
**BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF
April 9, 2024**

A Regular Meeting of the Big Bear Fire Authority was called to order by Board Chair Walsh at 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at 41090 Big Bear Boulevard, Big Bear Lake, California.

Board Members Present: Board Chair Larry Walsh
 Vice Chair Kendi Segovia
 Director Michael Eagleson
 Director Rick Herrick
 Director Perri Melnick
 Director Randall Putz
 Director Bob Rowe
 Director John Russo (arrived at 5:02 p.m.)
 Director Al Ziegler

Board Members Absent: None

Others Present: Jeff Willis, Fire Chief
 Kristin Mandolini, Director of Business Services
 Chardelle Smith, Board Secretary
 Nicholaus Norvell, Assistant Authority Counsel

OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

Moment of Silence: Observed

Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Vice Chair Segovia

ROLL CALL

Please Note: The Chair may, at his or her discretion, take items out of order at the meeting to facilitate the business of the Board and/or for the convenience of the public.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

The Fire Authority's Administrative Office will be closed:

- Monday, May 27, 2024, in observance of Memorial Day and will reopen on Tuesday, May 28, 2024, at 8:00 a.m.

PRESENTATIONS

- Recognition of 20 Years of Service
Speaker: Chief Willis
 - Brian Lambert, Captain

Willis presented a certificate of appreciation to Captain Brian Lambert.

- Blue Forest Conservation
Speaker: Anna Yip

Anna from Blue Forest Conservation, along with Forest Service Representatives, presented the Blue Forest Conservation and what they do to assist with investing in forest health, also known as the Forest Resilience Bond.

Board Chair Walsh called for Public Comment:

Daniel Gulbranson, Big Bear Lake commented how the forest is being mismanaged. He stated there must be controlled burns, not just trimming trees.

DIRECTORS' GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Board Chair Walsh mentioned Big Bear City Community Services District will be holding a Cleanup Day on Saturday, April 20th at 9.a.m. He stated more information can be found on the website.

Director Herrick mentioned Highway 38 will be closed Thursday, April 11th from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. for the Redlands Classic.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Patrice Duncan, Sugarloaf gave thanks regarding the productive Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee meeting. She also thanked Chief Willis for appointing Battalion Chief Wagner to assist with the Fire Safe Big Bear Council. The first meeting is set for May 2nd, at 6 p.m., at Hofert Hall. She mentioned she will be submitting the NFPA Firewise Community application for Sugarloaf and will then become the NFPA local expert to assist others throughout the community.

Daniel Gulbranson, Big Bear Lake mentioned his concerns for the Moonridge area. He commented how quickly you can get lost during the day while driving around. He questioned why the city is spending money on Castle Rock instead of keeping Moonridge safe with fire protection.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Willis stated receipt of the new ambulance will carry over to FY 2024/25 due to labor manufacture shortages. He mentioned the new fire engine and ladder truck are currently being outfitted with tools, digital devices, and other items. The department anticipates delivery within

the next few months and a “new in service” ceremony will be scheduled for the public to attend. Willis stated the department submitted an application to the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection requesting the Authority’s jurisdiction be added to the Fire Risk Reduction Community List. If qualified, this would prioritize for local assistance grant funding and assist in a homeowners insurance discount. He mentioned staff is preparing for the 2024 fire hazard abatement season with public safety messages, compliance information, and expected timelines. Willis provided an update regarding the Covid-19 reimbursement request. At this time, the request was submitted for final review with a total amount of \$27,461.66.

Discussion ensued regarding briefing the board members and community members about hazard abatement prior to inspections.

FINANCE OFFICER’S REPORT

Ms. Mandolini presented the finance report as of February 29, 2024.

Discussion ensued regarding how to define other revenue that did well and capital expenditures. Ms. Mandolini replied.

FIRE AUTHORITY CONSENT CALENDAR

- FA1. Approval of Demands – Check Issue Date 01/01/24 through 02/29/2024 in the amount of \$2,414,799.58.**
- FA2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from the February 3, 2024, Special Meeting of the Big Bear Fire Authority.**
- FA3. Approval of Meeting Minutes from the February 3, 2024, Regular Meeting of the Big Bear Fire Authority.**
- FA4. Receive and File Big Bear Fire Department Monthly Activity Report for January 2024.**
- FA5. Big Bear Fire Authority accepts the update on the U.S. Forest Service North Big Bear Landscape Restoration Project and restates its support for the effort (as outlined in Resolution No. BBFA2022-008).**
- FA6. Big Bear Fire Authority recognizes the value of conservation finance and the role it can play in enhancing the U.S. Forest Service North Big Bear Landscape Restoration Project, and supports the efforts to launch a Forest Resilience Bond in the San Bernardino National Forest.**

Action: Motion by Director Putz, seconded by Director Herrick, to approve the Consent Calendar as follows:

AYES: Herrick, Melnick, Putz, Rowe, Russo, Segovia, Ziegler, Eagleson,
Walsh
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

None

PUBLIC HEARING

None

NEW BUSINESS

BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY DISCUSSION ITEMS

FA7. Resolution No. BBFA2024-001 to Amend MidAmerica Adoption Agreement to Exclude Union Members from HRA Plan; Resolution No. BBFA2024-002 to Approve Contributions to the IAFF Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan Effective April 1, 2024 Including Promoted Firefighters Already Established in the plan; IAFF Joinder Agreement; Side Letter of Agreement Amending Current MOU Language

Board consideration to discuss and approve Resolution BBFA2024-001 approving the amendment to the MidAmerica Adoption Agreement and approving Resolution BBFA2024-002 approving contributions to the IAFF Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan.

