the BBCCSD to fund the Big Bear City Fire Department. There are three revenue sources for the Big Bear City Fire Department. First, the BBCCSD receives 9.6% of the 1% assessed value that is collected in the form property tax. This general fund revenue is then correctly allocated to the Fire Department with a small portion used to fund street lighting. The second source is a voter approved parcel tax levied on all improved and unimproved parcels within the BBCCSD, including Baldwin Lake, with developed parcels paying \$123.01 annually and undeveloped parcels paying \$59.56 annually for the tax year ending in 2013. The third revenue source is derived from ambulance patient transport. This is currently referred to as an enterprise fund in which fee for patient transport service is created once service is delivered.

The Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District is primarily funded from property taxes. The current revenue formula is for the fire protection district to receive approximately 15.25% of the 1% that is collected in the form of property tax. That 15.25% of the City of Big Bear Lake property tax revenue is forwarded to the Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District. The remainder of the 1% (84.75%) is distributed to the City, San Bernardino County, and other Special Districts that provide services within the City area.

The combined revenue from all sources for the Fiscal Year 2014/2015 Budget is \$9,697,170. This funding is utilized for the operation of and maintenance of the Big Bear Fire Department JPA, Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District, and the Big Bear City Fire Department. Beginning

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with the Fiscal Year 2015/2016 Budget, in addition to the revenue portion, Staff is proposing that the Big Bear City Community Services District Fire Department and the Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District include their expenditures budget as one document within the JPA rather than presenting three for approval (Big Bear City Fire Department, Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District, and JPA). Ambulance revenue and expense will be accounted for within the Fiscal Year 2015/16 Fire Authority Budget.

While today's document is not intended to be a budget reference, it is important to understand that all phases of the consolidation process are budget related and the direction and decisions generated from this workshop will need to be directed back into a budget planning document as the expanded fire protection district concept is carried forward.

The third phase of the consolidation process requires the Fire Authority Board to consider alternatives to the current revenue streams and the ability for that revenue to correctly match the current capability and capacity of the organization as it relates to current service demand. More importantly, do current revenue sources meet the needs of the current organization as well as the future organization?

There are many variables to consider when discussing the financial requirements of a public organization. The current funding methods may be adequate to operate at the present level; there may be a need to consider alternative funding methods for immediate and/or future needs; and there may exist alternatives that, while not under consideration presently, should be explored and be included as part of the decision making process for current, near term, and long term success of the organization.

As the consolidation process progresses forward, the direction being taken is to operate the Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District using the JPA separate from the BBCCSD and the City of Big Bear Lake. A similar process was used to separate the City of Big Bear Lake Department of Water and Power in 2011.

The transition goal on July 1, 2015 is to have the Big Bear Fire Department JPA significantly reduce the administrative support provided by each parent district and those service components be assumed by the Big Bear Fire Department JPA. This includes finance, human resources (recruiting, hiring, benefit administration, etc.), risk management, employee safety and welfare, insurances, etc. With this administrative process step nearing implementation, additional focus and attention will be placed upon the Fire Authority Board regarding policy

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direction and future vision and planning. The counter to this situation is much less policy direction required from each respective district board.

The task before the Big Bear Fire Department JPA Board from this point will then be to determine what service levels they would like to establish as a baseline for the specific communities served. While it is a fair benchmark to look at current staffing, equipment, facilities, etc. for a starting point, there may need to be considerable discussion involving all involved parties (community, Board of Directors, Fire Department Management, and Labor) to evaluate current department capability and capacity measured against current service demands. Through this process, a determination can then be formed regarding the potential of the current organization meeting the future demand for service along with the necessary revenue to meet that objective.

Employee Considerations

As with any organization, the most important resource is the employees. This is truly the case with the Big Bear Fire Department. From the Fire Chief to the newest Paid Call Firefighter, the employees produce quality work 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The personnel of the Big Bear Fire Department have participated in every step of the consolidation process thus far and deserve to be included in this next step. Not only does this third phase have the potential to be the largest impact on the overall employment of current and future employees, who knows better than the current participants in the organization what works, what does not, and what recommendations could be made to the existing organization as it progresses into phase three.

