



Meeting Minutes - Application Review #2

June 10th, 2021 | 5:30 pm

Big Sky Resort Area District
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This meeting was held remotely through Zoom



I. Open Meeting

[\(00:02:51\)](#) Kevin Germain called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

[\(00:03:00\)](#) Jenny Muscat read a list of representatives for sponsor organizations:

*Big Sky Transportation District—David Kack, Sam Luedtke, & Ennion Williams
Gallatin County Sheriff's Office—Dan Springer, Mark Woodard, & Dan Haydon
Big Sky Fire Department—Greg Megaard, Seth Barker, & Dustin Tetrault
Gallatin Canyon Water and Sewer District—Scott Altman, Kristin Gardner, & Mace Mangold
Big Sky Community Housing Trust—Laura Seyfang
Visit Big Sky—Tim Drain, Lori Wetzel, & Brad Niva
Big Sky Chamber of Commerce—Katie Grice, Lori Wetzel, & Brad Niva
Big Sky Community Organization—Whitney Montgomery & Adam Johnson
Gallatin River Task Force—Kristin Gardner, Ryan Newcomb, & Emily O'Connor
The Post Office, LLC—Al Malinowski
Arts Council of Big Sky—Brian Hurlbut & Katie Alvin
Warren Miller Performing Arts Center—John Zirkle
Morningstar Learning Center—Mariel Butan & Stephanie Kissell
Big Sky Skating & Hockey Association, Inc.—Ryan Blechta & Gary Hermann
Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance—Jennifer Mohler
Gallatin Valley Snowmobile Association—Bryan Capdeville
Big Sky Trails Recreation and Parks District—Al Malinowski
The Montana Land Reliance—Jessie Wiese
Big Sky SNO, Inc—Blair Mohn, Ania Bulis, & Marne Hayes
Big Sky Discovery Academy—Laura MacPherson, Hannah Richardson, & Scott Poloff
Friends of the Big Sky Community Library—Dani Kabisch, Teri Kendziorski, & Kathy House
Women In Action—Jean Behr
Big Sky Community Food Bank—Sarah Gaither Bivins & Jill Holder
Big Sky Ski Education Foundation—Jeremy Ueland, Jessie Lepel, & Markus Kirchmayr
Center for Large Landscape Conservation—Deb Davidson, Abigail Breuer, & Liz Fairbank
Big Sky Search and Rescue—Greg Clark & Mark Bradford*

A. Public Comment

[\(00:05:12\)](#) Jenny Muscat read an overview of public comment received prior to the meeting and read guidelines and tips for productive public comment. (Read public comments received before the meeting here:  )

[\(00:08:32\)](#) Kevin Germain thanked applicants and shared appreciation for public comments. Kevin explained that preliminary decisions were made at the previous meeting on June 7th and the Board will finalize those decisions tonight.

B. Regular Agenda

a. Funds Available Estimate: *Discussion*

[\(00:11:04\)](#) Daniel Bierschwale gave an overview of funds available and preliminary recommendations from the previous application review meeting on June 7th.

C. Application Review: *Action*

- a. 3-year Government Operations
- b. Projects over \$100,000
- c. Project under \$100,000

[\(00:13:07\)](#) **Motion:** to accept allocations as presented: Sarah Blechta

Seconded: Ciara Wolfe

[\(00:13:38\)](#) Tim Kent, chair of the Big Sky Community Housing Trust Board (BSCHT), asked questions regarding funding outside the normal award cycle.

[\(00:14:52\)](#) Kevin Germain clarified that over the last 5 years \$6.9 million and 25% of total allocations each year, have been awarded for community housing efforts. Kevin reiterated that the board is committed to housing efforts but require more details for future projects. Steve Johnson shared his hesitation to purchase land with cash and interest in exploring bonding and other opportunities.

[\(00:16:30\)](#) Sarah Blechta explained that she and the Board have been very supportive of housing efforts, as shown in previously funded projects, and she felt the BSCHT's 'Future Development TBD' lacked sufficient information for funding.

[\(00:17:03\)](#) Tim Kent asked the Board to reconsider the BSCHT's 'Future Development TBD' project and shared comments regarding reserves.

[\(00:21:56\)](#) Laura Seyfang of the BSCHT shared concerns for workforce housing as 70% of the local workforce commutes.

[\(00:25:16\)](#) Brad Niva, CEO of the Chamber of Commerce and Visit Big Sky (VBS), updated the Board on how they are managing their budget and projects to adjust their focus to tourism management and

stewardship of the community.

[\(00:28:39\)](#) Tim Drain, VBS board member, discussed marketing efforts.

[\(00:30:48\)](#) Sarah Blechta asked Kim Beatty for her legal opinion regarding projects without details and reserve funds. *(Kevin Germain delayed discussion until after public comment)*

[\(00:32:03\)](#) Greg Megaard of the Fire Department explained their prioritization of capital projects.

[\(00:33:45\)](#) Kim Beatty, legal counsel for the District, shared her concerns for lack of information and additional details regarding BSCHT projects and did not believe there were sufficient details in the application.

[\(00:38:16\)](#) Ciara Wolfe shared her support for housing efforts and explained her concerns with lack of details in housing project applications. Board members discussed reserves and funding options for future projects.

