



Meeting Minutes

June 10th, 2020

Big Sky Resort Area District
11 Lone Peak Drive#204
PO Box 160661
Big Sky, MT 59716
www.Resorttax.org
info@resorttax.org
406.995.3234

FY21 Spring Application Review #1

June 10th, 2020 | 5:30 pm

Zoom Webinar

I. Open Meeting

[\(00:01:15\)](#) Kevin Germain called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

[\(00:01:55\)](#) Daniel Bierschwale called roll: *all present*: Kevin Germain, Sarah Blechta, Steve Johnson, Ciara Wolfe, and Grace Young

[\(00:04:19\)](#) Jenny Muscat reviewed how to use Zoom and how to make public comment.

A. Public Comment

[\(00:07:27\)](#) All public comment received as of 3:00 pm on June 10th was shared with the board. Daniel Bierschwale read an overview of public comment. (Public comment and letters of support can be viewed here:

B. Intro & Chairman's Statement: Discussion

[\(00:09:37\)](#) Kevin Germain explained the 2 allocation process for FY21 Spring and Fall.

[\(00:12:43\)](#) **Motion:** to move agenda item "Applications over \$200,000" before "Applications under \$200,000: Sarah Blechta; **Seconded:** Grace Young

[\(00:13:29\)](#) **Vote:** *All in Favor*

C. Funds Available Estimate: Discussion

[\(00:14:00\)](#) Daniel Bierschwale reviewed Funds Available as of June 9th.

Reserve Fund Committee Recommendations

[\(00:15:52\)](#) Sarah Blechta and Grace Young discussed committee recommendations.

[\(00:17:21\)](#) **Motion:** fund reserves in amount of \$1.5 million: Grace Young

Seconded: Sarah Blechta

[\(00:17:54\)](#) Ciara Wolfe shared thoughts on reserve funds.

[\(00:19:41\)](#) Board members discussed reserve funds and ways to invest.

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[\(00:22:20\)](#) Kevin Germain explained that the Reserve Fund can be revisited and adjusted in the Fall funding cycle and discussed an emergency fund to be used in the event of COVID-19 needs.

[\(00:27:20\)](#) Public Comment from Candace Strauss explaining State and CARES Act funding for COVID-19 testing

[\(00:27:40\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passes 3 - 2

D. Application Review: Discussion

a. Government Entities: Action

[\(00:29:27\)](#) **Motion:** delay the following capital requests, over \$10,000, until Fall funding cycle:

The Big Sky Fire Department's Wildland Apparatus Replacement project; The Transportation Department's Bus Barn project; and the Big Sky Housing Trust's Future Property Development project: Sarah Blechta

Seconded: Ciara Wolfe

[\(00:30:00\)](#) Sarah Blechta explained her reasoning for postponing capital projects until Fall Funding cycle, suggested waiting to see results of summer collections.

[\(00:31:12\)](#) Kevin Germain shared concerns regarding possible loss of DNRC grant for wildland fire engine.

[\(00:32:42\)](#) Steve Johnson asked if used equipment could be purchased instead. Ciara Wolfe discussed using reserves.

Big Sky Fire Department – Chief Greg Megaard

[\(00:35:17\)](#) Steve Johnson asked questions to Chief Megaard; the Fire Department has not considered used equipment or looked into the cost. Chief Megaard explained matching funds through DNRC.

[\(00:37:16\)](#) Kevin Germain asked and Chief Megaard discussed how the Fire Department could utilize funds and changing costs due to COVID-19.

[\(00:39:03\)](#) Kim Beatty discussed how the board can be flexible with the motion to delay capital projects.

[\(00:40:57\)](#) **Motion:** to fund 90% of the Fire Department's operational support request for July-December \$378,641 and delay decision for Wildland Apparatus Replacement until the Fall funding cycle: Sarah Blechta

NO Second

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[\(00:41:35\)](#) **Motion:** defer decision on Wildland Apparatus Replacement until the Fall funding cycle: Steve Johnson

Seconded: Sarah Blechta

[\(00:42:27\)](#) **Vote:** Motion passes

[\(00:42:52\)](#) **Motion:** delay capital request for the Transportation District's Bus Barn until the fall funding cycle: Sarah

Blechta **Seconded:** Steve Johnson

[\(00:43:28\)](#) **Vote:** Motion passes

Gallatin County Sheriff's Department

[\(00:44:01\)](#) **Motion:** to fully fund the Sheriff Department for July-Dec in amount of \$155,664: Steve Johnson

Seconded: Sarah Blechta

[\(00:44:51\)](#) Kevin Germain discussed meeting with Madison and Gallatin county to consider matching funds and 3-year interlocal agreements; Steve Johnson was supportive.

