



Application Review #2 Meeting Minutes

June 6th, 2023 | 5:30 PM

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

FY24 Application Review meetings were held on Monday, June 5th, Tuesday, June 6th, and Thursday, June 8th, at 5:30 pm at BASE Community Center (285 Simkins Dr) and through Zoom.

I. Open Meeting

[00:01:47](#) Sarah Blechta called meeting to order at 5:30pm.

A. Roll Call

[00:01:56](#) All board members present.

[00:02:22](#) Sarah Blechta explained review process with tentative decisions being made during this meeting and final decisions will be made on Thursday June 8th.

B. Public Comment

[00:03:56](#) Jenny Muscat explained directions for public comment and reviewed public comment received prior to meeting.

C. Application Review: Action

[00:07:14](#) Kevin Germain explained his philosophy including planning for future infrastructure and capital projects. Kevin thanked all collectors and businesses who make these investments possible.

[00:08:21](#) Ciara Wolfe explained her approach of 7.5% increased growth for projects from last year and discussed declining collections. Ciara encouraged at least 1:1 matching funds. Ciara also heavily weighted public support for projects.

[00:10:36](#) Steve Johnson expressed support for funding strategic investments with lasting value as a priority and matching funds.

[00:12:26](#) Grace Young discussed her process including matching funds and public support.

[00:14:03](#) Sarah Blechta discussed funding process and dispelled misconceptions around cutting budgets and reminded everyone these are public funds used for community needs.

[00:16:54](#) Daniel Bierschwale shared an overview of process, project requests, and contingency recommendations.

[00:20:23](#) Daniel explained the prioritize tool and community engagement.

[00:21:51](#) Daniel reviewed budget, including precommitments and government services, and reviewed preliminary decisions from Monday June 5th.

[00:24:37](#) Emily O'Connor with the Gallatin River Task Force explained they were reducing their request for Gallatin River Access Restoration from \$184,083 to \$127,083.

a. Health & Safety

[00:25:38](#) Daniel Bierschwale gave an overview of the projects under Health & Safety.

[00:26:30](#) **Motion:** fund Wellness in Action's (WIA) 'Counseling Services Hub - Building Remodel' for \$100,000 and 'Sliding Scale Support for Counseling Services' for \$50,000: Ciara Wolfe

Second: Kevin Germain

[00:26:47](#) Ciara Wolfe noted the tax dollars collected from recreational cannabis sales were \$150,000 over the last year and supported those dollars being invested in counseling services. Board members agreed.

[00:28:12](#) Public Comment in support of Wellness in Action.

[00:28:59](#) Seth Griggs Ryan shared support for Wellness in Action and noted Rimrock Foundation will be delivering Narcan kits and training free for the community.

[00:30:30](#) Danielle Osti Chenoweth made public comment in support of counseling services and Wellness in Action's 'Counseling Services Hub – Building Remodel'.

[00:32:56](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** Unanimously

[00:33:18](#) **Motion:** fund Big Sky Community Food Bank's 'Emergency Food & Social Services for \$70,000: Kevin Germain

Second: Grace Young

[00:33:28](#) Kevin Germain thanked Sarah Gaither of the Food Bank for all she does for the community.

[00:33:35](#) Ciara Wolfe shared support for funding \$55,500 as 7.5% increase over last year.

[00:34:36](#) Sarah Gaither from the Big Sky Community Food Bank thanked the board and explained the increase due to 8% inflation (\$1.48/pound of food now \$1.60/pound of food) and 97% increase, almost double, in service numbers and purchased 250% more food over last year.

[00:36:00](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** 4-1

[00:36:34](#) **Motion:** fund Big Sky Community Organization's (BSCO) 'BASE as Disaster Relief Shelter' for \$100,000: Sarah Blechta

Second: Kevin Germain

[00:36:45](#) Sarah Blechta shared support for this project as a safe space for children and a place for the community in case the power were to go out.

[00:37:37](#) Kevin Germain questioned circumstances of natural disasters and if the community would use this.

[00:38:22](#) Ciara Wolfe supported project as they had matching funds, if the budget affords, and considered it a want over critical need. Grace Young shared similar concerns but asked about other options.

[00:39:23](#) Sarah Blechta discussed natural disasters and the concern for losing power over a natural disaster.

