
**BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF
August 13, 2024**

A Regular Meeting of the Big Bear Fire Authority was called to order by Board Chair Walsh at 5:01 p.m., Tuesday, August 13, 2024, at 41090 Big Bear Boulevard, Big Bear Lake, California.

Board Members Present: Board Chair Larry Walsh
 Vice Chair Kendi Segovia
 Director Perri Melnick
 Director Randall Putz
 Director Bob Rowe
 Director John Russo
 Director Al Ziegler

Board Members Absent: Director Rick Herrick

Others Present: Jeff Willis, Fire Chief
 Luke Wagner, Assistant Chief/Fire Marshal
 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, September 2, 2024, in observance of Labor Day, and will reopen on Tuesday, September 3, 2024, at 8:00 a.m.

At the July 19th LifeStream Blood Drive, held at station 281, 6 donors registered with 2 of them being first time donors. Out of the 6 donors, a total of 5 units were collected.

The push-in ceremony for Tower-281 is scheduled for Tuesday, August 27th, at 10 a.m., at Headquarters, Station 281. Public attendance is encouraged.

inspection process. He stated the department is currently hiring the position of Ambulance Operator/Paramedic and are offering promotional exams for the position of Firefighter.

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

Chief Willis presented the finance report as of May 31, 2024.

FIRE AUTHORITY CONSENT CALENDAR

- FA1. Approval of Demands – Check Issue Date 04/01/24 through 05/31/2024 in the amount of \$1,727,210.61**
- FA2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from the June 11, 2024, Regular Meeting of the Big Bear Fire Authority.**
- FA3. Receive and File Big Bear Fire Department Monthly Activity Report for March, 2024.**
- FA4. Resolution NO. BBFA2024-007 to approve Cal OES Form 130 to receive Covid-19 reimbursement funding.**
- FA5. Resolution NO. BBFA2024-008 and Agreement with CAL FIRE to continue Federal Excess Personal Property Program**

Action: Motion by Vice Chair Segovia, seconded by Director Russo, to approve the Consent Calendar as follows:

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

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

None

PUBLIC HEARING

None

NEW BUSINESS

BIG BEAR FIRE AUTHORITY DISCUSSION ITEMS

FA6. Big Bear Fire Authority Meetings

Board consideration to review and approve the updated 2024 meeting calendar and updated Bylaws reflecting monthly regular meetings starting in August, for the remainder of 2024.

Speaker: Jeff Willis, Fire Chief

Chief Willis introduced the updated 2024 meeting calendar reflecting the change to hold regular meetings every month and the new day for the Finance committee.

Discussion was held whether the Finance Committee and Regular meetings should be held the same day.

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 Putz, seconded by Director Melnick, to approve the updated 2024 meeting calendar and the updated Bylaws reflecting regular meetings to be held monthly and the Finance Committee to meet on the fourth Tuesday of September and November.

Said Motion was approved by the following vote:

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

FA7. Appointment of Vacant Seat on the Fire Authority Finance Committee

Board consideration of the Board Chair selecting one Director to fill the vacant seat and serve along with the current Finance Committee for remainder of the 2024 calendar year.

Speaker: Board Chair Walsh

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

Action: Board Chair Walsh called Board Chair Walsh for appointment of the vacant seat on the Finance Committee for the remainder of 2024.

Public Comment:

Jon Bidwell: questioned if it was supposed to be two Directors from each member agency to make up the ad hoc committee.

Action: Board Chair Walsh called Director Melnick for appointment of the vacant seat on Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee for the remainder of 2024.

Motion by Board Chair Segovia, seconded by Director Russo. Said Motion was approved by the following vote:

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

FA10. Reserve Policy

Board consideration to review the draft reserve policy and assign to the Finance Committee for further discussion and revision.

Speaker: Jeff Willis, Fire Chief

Chief Willis provided background of recent discussions held between staff and the finance committee regarding updating the current reserve policy.

Discussion ensued regarding the targeted fund balance goals and if this was a good starting point to update the reserve policy that better aligns with the strategic planning discussions.

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 Melnick, seconded by Putz, for the Finance Committee to continue discussions and revisions to the reserve policy and bring it back to the full Board with a recommendation.