[\(00:46:01\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passes

Transportation District – David Kack

[\(00:46:08\)](#) **Motion:** to fully fund the Transportation District's 6-month request of \$195,000: Ciara Wolfe

Seconded: Sarah Blechta

[\(00:46:27\)](#) Steve Johnson noted that BSTD was able to reduce their request by \$65,000 through federal and state funding.

[\(00:47:22\)](#) Kevin Germain asked about increasing service in the Winter; David Kack discussed ever changing situation and CARES Act funding.

[\(00:48:30\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passes

Big Sky Fire Department

[\(00:48:51\)](#) **Motion:** to fully fund the Fire Department's operational support request of \$420,713: Grace Young

Seconded: Ciara Wolfe

[\(00:49:09\)](#) Sarah Blechta shared concerns with year-over-year increases in operational requests. Ciara Wolfe and Steve Johnson discussed the Fire Department's request.

[\(00:51:36\)](#) Kevin Germain suggested amending motion to unrestricted and allow the Fire Department to use funds

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for either project.

Motion amended: fund amount of \$420,713 without restriction to project: Grace Young & Ciara Wolfe

[\(00:52:03\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passes

c. Applications over \$200,000: Action

Big Sky Community Organization

[\(00:52:51\)](#) **Motion:** to fully fund BSCO's Spring request: Sarah Blechta

Seconded: Steve Johnson

[\(00:53:05\)](#) Ciara Wolfe recused herself.

[\(00:53:27\)](#) Kevin Germain discussed possible future Parks District supported by property tax.

[\(00:54:14\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passes (with Ciara Wolfe recused)

Big Sky Community Housing Trust

[\(00:54:46\)](#) **Motion:** to fund BSCHT \$264,000 for operational support and Down Payment Assistance programs: Sarah Blechta **Seconded:** Ciara Wolfe

[\(00:55:15\)](#) Ciara Wolfe and Sarah Blechta discussed the Down Payment Assistance program.

[\(01:00:03\)](#) Candace Straus, vice-chair of the BSCHT, explained that there is a lack of inventory for those individuals to purchase with the average median home price in Big Sky at \$1.4 million.

[\(01:01:44\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passes

[\(01:02:15\)](#) **Motion:** to defer Future Property Development project until the Fall funding cycle: Ciara Wolfe

Seconded: Sarah Blechta

[\(01:02:49\)](#) Laura Seyfang joined the conversation.

[\(01:04:28\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passes

Big Sky Chamber of Commerce

[\(01:04:50\)](#) **Motion:** to fund the Chamber in the amount equal to their dues collections for the first 6 months, in the amount of \$102,250: Steve Johnson

Seconded: Grace Young

[\(01:05:56\)](#) Steve Johnson explained his decision to match funds.

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[\(01:06:53\)](#) Candace Strauss discussed the Chamber's budget and the cost of membership dues in the current business climate due to COVID-19.

[\(01:08:03\)](#) Ciara Wolfe shared concerns with only funding 34% of operational budget. Steve Johnson discussed marketing challenges due to COVID-19.

[\(01:10:16\)](#) Andrea Saari and Denise Wade shared public comment in support of the Chamber and Visit Big Sky.

[\(01:11:32\)](#) **Vote:** Motion does not pass

[\(01:11:47\)](#) **Motion:** to fully fund the Chamber's request of \$176,100 for 'Leadership, Staffing, and Operations', \$5,500 for 'Local Governance Facilitation', and delay 'Advocating for Our Community' request until Fall funding cycle, for a total of \$181,600 for Spring: Sarah Blechta

Seconded: Ciara Wolfe

[\(01:12:35\)](#) Sarah Blechta discussed how the Chamber has helped small businesses during this time.