[00:40:37](#) Whitney Montgomery of BSCO explained the Red Cross had approached BASE as being a disaster relief shelter in the case of any natural disaster and felt it was a need from the community. Whitney explained partnership with the Fire Department who was requesting a FEMA grant for the generator and this project would fund the concrete pad and connection to building.

[00:41:27](#) Greg Megaard of the Fire Department explained generator funding and community need.

[00:42:21](#) Dan Taft shared public comment in opposition to project.

[00:42:50](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** 4-1

b. Recreation & Conservation

[00:44:30](#) **Motion:** fund Gallatin River Task Force's (GRTF) 'West Fork Nitrogen Reduction' for \$316,337: Kevin Germain

Second: Sarah Blechta

[00:44:45](#) Kevin Germain discussed the importance of the Gallatin River to the community.

[00:45:26](#) Ciara Wolfe discussed matching funds and high priority rating from the community.

[00:46:33](#) Seth Griggs Ryan shared public comments related to fertilization and landscaping, and asked how the project would reduce nitrogen related to construction and golf course maintenance.

[00:47:52](#) Kristin Gardner of GRTF explained a wetland designed to treat and reduce 1,000 pounds of nitrogen a year.

[00:48:38](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** Unanimously

[00:48:54](#) Daniel Bierschwale explained recommended contingencies and reviewed projects with less than 50% matching funds.

[00:49:42](#) **Motion:** fund BSCO's 'Trail Projects & Safety' for \$150,000 and 'Parks & Trails Equipment' for \$115,000: Steve Johnson

Second: Grace Young

[00:51:01](#) Kevin Germain discussed high scoring for parks and recreation among community and shared concerns with rising costs and compared other cities. Kevin shared support for assessment.

[00:52:35](#) Ciara Wolfe encouraged 1:1 matches with all BSCO projects and suggested funding 'Trail Projects & Safety' for \$100,000 and 'Parks & Trails Equipment' for \$73,718.

[00:53:39](#) Whitney Montgomery with BSCO discussed correlation between recreation and behavioral health. Whitney discussed fundraising to meet 1:1 match next year.

[00:56:16](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** 4-1

[00:56:59](#) **Motion:** fund Big Sky Trails, Recreation, and Parks (BSTRP) 'Recreational Asset Maintenance' for \$955,346: Sarah Blechta

Second: Kevin Germain

[00:57:25](#) Sarah Blechta shared support for assessment and explained funding 85% of the request. Ciara Wolfe suggested \$1.1 million at a 7.5% increase over last year.

[01:00:25](#) Steve Johnson recused himself from voting on this project as he is a BSTRP Board Member.

[01:03:07](#) Al Malinowski, BSTRP Board Member, answered questions and explained cost increases and expanded services. Al explained the assessment process and timing; and Board Members discussed.

[01:13:37](#) **Vote:** Motion did not pass 1-3

[01:14:08](#) **Motion:** fund Big Sky Trails, Recreation, and Parks (BSTRP) 'Recreational Asset Maintenance' for \$1,123,936: Kevin Germain

Second: Ciara Wolfe

[01:18:06](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** 3-1

[01:18:39](#) **Motion:** fund Gallatin River Task Force's (GRTF) 'Gallatin River Access Restoration' for \$127,083: Kevin Germain

Second: Grace Young

[01:19:23](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** Unanimously

[01:19:57](#) **Motion:** fund Big Sky Sustainability Network Organization's (SNO) 'Solarize Big Sky: Riverview' for \$215,000 (a 1:1 match): Ciara Wolfe

Second: Sarah Blechta

[01:21:44](#) Lizzy Peyton with SNO discussed matching funds through grants and explained eligibility requirements. Board Members asked questions and Lizzy made clarifications.

[01:23:23](#) **Motion Amended:** fund Big Sky Sustainability Network Organization's (SNO) 'Solarize Big Sky: Riverview' for \$210,000: Ciara Wolfe

Second: Sarah Blechta

[01:23:40](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** 3-2

[01:24:28](#) **Motion:** fund BSCO's 'Big Sky Community Park Implementation Phase 1' for \$718,000 with contingency to formally request funding from the Futbol Club: Sarah Blechta

Second: Steve Johnson

[01:25:02](#) Sarah Blechta explained various entities using the park share funding.