[\(00:42:21\)](#) Kim Beatty shared opinions and legal analysis of maintaining reserve accounts.

[\(00:45:50\)](#) Steve Johnson requested to revisit the Chamber of Commerce recommendations. Ciara Wolfe discussed Chamber and VBS recommendations.

[\(00:48:10\)](#) Kevin Germain suggested increasing the Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance award and suggested adding contract conditions for the Canyon Water & Sewer District. Steve Johnson encouraged the Canyon Water & Sewer District to “stand themselves up” quickly in order to receive funding from other sources.

[\(00:51:42\)](#) Ciara Wolfe clarified that Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance requested funding for 3 projects totaling \$75,220 (\$73,238 was recommended for funding.) Sarah Blechta advised applicants to calculate operations/administration cost into each project.

[\(00:54:54\)](#) **Motion Withdrawn:** Sarah Blechta

[\(00:55:11\)](#) Steve Johnson shared that he has received public feedback requesting reduced funding for the Chamber and VBS. Steve encouraged the Chamber to increase their membership dues to match Resort Tax funding.

Motion: allocate \$160,000 for Big Sky Chamber Staffing & Operations project: Steve Johnson

Seconded: Grace Young

[\(00:57:35\)](#) *Applicant Comment:* Brad Niva expressed concerns over maintaining staff and asked the Board to reconsider.

[\(00:59:08\)](#) Sarah Blechta asked the Chamber how the recommended funding would affect their operations. Brad Niva and Lori Wetzel shared concerns with possible staffing cuts and increasing membership dues.

[\(01:02:37\)](#) Katie Grice, of the Chamber, discussed membership dues.

[\(01:04:08\)](#) *Public Comment:* Jenny Muscat read public comments made through Zoom Chat.

Liv Grubaugh commented: "I am in full disagreement with Steve Johnson's motion in regards to further decreasing the award to the VBS Staffing and Operations ask."

[\(01:04:30\)](#) *Public Comment:* Yann Benjamin discussed the efforts of the Chamber of Commerce.

[\(01:06:30\)](#) Sarah Blechta supported giving Brad Niva time considering his transparency and willingness to make the cuts he has already. Steve Johnson encouraged the members of the Chamber of Commerce to show value through their investment with matching funds. Board members discussed Chamber and VBS efforts.

[\(01:09:43\)](#) **Vote: Motion Did Not Pass** 2 in favor, 3 opposed

[\(01:10:14\)](#) **Motion:** approve recommendations as presented: Ciara Wolfe

Seconded: Sarah Blechta

[\(01:11:37\)](#) *Public Comment:* Jenny Muscat read public comments made through Zoom Chat.

Liv Grubaugh commented: "The Chamber will play an extremely important role in educating our influx of tourists on how to be guests in Big Sky-- how to recreate safely, where to lodge, where to dine, etc. They are not only focused on bringing new guests to the area."

[\(01:12:37\)](#) Grace Young discussed what she has heard from the public and shared that while she appreciates the efforts of the Chamber, she questioned their role in the community and suggested a focus on small business needs. Steve Johnson discussed the Chamber's involvement in local governance. Sarah Blechta encouraged giving the Chamber and VBS a year to stand themselves up and give their new leadership time to focus appropriate efforts.

[\(01:17:55\)](#) Kevin Germain encouraged creating a subcommittee to work with the Big Sky Community Housing Trust to come up with a better route forward. Kevin also noted that he only supports funding the Canyon Water & Sewer District for 3 years.

[\(01:19:02\)](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** 3 in favor, 2 opposed

View Final FY22 Funding Award Decisions:  

D. Public Comment

[\(01:20:52\)](#) David Kack thanked the Board and staff and shared appreciation for their support. He also updated everyone on the Transportation District's funding received from Gallatin & Madison County.

[\(01:22:29\)](#) Carol Collins requested Board Members to more clearly identify how they voted. Carol asked and Kevin Germain explained that he, as Board Chair, only votes in cases of ties based on "Robert's Rules of Order."

Public Comments made through Zoom Chat:

Lori Wetzel: “the chamber and visit big sky are not able to fund raise like BSCO can, we are a 501 C6 not a 501 C3”


Tim Kent: “Thank you Mr. Germain.”

Jill Holder: “Thank you Kevin and the entire board! Difficult job!”

Greg Clark: “Thank you all!”

Jeremy Ueland: “Thank you for all your support”

[\(01:26:30\) Motion to Adjourn:](#) Sarah Blechta

View Final FY22 Funding Award Decisions:  [↩](#)

Respectfully Submitted,

Steven Johnson

[Steven Johnson \(Jul 14, 2021 16:05 MDT\)](#)

Steve Johnson, Secretary & Treasurer

BSRAD BOARD & STAFF: Kevin Germain, Chair | Sarah Blechta, Vice Chair | Steve Johnson, Secretary & Treasurer | Ciara Wolfe, Director | Grace Young, Director | Daniel Bierschwale, Executive Director | Kristin Drain, Finance & Compliance Manager | Jenny Muscat, Operations Manager | Sara Huger, Administrative Assistant

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