[\(01:13:11\)](#) Steve Johnson explained that the BSRAD Board, as the voter elected government entity, should be the entity leading local governance. Kevin Germain agreed with BSRAD playing a more active role with Madison and Gallatin Counties and discussing 'Eggs & Issues' being separate from Joint County Commission meetings.

[\(01:15:34\)](#) Sarah Blechta asked question regarding "Eggs & Issues" and Joint County Commission meetings; Candace Strauss clarified meeting structure.

[\(01:21:26\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

Visit Big Sky

[\(01:22:22\)](#) **Motion:** to fund Visit Big Sky in the same matching the amount from the State Lodging Tax

(\$259,000/year): Steve Johnson

Not Seconded

[\(01:24:32\)](#) **Motion:** to fund Visit Big Sky 90% of projects 1 & 2 (Operations & Marketing), for total of \$353,614: Sarah Blechta

Seconded: Ciara Wolfe

[\(01:25:42\)](#) Candace Strauss made clarifications on State funding.

[\(01:27:57\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

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[\(01:28:15\)](#) **Motion:** not fund projects 3 & 4 ('Develop & Steward' and 'Lead') for Spring cycle: Sarah Blechta

Seconded: Grace Young

[\(01:30:46\)](#) Sarah Blechta shared thoughts on postponing projects until Fall funding cycle.

[\(01:31:33\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passes

Big Sky Community Housing Trust

[\(01:32:37\)](#) **Motion:** to defer project #4, Long Term Rental Program, until the Fall funding cycle: Ciara Wolfe

Seconded: Sarah Blechta

[\(01:33:11\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

Gallatin River Task Force

[\(01:34:00\)](#) **Motion:** to fully fund projects 1,2,4&5, and 50% of project 6: Steve Johnson

Not Seconded

[\(01:35:21\)](#) **Motion:** to fund 'Operations' in the amount of \$116,544, 'Education & Outreach' for \$7500, delay 'Watershed Monitoring' until Fall, fund 'Watershed Restoration & Enhancement' for \$20,000, fund 'Water Supply Resiliency' for \$38,520, and not fund 'Gallatin Canyon Groundwater Discharge Modeling, Panning, and District Formation Support': Sarah Blechta

Not Seconded

[\(01:37:34\)](#) **Motion:** fund 50% of the 'Gallatin Canyon Groundwater Discharge Modeling, Panning, and District Formation Support' project: Steve Johnson

Seconded for discussion: Sarah Blechta

[\(01:37:52\)](#) Kevin Germain discussed how parts of the project could be supported by the 1% and overseen by the Water & Sewer District.

[\(01:39:16\)](#) Kim Beatty explained how this project could be incorporated with the Water & Sewer District but would be their decision; board members discussed.

[\(01:42:31\)](#) **Motion amended:** not fund 'Gallatin Canyon Groundwater Discharge Modeling, Panning, and District Formation Support' project and revisit in the Fall: Steve Johnson

Seconded: Sarah Blechta

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[\(01:45:44\)](#) Ciara Wolfe discussed project-based conservation requests among all conservation-based organizations and the percentage of operations funding for GRTF; Kevin Germain agreed.

[\(01:47:51\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

b. Applications under \$200,000: Action

Morningstar Learning Center & Discovery Academy

[\(01:48:56\)](#) **Motion:** to fund both Morning Star Learning Center and Discovery Academy for \$13 per child per enrolled day, up to \$72,800 for Morningstar and up to \$22,400 for Discovery, based on enrollment: Sarah Blechta

Seconded: Ciara Wolfe

[\(01:49:27\)](#) Sarah Blechta explained effort to remain equitable and fair in funding for both.

Morningstar Learning Center

[\(01:50:06\)](#) **Motion amended:** to fund Morning Star Learning Center for \$13 per child per enrolled day, up to \$72,800 based on enrollment: Sarah Blechta

Seconded: Ciara Wolfe

[\(01:51:32\)](#) Ciara Wolfe clarified that childcare services are being funded.

[\(01:52:30\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

Discovery Academy

[\(01:52:39\)](#) **Motion:** to fund Discovery Academy for \$13 per child per enrolled day, up to \$22,400, based on enrollment: Sarah Blechta

Seconded: Ciara Wolfe

[\(01:53:11\)](#) Ciara Wolfe discussed equitability for childcare and using public dollars fairly.