[01:26:11](#) Whitney Montgomery discussed community input and support.

[01:27:09](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** Unanimously

[01:27:56](#) **Motion:** fund GRTF's 'Water Planning, Coordination & Outreach' for \$219,794: Steve Johnson
Second: Kevin Germain

[01:29:23](#) Ciara Wolfe explained recommendation of matching funds and funding \$160,000; Sarah Blechta agreed.

[01:30:34](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** 3-2

[01:31:06](#) **Motion:** fund Center for Large Landscape Conservation's 'US-191/MT-64 Assessment: Action Plan Development' for \$85,000: Steve Johnson
Second: Grace Young

[01:31:24](#) Steve Johnson explained unanimous support and recommendation from Gallatin County Commission.

[01:32:56](#) Ciara Wolfe suggested 1:1 match at \$77,500. Steve Johnson discussed current matching funds from Gallatin County and FEMA.

[01:33:41](#) Abigail Brewer with the Center for Large Landscape Conservation shared work on 191 and throughout the state of Montana. Abigail discussed grants and federal funding for wildlife crossings and search for additional funding.

[01:35:39](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** 4-1

[01:36:34](#) **Motion:** fund GRTF's 'Middle Fork Restoration' for \$82,736, 'Water Conservation' for \$67,791, and 'Watershed Monitoring' for \$50,580: Sarah Blechta
Second: Steve Johnson

[01:36:53](#) Sarah Blechta discussed importance of water to the community.

[01:37:17](#) Ciara Wolfe suggested funding 'Water Conservation' for \$61,000 at 7.5% increase.

[01:37:54](#) Emily O'Connor with GRTF explained scope of work, increased costs, and matching funds.

[01:38:54](#) Whitney Montgomery with BSCO offered to remove 2 of their projects, 'New Accounting Software' and 'Two-Way AV Communications Platform' from funding request.

[01:39:40](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** Unanimously

[01:41:23](#) **Motion:** fund SNO's 'Climate Action Plan (CAP) Implementation' for \$43,000, a 7.5% increase from last year: Ciara Wolfe
Second: Kevin Germain

[01:42:10](#) Lizzy Peyton with SNO explained the increase was due to hiring a consultant.

[01:43:24](#) Board Members asked questions and discussed SNO's 'Climate Action Plan (CAP) Implementation' and 'Green Build Toolkit.'

[01:47:03](#) Amy Fonte with SNO discussed the 'Green Build Toolkit' and collaboration.

[01:48:48](#) **Vote:** Motion did not pass

[01:49:21](#) **Motion:** fund SNO's 'Climate Action Plan (CAP) Implementation' for \$60,000: Kevin Germain
Second: Grace Young

[01:51:01](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** 4-1

[01:51:26](#) **Motion:** not to fund 'Green Build Toolkit' or 'Solarize Big Sky: Credit Program' projects: Ciara Wolfe
Second: Sarah Blechta

[01:51:58](#) Board Members discussed and asked SNO questions. Lizzy Peyton answered questions and discussed project priorities.

[02:00:03](#) **Amended Motion:** to fund 'Green Build Toolkit' for \$90,000 and not fund 'Solarize Big Sky: Credit Program': Ciara Wolfe
Second: Sarah Blechta

[02:03:33](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** 4-1

[02:04:17](#) *Break*

[02:11:56](#) *Returned from Break at 7:41pm*

[02:12:10](#) **Motion:** fund Southwest Montana Mountain Bike Association's (SWMMBA) 'Big Sky Community Park Pump Track - Phase 2' for \$50,000: Kevin Germain

Second: Ciara Wolfe

[02:12:22](#) Board Members discussed. Ciara Wolfe supported this project as it had more than 50% matching funds.

[02:13:24](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** Unanimously

[02:13:39](#) **Motion:** fund Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance's (GISA) 'Invasive Species Education Project' for \$36,609, a 7.5% increase over last year: Ciara Wolfe

Second: Kevin Germain

[02:14:27](#) Jen Mohler with GISA, now Grow Wild, discussed projects and their impact.

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

[02:16:13](#) **Motion:** fund Big Sky Community Organization's (BSCO) 'Community Warming Hut & Green Room' for \$50,000: Kevin Germain

Second: Steve Johnson

[02:16:33](#) Ciara Wolfe suggested funding for \$37,500 at a 1:1 match and Sarah Blechta agreed.