The Big Bear Fire Department has numerous positions within each general classification. Administration (Fire Chief, Senior Finance Officer, Administrative Battalion Chief, Suppression Battalion Chiefs, Administrative Assistants) and Suppression/Operations (Fire Captains, Fire Engineers, Firefighters, Apprentice Firefighters, Paid Call Firefighters) all have very distinct job duties, job expectations, and rewards. While the greatest amount of interaction at the Board level occurs with Fire Department Administration and Fire Department Administration with senior executive staff from each District, the general public interacts more frequently with Suppression/Operations personnel. These are the first responders to every service request, emergency and non emergency, and the actions taken by these personnel create the overall image of the Big Bear Fire Department that the public remembers. The Big Bear Fire Department has strong, broad, community support throughout the service area that has been earned, one customer at a time, for many years.

Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District Future Planning Discussion Document

March 3, 2015

At present, the members of the Big Bear Fire Department have been given the opportunity to participate with Administration in an open meeting format on several occasions to be briefed on the direction and status of the consolidation progress. Many good ideas have been presented and a lot of questions have been asked in an attempt to address employee concerns. As with any endeavor of this type, the individual employees' number one concern is job preservation and the ability to continue to provide for their families as they have for however long they have worked for the organization.

The employees' primary concerns appear to be:

- Retirement system selection and the impact on their individual future as well as the organization
- Post retirement benefits that are currently included as part of the employment package
- Healthcare benefits under a new organization compared to existing healthcare benefits

Retirement System Considerations

As the Fire Authority Board is well aware, the discussion for converting to either the San Bernardino County Public Employees' Retirement System (SBCERA) or the State of California Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) has been lengthy, difficult to understand for non-retirement experts, and also has a potential for a large cost to the expanded fire protection district.

The personnel of the Big Bear Fire Department have expressed concerns regarding the selection of either proposed retirement system. A large number of the current employees have been participants in one or the other retirement system for many years. This group of employees is rightly concerned about being converted to one or the other system and the resulting potential negative impact it may have on the employees that are asked to transition to the selected pension system that the Fire Authority Board will decide upon. As discussion and analysis evolve regarding this transition, there is an expectation that such decisions will not significantly change the benefit that was mutually agreed upon through the collective bargaining process with their employing agency. Likewise, the less senior employees or those with less than five years on the job that have not vested in either system are concerned that whichever system is selected allows for recognition of prior years' service and is accounted for and/or considered as part of the transition from one system to the other.

Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District Future Planning Discussion Document

March 3, 2015

The Fire Authority Board has authorized the Fire Chief to actively engage in discussions with State of California Assemblyman Jay Obernolte's office to offer legislative alternative to offset any pension termination liability by moving current CAL PERS employees into the SBCERA retirement system. While these discussions and legislative action are early in the process, the possibility of eliminating the cost to transition to a different but comparable retirement system is worth exploring. While both of the proposed retirement systems have advantages and disadvantages, overall long term cost needs to be considered and evaluated to ensure success of the consolidated organization well into the future, literally decades from now.

Post Retirement Benefit Package

As with most organizations, employee groups have requested and have been granted certain components to their respective employment package. In the case of the BBCCSD Fire Department employees, they currently receive a post retirement healthcare benefit that continues for themselves and their spouse until the age of 65 when they become eligible for Medicare. The employees of the Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District do not receive any post retirement healthcare insurance coverage.

While the employees of the Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District do not receive a post retirement healthcare benefit within the SBCERA pension system, all Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District safety employees hired prior to January 1, 2013 receive a retirement benefit commonly known as 3% at 50. In simple terms, this group of employees calculates their retirement percentage by multiplying the number of years worked times 3% of their base salary to arrive at their post retirement annual salary value. In order for the employee to be eligible for retirement, they must be a minimum of 50 years of age. Further, the maximum retirement salary potential is 100% of base salary providing the employee has worked 33.5 years within the SBCERA system, which in most cases, puts the employee well past the age of 50 to receive the maximum benefit.

The safety employees of the BBCCSD Fire Department hired prior to July 17, 2006 receive the same retirement benefit calculation (3% at 50) as those hired into the SBCERA system prior to January 1, 2013. The difference being the maximum retirement salary potential is 90% of the base salary providing the employee has worked for 30 plus years within the CAL PERS system. In most cases, this puts the employee well beyond the age of 50 to receive the maximum benefit. Further, as a result of the collective bargaining process, safety employees hired into the BBCCSD CAL PERS system after July 17, 2006 are placed into the 3% at 55 pension

Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District Future Planning Discussion Document

March 3, 2015

retirement tier. Within this tier, the employee must reach the age of 55 in order to be eligible for retirement and the 90% of base salary cap still applies. This benefit is calculated the same way as 3% at 50 with the difference being the age is 55 versus age 50 in order to become eligible for retirement.