[\(01:54:24\)](#) Nettie Breuner from Discovery explained their need-based support and different approach to programming offered.

[\(01:56:19\)](#) Kevin Germain shared appreciation for need-based subsidies and encouraged Morningstar to do the same. Ciara Wolfe and Sarah Blechta clarified that while the board calculated amount per child, Discovery may allocate their award based on need as they have been doing. Ciara explained awarding both Morningstar and Discovery the same amount per service per child.

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[\(01:58:01\)](#) Barbara Rowley made public comment supporting need-based childcare.

[\(01:58:17\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

Friends of the Big Sky Community Library

[\(01:58:35\)](#) **Motion:** fully fund the Library request for \$17,500 (reduced by \$15,000): Steve Johnson

Seconded: Sarah Blechta

[\(01:58:52\)](#) Sarah Blechta discussed the percentage of operational budget and reliance on Resort Tax.

[\(01:59:32\)](#) Grace Young asked about the \$15,000 grant from 3 Rivers; Kathy House explained their Spring request can be decreased by \$15,000. The board clarified motion to include the reduced request.

[\(02:01:01\)](#) Ciara Wolfe discussed possibility of a Library District to help fund a public library with property taxes that are currently funding the Bozeman library.

[\(02:02:02\)](#) Danny Bierschwale asked, and Kathy House clarified that the library pays rent directly to Ophir School.

[\(02:02:35\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

Big Sky Search & Rescue

[\(02:02:49\)](#) **Motion:** fully fund Big Sky Search & Rescue: Steve Johnson

Seconded: Sarah Blechta/Grace Young

[\(02:03:16\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

Warren Miller Performing Arts Center

[\(02:03:23\)](#) **Motion:** fully fund WMPAC in the amount of \$90,000: Ciara Wolfe

Seconded: Grace Young

[\(02:03:38\)](#) Ciara Wolfe discussed WMPAC's response to COVID-19 and their reduction in requests; Steve Johnson and Sarah Blechta agreed.

[\(02:04:15\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

Arts Council of Big Sky

[\(02:04:26\)](#) **Motion:** to fund the Arts Council \$30,000 for Summer programming in leu of Music in the Mountains: Ciara Wolfe **Seconded:** Sarah Blechta/Steve Johnson

[\(02:04:54\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

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Reserve Fund Discussion

[\(02:05:32\)](#) **Motion:** reduce reserve to \$500,000: Ciara Wolfe

Seconded: Steve Johnson

[\(02:05:58\)](#) Ciara Wolfe explained reasoning and suggested setting aside \$500,000 in each Spring and Fall cycle.

Board members discussed reserve funds.

[\(02:07:52\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

Women In Action

[\(02:08:03\)](#) **Motion:** fully fund WIA for \$25,000: Sarah Blechta

Seconded: Steve Johnson

[\(02:08:28\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

The Big Sky Post Office

[\(02:08:36\)](#) **Motion:** fully fund the Post Office for \$18,000: Ciara Wolfe

Seconded: Sarah Blechta

[\(02:09:16\)](#) Kevin Germain asked how many PO Boxes are available; Al Malinowski explained and discussed challenges with growth.

[\(02:14:06\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance

[\(02:14:21\)](#) **Motion:** to fund the Alliance for \$13,458: Sarah Blechta

Seconded: Ciara Wolfe

[\(02:14:38\)](#) Sarah Blechta and Ciara Wolfe shared their appreciation for the Alliance, and all applicants that were able to reduce their request in light of COVID-19 challenges.

[\(02:15:32\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

The Rotary Foundation

[\(02:15:42\)](#) **Motion:** fully fund the Rotary Foundation for \$3,060: Steve Johnson

Seconded: Sarah Blechta

[\(02:16:21\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

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Habitat for Humanity Gallatin Valley

[\(02:16:33\)](#) **Motion:** fully fund Habitat for \$17,500 (reduced amount): Sarah Blechta

Seconded: Steve Johnson

[\(02:17:08\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

Gallatin Valley Snowmobile Association

[\(02:17:14\)](#) **Motion:** to fully fund GVSA for \$7,000: Steve Johnson

Seconded: Ciara Wolfe

[\(02:18:14\)](#) Brian Capdeville of GVSA clarified requirements for December; Board members discussed when awarded funds will be available.