[02:16:51](#) Sarah asked questions regarding funding from the Arts Council of Big Sky and Whitney Montgomery clarified they will be paying an annual rent.

[02:17:41](#) **Amended Motion:** fund Big Sky Community Organization's (BSCO) 'Community Warming Hut & Green Room' for \$37,500: Kevin Germain

Second: Steve Johnson

[02:18:19](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** Unanimously

[02:18:46](#) **Motion:** fund SNO's 'Carpool Incentivization Program' for \$50,000: Sarah Blechta

Second: Kevin Germain

[02:18:57](#) Sarah Blechta supported this project as a supplement to public transportation and supported fewer cars on the roads. Ciara Wolfe shared support for safety.

[02:19:52](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** 4-1

[02:20:25](#) Sarah Blechta reminded everyone that BSCO pulled their request for 'Two-Way AV Communications Platform' project.

[02:20:46](#) **Motion:** not to fund Big Sky Skijoring's 'Best in the West Showdown Annual Skijoring Event': Sarah Blechta

Second: Ciara Wolfe

[02:20:51](#) Sarah Blechta explained concerns with funding for-profit events and creating a precedent. Ciara Wolfe agreed.

[02:22:12](#) Justa Adams with Big Sky Skijoring explained the need for land and space for track.

[02:23:27](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** Unanimously

[02:23:54](#) **Motion:** fund Gallatin Valley Snowmobile Association's (GVSA) 'Buck Ridge Snowmobile Trail Additional Groomings' for \$30,000: Kevin Germain

Second: Grace Young

[02:24:16](#) Ciara Wolfe suggested \$29,029 at 7.5% over last year.

[02:25:21](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** 4-1

[02:25:53](#) **Motion:** fund Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance (GISA/Grow Wild) projects at 7.5% over last year, 'Grail Gardens Project' for \$24,837, 'Landowner Stewardship Project' for \$25,180, 'Wildlife Habitat Conservation Project' for \$23,171, and 'Clean Recreation Project' for \$17,608: Ciara Wolfe

Second: Grace Young

[02:26:50](#) Kevin Germain asked and Jen Mohler, with GISA/Grow Wild, explained budget, funding, and rebranding.

[02:30:25](#) Grace Young asked about fees for services and Jen Mohler explained.

[02:32:19](#) Lizzy Peyton made public comment in support of GISA/Grow Wild.

[02:33:12](#) Shawn Simpson with GISA/Grow Wild made public comment in support of GISA/Grow Wild.

[02:38:18](#) Madeleine Feher made public comment in support of GISA/Grow Wild.

[02:39:31](#) Board Members discussed GISA/Grow Wild projects.

[02:42:59](#) Susan Lance shared public comment.

[02:44:17](#) **Vote:** Motion did not pass 1-4

[02:44:45](#) **Motion:** fund Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance (GISA/Grow Wild) projects, 'Grail Gardens Project' for \$37,037, 'Landowner Stewardship Project' for \$36,307, 'Wildlife Habitat Conservation Project' for \$29,167, and 'Clean Recreation Project' for \$25,855: Kevin Germain

Second: Steve Johnson

[02:46:13](#) **Vote: Motion Passed** 4-1

E. Public Comment

[02:47:00](#) Brad Niva, Big Sky Chamber of Commerce and Visit Big Sky, asked question about previous year's funding awards.

[02:48:29](#) Lizzy Peyton, Big Sky SNO, shared comments regarding equality vs equity, and solutions.

[02:49:48](#) Motion to Adjourn

Respectfully Submitted,

Steven Johnson

Steven Johnson (Jul 12, 2023 13:19 MDT)

Steve Johnson, Secretary & Treasurer

BSRAD BOARD & STAFF: Sarah Blechta, Chair | Ciara Wolfe, Vice Chair | Steve Johnson, Secretary & Treasurer | Kevin Germain, Director | Grace Young, Director | Daniel Bierschwale, Executive Director | Kristin Drain, Finance & Compliance Manager | Jenny Muscat, Deputy Director | Tammy Estensen, Communications & Community Engagement Manager | Sara Huger, Office Manager

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