Said Motion was approved by the following vote:

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

FA11. Possible Future Tax Revenue Anticipation Note from City of Big Bear Lake and Big Bear City Community Services District

Board consideration to proceed with each member agency to consider availability and terms for short term lending.

Speaker: Jeff Willis, Fire Chief

Chief Willis stated this has been previously mentioned, but no formal discussion has been held. He asked if the Board would like staff to discuss further with the City of Big Bear Lake (City) General Manager and the Big Bear City Community Services District (CSD) General Manager to see the probability of this taking form. If it were to happen, this Tax Revenue Anticipation Note (TRAN) would be in lieu of commercial lending and be a three-month period, up to \$2 million dollars.

Discussion ensued regarding how much borrowing the TRAN funds cost the department through commercial lending. It was mentioned the CSD Finance Officer was asked and due to GASB 102, if the agency were to take any action that puts their own obligations at risk, it requires they issue a notice of insufficiency.

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

Board Chair Walsh called for public comment:

Jon Bidwell: questioned if the CSD Board were to approve contributing, would the Finance Officer have any say.

Action: Motion by Director Putz, seconded by Director Melnick, to approve staff to formally approach the CSD and the City of Big Bear Lake for \$1 million each with a fair and better interest rate between both entities, with the possibility of the City taking on the full amount.

Said Motion was approved by the following vote:

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

FA12. Strategic Planning Discussion

Board consideration on future funding to assist with fund balance reserves and future staffing optimization be assigned back to the Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee for further discussion

Speaker: Jeff Willis, Fire Chief

Chief Willis provided background of previous discussions held between staff and members of the ad hoc strategic planning committee. He mentioned the most recent discussion has been regarding the visitor impact on the department.

Battalion Chief Rogers and Captain Crane provided a PowerPoint presentation with data from fiscal year 2023 showing the impact on the department. It was noted the data from fiscal year 2024 was not used due to bill payments still being collected. The data reflected non-resident/non-property owner use of service. This use of service data included fire engine response/ambulance response and cost associated with "bad debt", meaning the amount of money that is not collected post-billing.

Discussion ensued regarding the impression that visitors were net positive on the department. It was noted the visitor impact on the department was roughly a third of the calls and estimated at \$5 million. With this came the question of how to recoup that cost. The ad hoc committee came up with a list of ways to increase funding with the top three being a recreation fee, TOT, and Community Facilities District.

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 Vice Chair Segovia, to continue the ad hoc committee meetings to discuss future department funding and the future staffing optimization plan.

Said Motion was approved by the following vote:

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

An Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee meeting was held on:

- July 1, 2024
 - In attendance was Director Putz, Director Rowe, and Vice Chair Segovia, with ex officio members Jon Bidwell and Andrew Crane.
- July 22, 2024
 - In attendance was Director Putz, Director Rowe, and Vice Chair Segovia, with ex officio members Glenn Schwartzman and Andrew Crane.

A Finance Committee meeting was held on:

- July 9, 2024
 - In attendance was Director Herrick, Director Rowe, and Vice Chair Segovia

An Ad Hoc Personnel Committee meeting was held on:

- July 11, 2024
 - In attendance was Director Melnick and Vice Chair Segovia.

Vice Chair Segovia and Director Melnick commented on how well the Board, staff, and personnel are communicating at this time.

DIRECTORS' CLOSING COMMENTS

Director Putz mentioned the organization has made significant strides in the last several months. He mentioned how proud he is of the work from the ad hoc strategic planning committee and thanked all who have contributed.

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.)

None

CLOSED SESSION

1. **Public Employee Performance Evaluation (Government Code §54957)**
Title: Fire Chief
2. **Conference with Labor Negotiators (Government Code § 54957.6)**
Agency designated representatives: Chair Walsh

Unrepresented employee: Fire Chief

3. Public Employee Appointment (Government Code § 54957)

Title: Fire Chief (hiring process only)

REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION

At the hour of 6:46 p.m., Board Chair Walsh adjourned to Closed Session.

At the hour of 8:22 p.m., Board Chair Walsh adjourned Closed Session.

At the hour of 8:22 p.m., Board Chair Walsh re-opened Regular Session, with no public present.

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 8:23 p.m.



Chardelle Smith
Board Secretary

APPROVED AT THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 8, 2024