For either employing agency, the BBCCSD Fire Department or Big Bear Lake Fire Protection District, all safety employees hired after January 1, 2013 participate in the same retirement program regardless of retirement system administrator. This program is commonly known as the Public Employees Pension Reform Act of 2013 (PEPRA). The PEPRA program provides a retirement benefit of 2.7% at age 57 for safety employees.

The Big Bear Fire Department JPA is in the process of becoming an employer with an effective date of July 1, 2015. The initial job classes that will be employed by the Fire Authority are the Apprentice Firefighters, Senior Finance Officer, Administrative Clerks, and all Paid Call or part-time positions. The Fire Authority Board has been advised that there are only two viable pension system paths available to pursue: SBCERA or CAL PERS. Once this is established and implemented, the job classes of Apprentice Firefighter, Senior Finance officer, and Administrative Clerks will be enrolled as PEPRA employees.

Medical Benefits Discussion

An additional consideration for the Fire Authority Board, based on the retirement system selected and the collective bargaining process, is the determination of healthcare coverage for employees of the JPA. At the present time, the BBCCSD participates in the healthcare insurance programs offered through CAL PERS for both employees and retirees. The Big Bear Lake employees participate in the medical insurance programs offered by a private broker for employee and family. Retirees are not covered for health insurance.

While the selection of healthcare insurance is much less visual in the overall discussions of the expanded fire protection district, the potential impact on employees, retirees, and their families is significant and should be an important benefit consideration as discussions proceed.

Strategic Planning

A method to accomplish the future Vision

November 7, 2017

7 year planning period

- ▶ Effective Administration and Fire Prevention services
- ▶ Effective Operational Capability (community standard of cover)
- ▶ Reduction of 8:45 minute travel time
- ▶ Improve current system reliability of 32.9%
- ▶ Support of the Department's Training Division
- ▶ Integration and cost of technology

Effective Administration and Fire Prevention Services

- ▶ Focus on Community Risk Reduction
- ▶ Need for additional Prevention inspectors to accomplish Mission
- ▶ Assume annual Fire Hazard Abatement inspections
- ▶ Provide Prevention and Investigation Specialist to free up emergency resources

Effective Operational Capability (community standard of cover)

- ▶ Jurisdiction Risk Profile indicates 21-22 Firefighters needed
- ▶ The Jurisdiction currently has 13 Firefighters on duty daily
- ▶ Current need to make E-282 and E-283 3 personnel Staffing (15 on duty daily)
- ▶ Add one Battalion Chief
- ▶ Staffing of Moonridge station will provide (18 Firefighters on duty daily)
- ▶ Make T-281 staffing 4 person (19 on duty daily)
- ▶ Add squad or ambulance (22 on duty daily)

Reduction of 8:45 minute travel time

- ▶ Fire response 5 minute travel time
- ▶ Emergency medical response 4 minute travel time
- ▶ Requires that the Moonridge Station be built and staffed
- ▶ The Jurisdiction has not adopted a Response Time Standard
- ▶ The Department has taken steps to improve turn-out time

Improve Current System Reliability of 32.9%

	2014	2015	2016
Committed Hours	2,565	2,688	2,884
Pct. Unavailable	29.3%	30.7%	32.9%

Support of the Departments Training Division

- ▶ Since 2007, only a single person assigned to training
- ▶ Firefighters need a very substantial investment of time and resources to provide and maintain service quality
- ▶ Improves Department performance across the 3 shifts and Administration
- ▶ Significant reduction in Fire Ground Risk
- ▶ Significant reduction in Civil Liability

Integration and Cost of Technology

- ▶ Thermal imaging cameras \$48,000
- ▶ Computer technology added to apparatus \$184,000
- ▶ Vehicle Extrication Equipment \$50,000
- ▶ Radio Communication 800 Mhtz \$200,000
- ▶ Traffic Control Devices \$75,000 (CalTrans assistance required)
- ▶ Cardiac Monitors (10) \$300,000
- ▶ Self Contained Breathing Apparatus \$51,000



BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY AGENDA REPORT

Item No. 2

MEETING DATE: January 9, 2024

TO: Big Bear Fire Authority Finance Committee

FROM: Jeff Willis, Fire Chief *JW*

PREPARED BY: Chardelle Smith, Board Secretary *CS*

SUBJECT: **REVIEW OF BACKFILL OF VACANCIES AT OVERTIME
RATE OF TIME AND A HALF**

BACKGROUND

This discussion was brought to the full board at the December 12, 2023 regular board meeting where it was agreed to have the Finance Committee discuss in further detail.

