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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RESORT TAX APPROVES ORDINANCE 98-01 REVISIONS

Big Sky, Montana, October 25th, 2019 –Through a unanimous vote at the 2nd reading, the Board of Directors of the Big Sky Resort Area District approved revisions to Ordinance 98-01. The revision includes new Rules, Regulations, and Registrations (3Rs) offering clarification on taxable items and furthering administrative guidance. More than six months of active public engagement informed the details of the revision. “The District strives for impactful management of funds working to create a legacy for future generations in Big Sky. We believe this ordinance is not only clear but also fair and equitable by helping to aid businesses with compliance and in turn investing in funding Big Sky’s future.” said District Manager Daniel Bierschwale.

The revision simplifies what’s taxed including clarification that all alcohol and tobacco is to be taxed regardless of where sold within the District. Chairman of the Board, Kevin Germain adds that, “We wanted to ensure we do not place any more burdens on the cost-of-living for our locals and workforce. Clarifying language was developed to truly ensure “Necessities of Life” were not taxed. We revised language from our previous ordinance that technically required “all goods and services” to be taxed in unusual situations. For instance, it is not our intention to tax groceries just because the store has a food service establishment/deli.”

The District has over 1,000 businesses collecting the Resort Tax. To compliment the new Rules and Regulations, all businesses operating within the District are now required to register. Tim Drain, General Manager of Natural Retreats (Big Sky) stated that “We are glad to contribute to the local Big Sky economy and collect Resort Tax. We recognize the value the funding provides our community-from promoting and marketing Big Sky as a year-round destination, to recreational and cultural opportunities, to the infrastructure our growing community needs. It’s nice to see money spent in Big Sky truly stay in Big Sky.”

In tandem with the revisions, the community developed plan, “Our Big Sky: Vision and Strategy,” will inform District decision-making for strategically appropriating funds. “The Resort Tax plays such a critical role in supporting this Community’s needs.” said Laura Seyfang, Program Director for the Big Sky Community Housing Trust. “These funds have contributed nearly \$70 million to the evolution of Big Sky from solely a tourist destination to a sustainable community,” said Candace Carr Strauss, CEO Big Sky Chamber and Visit Big Sky. “The clarification of the Ordinance’s language and resulting accountability will contribute to a positive business climate and aid businesses with compliance.”

Live streamed trainings will take place November 7th at the Wilson and Buck’s T4. One-on-one sessions are available by appointment on November 19th - 20th and December 10th - 11th. The Ordinance will become effective on November 25th with a registration deadline of December 31st. Visit resorttax.org to review the a 3Rs FAQ, the amended Ordinance 98-01, to watch the recorded trainings, and learn more.

The Big Sky Resort Tax is a 3% tax passed in 1992. Since its inception, the money raised has played a significant role in the funding of community services and programs including infrastructure facilities, post office services, ambulance and emergency services, public transportation systems, parks and trails, community library, tourism development, public health, safety, and welfare services within the District.

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