Speaker: Kristin Mandolini

Ms. Mandolini mentioned the current approved MOU agreement provides a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) through Mid America for union members. The Union is now requesting a Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan (MERP) in replacement of the HRA. Mandolini states rather than contributing \$5,000 annually to the HRA, the department would contribute \$5,000 annually to the MERP. She mentioned this is budget neutral.

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

Board Chair Walsh called for public comment. There was no public comment.

Action: Motion by Director Melnick, seconded by Director Eagleson, to approve Resolution No. BBFA2024-001 approving the MidAmerica Adoption agreement

amendment; Resolution No. BBFA 2024-002 approving contribution to IAFF Medical Expense Reimbursement plan; approving the IAFF MERP Joinder agreement and the side letter agreement changes to the adopted MOU between the Big Bear Fire Authority and Big Bear Professional Firefighters Association.

Said Motion was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Melnick, Putz, Rowe, Russo, Segovia, Ziegler, Eagleson, Herrick,
Walsh
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

FA8. Transfer of Lease and Approval of Sublease for Baldwin Lake Fire Station

Board consideration to discuss and approve the Fire Chief to sign a lease assignment agreement among the Authority, BBCCSD, and Larry Winslow, for the Baldwin Lake Fire Station, and to approve the Fire Chief to sign a sublease with the State of California for the Baldwin Lake Fire Station, similar to the previous sublease between BBCCSD and the State.

Speaker: Chief Willis

Chief Willis provided a background of previous agreements regarding the Baldwin Lake Fire Station. He mentioned there is no agreement between the Authority and the Big Bear City Community Services District (CSD), but only between CSD and CalFire. Willis stated this agreement would transfer the lease between CSD and Larry Winslow to the Authority and Larry Winslow direct. He stated this is budget positive.

Assistant Authority Counsel Norvell mentioned that with the Authority being a Joint Powers Agreement, if the Authority were to be terminated, the lease agreement would revert to the CSD.

Discussion ensued regarding the lease agreement being budget positive for the department and if the department keeps an ambulance at that station while Cal Fire is there. It was mentioned the department is still paying the utility bills while Cal Fire is at the station. Discussion was held regarding the document stating only part of the building has tempered windows.

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

Board Chair Walsh called for public comment:

Daniel Gulbranson, Big Bear Lake: mentioned he worked in the glass industry for many years. He stated the safety code is separate from the fire code.

Action: Motion by Director Herrick, seconded by Director Russo, to approve the Fire Chief to sign a lease assignment agreement among the Authority, BBCCSD, and Larry Winslow for the Baldwin Lake Station, and to sign a sublease with the State of California for the Baldwin Lake Station.

Said Motion was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Putz, Rowe, Russo, Segovia, Ziegler, Eagleson, Herrick, Melnick,
Walsh
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

FA9. Request for Proposal Approval for Lance, Soll & Lunghard Auditing Services

Board consideration to waive a separate RFP process and authorize the Fire Chief to approve the service contract with Lance, Soll & Lunghard for auditing services in coordination with the City of Big Bear Lake.

Speaker: Kristin Mandolini

Mandolini provided the background regarding the City of Big Bear Lake initiating a Request for Proposal (RFP) for auditing services, that includes the Authority. The city used a technical cost criterion scoring system and the current auditor, Lance, Soll & Lunghard (LSL) was chosen. She mentioned this would cost the authority \$23,690 for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

Discussion ensued regarding how long the Authority has been using LSL.

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

Action: Motion by Director Rowe, seconded by Vice Chair Segovia, to approve waiving a separate RFP process and authorize the Fire Chief to approve the contract with Lance, Soll & Lunghard for auditing service, in coordination with the City of Big Bear Lake.

Said Motion was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Rowe, Russo, Segovia, Ziegler, Eagleson, Herrick, Melnick, Putz,
Walsh
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

An Ad Hoc Personnel Committee meeting was held on:

- March 5, 2024
 - In attendance was Director Melnick, Vice Chair Segovia, and Board Chair Walsh.

A Fire Authority Finance Committee meeting was held on:

- March 12, 2024
 - In attendance was Director Rowe, Director Eagleson, Director Herrick, Vice Chair Segovia.

An Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee meeting was held on:

- March 27, 2024
 - In attendance was Director Eagleson, Director Putz, Director Rowe, and Vice Chair Segovia, with ex officio members Jon Bidwell, Glenn Schwartzman, and Andrew Crane.

Each committee shared key points from the recent committee meetings. It was requested to bring two discussion items to the full board at the June 11th regular board meeting. First was to hold a regular board meeting every month and second was a discussion for a reserve policy.

Board Chair Walsh called for public comment:

Joseph Kelly: mentioned this was the first he had heard about subcommittees within the Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee. He asked if those were held at the same time as the full committee or at different times.

Jon Bidwell: stated the subcommittees were formed for fact checking only and to bring back the information found to the full ad hoc committee for further discussion with public input.

DIRECTORS' CLOSING COMMENTS

Vice Chair Segovia commented she will not be in attendance for the April 17th Board Workshop.

Board Chair Walsh stated the Budget Workshop agenda will be distributed Wednesday and encouraged all board members to take time to review the packet prior to the meeting.

A break was taken at 6:29 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS: (Any member of the public is entitled to speak on Closed Session Agenda item. 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

REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION

At the hour of 6:35 p.m., Board Chair Walsh adjourned to Closed Session.

At the hour of 8:16 p.m., Board Chair Walsh adjourned Closed Session.

At the hour of 8:16 p.m., Board Chair Walsh re-opened Regular Session.

REPORT ON CLOSED SESSION

No reportable action.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Fire Authority at this session, Board Chair Walsh adjourned the meeting at 8:17 p.m.



Chardelle Smith
Board Secretary

APPROVED AT THE MEETING OF JUNE 11, 2024