[\(02:25:31\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

Big Sky Community Food Bank

[\(02:25:49\)](#) **Motion:** fully fund the Food Bank: Steve Johnson

Seconded: Sarah Blechta

[\(02:25:54\)](#) Grace Young asked about reduced request of \$44,212; Sarah Gaither explained leftover amount from FY20 award.

[\(02:27:05\)](#) Kevin Germain and Sarah Blechta explained that there is not a 'rollover' and Danny Bierschwale clarified that any FY20 awards must be requested by July 15th, 2020.

[\(02:29:34\)](#) Danny Bierschwale clarified the Food Bank's total FY21 request for \$50,910, and \$25,452 for the Spring.

[\(02:30:44\)](#) Ciara Wolfe discussed possible philanthropic support of the Food Bank. Sarah Gaither explained that the Food Bank has submitted grant applications in the past but was turned down by all 3 Community Foundations for funding.

[\(02:36:20\)](#) Ryan Newcomb shared public comment in support of the Food Bank

[\(02:37:16\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

Parkview West Homeowners Association

[\(02:38:06\)](#) **Motion:** to not fund the Karst Bridge project: Sarah Blechta

Seconded: Ciara Wolfe

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[\(02:38:24\)](#) Sarah Blechta explained that there is not enough public use to support project.

[\(02:38:32\)](#) Danny Bierschwale addressed questions submitted by Denise Wade; Kevin Germain explained that he feels public need is already being addressed with existing bridge and the bridge replacement only benefits homeowners. Board members shared concerns with funding HOAs and possible legal restraints.

[\(02:42:34\)](#) Denise Wade shared comments regarding infrastructure and fire concerns.

[\(02:45:18\)](#) Sarah Blechta and Steve Johnson discussed public impact and needs. Steve Johnson explained that '1% for infrastructure' must be voted on by voters in the District.

[\(02:47:41\)](#) Kevin Germain suggested forming a rural improvement district to finance construction of the bridge.

[\(02:49:57\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Big Sky Co

[\(02:52:13\)](#) **Motion:** defer request until the Fall funding cycle: Ciara Wolfe

Seconded: Sarah Blechta

Ciara Wolfe and Sarah Blechta shared support for behavioral health but would like to wait until it has been approved by the school and revisit request in the Fall.

[\(02:53:11\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

Wildlife Conservation Society

[\(02:54:33\)](#) **Motion:** fund Bear Smart Big Sky \$12,034: Sarah Blechta

Seconded: Grace Young

[\(02:54:55\)](#) Sarah Blechta explained support and reasoning for funding 50%. Steve Johnson shared concerns with Ordinance enforcement. Kris Inman discussed making bear proof trash cans the only trash cans available in Big Sky and an Ordinance is just one option being explored.

[\(03:00:18\)](#) **Motion amended:** fund 75% of Bear Smart Big Sky for \$18,051: Sarah Blechta

Seconded: Ciara Wolfe

[\(03:01:12\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

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Montana Land Reliance

[\(03:01:35\)](#) **Motion:** to fund the Montana Land Reliance 75% of request: Ciara Wolfe

Seconded: Sarah Blechta

[\(03:01:53\)](#) Sarah Blechta discussed the importance of have project-based requests for Conservation for the best decision making.

[\(03:04:16\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

Gallatin River Task Force

[01:56:42 PM \(03:05:27\)](#) Ciara Wolfe discussed percentage of funding for GRTF. Grace Young suggested funding all conservation organizations 75%.

[\(03:09:02\)](#) **Motion:** to fund 75% of GRTF operations for \$87,408: Grace Young

Seconded: Sarah Blechta

[\(03:09:28\)](#) Sarah Blechta explained that funds all conservation type projects at 75%, with the exception of Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance who had already drastically reduced their request.

[\(03:09:52\)](#) Public inquired about confidential comments, Kevin Germain explained public meeting rules and all comments are part of the public record.

[\(03:10:28\)](#) **Vote:** Motion Passed

[\(03:11:43\)](#) **Motion: to Adjourn**

Respectfully Submitted,



Steve Johnson (Nov 9, 2020 13:51 MST)

Steve Johnson, Secretary & Treasurer

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