At the December meeting, the Board also set forth regular monthly meetings for the Finance Committee. Through this action, staff is to meet with committee members monthly to cover items of financial interest.

DISCUSSION

Attachments A-D include overtime analysis, burdened rate by position, mutual aid fund and November budget variance

FISCAL IMPACT

None

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Finance Committee discuss and provide further direction to staff.

Attachment A: 2023 Suppression Overtime Analysis

Attachment B: Suppression Fully Burden Rate

Attachment C: General Ledger – Mutual Aid Fund

Attachment D: November Budget Variance Report

2023 Suppression Overtime Analysis

	OT Hours 2023	Average OT Rate	Suppression OT Cost	FBR	FBR Cost			
Captain	8129	68.84	559,560	95.84	779,083			
Engineer	5095	52.97	269,857	77.15	393,079			
Firefighter	5841	45.51	265,824	61.80	360,974			
	19,065		1,095,240		1,533,136			
	Comp Time	Holiday	Injury	Jury Duty	Vacation	Sick	Admin Leave	School
Captain	1,465	292	1,514	0	3,340	573	215	538
Engineer	772	168	2,160	17	1,900	1,121	7	232
Firefighter	1,343	368	0	0	2,435	412	0	193
	3,580	828	3,674	17	7,675	2,106	222	963

Classification	Captain	Engineer	Firefighter
Hourly Rate	42.86	34.14	29.87
Longevity	3.03	1.17	0.47
Total Rate	45.89	35.31	30.34
Annual Hours	2,756	2,756	2,756
Base Salary	126,473	97,314	83,617
Paramedic Stipend	9,000	9,000	9,000
Uniform	1,200	1,200	1,200
Cafeteria	8,250	6,187	5,892
Total Salary	144,923	113,701	99,709
Medicare	2,101	1,649	1,446
SUI/ETT	189	189	189
Retirement	82,466	60,115	47,527
Health	26,109	28,769	14,865
Dental	2,420	2,307	893
Vision	373	347	159
Life	156	156	156
Disability	385	385	385
HRA	5,000	5,000	5,000
Total Benefits	119,199	98,917	70,620
Total Compensation	264,122	212,618	170,329
Fully Burdened Rate	95.84	77.15	61.80

General Ledger - Mutual Aid Fund

Period Budget Analysis

User: kmandolini
Printed: 1/4/2024 - 9:20 AM
Period: Period 1 to 12, 2023
Budget Type: Full Year Budgeting



Account	Description	FY 22/23
Fund Number	222	
REVENUE		
222-4520-4835	Mutual Aid Response Reimb.	1,413,019.39
REVENUE Totals:		
EXPENSE		
222-4520-5010	Salaries	182,740.10
222-4520-5020	Overtime	482,337.20
222-4520-5220	Medicare ER	11,866.97
222-4520-5230	SUI Insurance	0.00
222-4520-6030	Fuel	4,512.03
222-4520-6040	Supplies	61,547.37
222-4520-6455	Other Expenditures	0.00
222-4520-6490	Travel	75,953.90
EXPENSE Totals:		818,957.00
Income Total:		594,062.39

**Big Bear Fire Authority
Operating Budget Variance Report
November 30, 2023**

	<u>Annual Budget</u>	<u>YTD Total</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>%</u>
<i>Revenue</i>				
Property Tax Revenue	12,939,524	2,164,183	(10,775,341)	17%
Current Service Charges	5,291,592	1,912,192	(3,379,400)	36%
Interagency Revenues	1,020,207	625,354	(394,853)	61%
Use of Money and Property	82,306	26,298	(56,008)	32%
Other Revenue	4,900	188	(4,712)	4%
Total Revenue	19,338,529	4,728,214	(14,610,315)	24%
<i>Expenses</i>				
Salaries & Benefits	15,401,670	6,769,359	(8,632,311)	44%
Supplies	335,232	113,510	(221,722)	34%
Professional Services	1,047,526	381,906	(665,620)	36%
Maintenance and Equipment	999,821	261,896	(737,925)	26%
Utilities	231,800	70,388	(161,412)	30%
Other Expenditures	707,425	215,187	(492,238)	30%
Total Expenses	18,723,474	7,812,246	(10,911,228)	42%
Capital Expenditures	325,000	0	(325,000)	0%