

**BIG SKY RESORT AREA DISTRICT  
11 LONE PEAK DRIVE NO. 204  
BIG SKY, MONTANA**

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
JULY 10, 2024, 9:00 A.M.**

**BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF:**

Sarah Blechta	Chair
Kevin Germain	Director
Grace Young	Secretary and Treasurer
John Zirkle	Director
Ashley Wilson	Director
Daniel Bierschwale	Executive Director
Jenny Muscat	Deputy Director
Tammy Estensen	Communications and Community Engagement
Jackie Haines	Director of Economic and Strategic Development
Kristin Drain	Finance and Compliance Manager
Kim Beatty	BSRAD Attorney (via teleconference)

Minutes prepared by Jolene de Jager of Minutes Solutions Inc. from a recording

**1. CLOSED MEETING**

The following topics were discussed:

- Litigation Strategy
- Confidential Employee Reviews

**2. ROLL CALL**

There being a quorum present, and adequate and proper notice of the meeting having been given, the open meeting was called to order at 9:48 a.m.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ashley Wilson announced she will be moving back to Michigan. She plans to remain on the Board to assist with the transition. The Board expressed gratitude and noted that both the community and BSCO will miss her.

**4. CONSENT AGENDA**

**On a motion made by Kevin Germain, seconded by Grace Young, it was resolved to approve the consent agenda, excluding the May 8, 2024, minutes. Motion carried.**

The Board pointed out a missing motion in the May 8, 2024, minutes, and it was noted that a new company, Minutes Solutions, is being used to generate minutes due to Sara Hegers departure and the decision not to refill her position.

**5. REGULAR AGENDA**

**5.1 Old Business**

### 5.1.1 Resolution 2024-03R

**On a motion made by John Zirkle, seconded by Ashley Wilson, it was resolved to approve Resolution 2024-03R as presented. Motion carried.**

### 5.1.2 Gallatin Canyon Water and Sewer Pipeline Feasibility Determination

**On a motion made by John Zirkle, seconded by Ashley Wilson, it was resolved to accept the Gallatin Canyon Water and Sewer Pipeline Feasibility Determination. Motion carried.**

The project feasibility is evaluated based on three fundamental aspects: discharge feasibility, logistical feasibility, and economic feasibility. The discharge feasibility is supported by a Department of Environmental Quality DEQ letter, and the acquisition of a key property and cooperation with the Forest Service MDT improves the logistical feasibility. The primary concern is economic feasibility, particularly the cost of the Highway 64 corridor element, which has doubled from the original \$12 million estimate. This portion of the project is under the jurisdiction of the Big Sky County Water and Sewer District, which must assess the cost-benefit for its user base. The project plans to use groundwater discharge as the primary method and land application reuse as a secondary method. There is no intention for direct discharge.

A letter summarizing the project deems it feasible and outlines two potential options for moving forward: A "go it alone" solution and a "co-solution." The "go it alone" option is considered if navigating the Highway 64 corridor becomes problematic. However, the "co-solution" is preferred for its community-wide benefits, including discharge disposal capacity and operational advantages. The rationale for pursuing groundwater discharge was questioned, and it was clarified that it helps with aquifer recharge and nutrient removal, offering environmental benefits over direct river discharge. Despite logistical hurdles, this approach is seen as the right choice for the community.

Johnny O'Connor, the executive director of Big Sky Water Service, discussed the importance of water sustainability and the potential for growth in the reuse application sector. He expressed optimism about the project's future despite existing challenges. The Board was asked to accept the feasibility determination and pass the project to the CIP committee for further integration into the broader context.

### 5.1.3 Microgrant Application – Safety Events Trailer

**On a motion made by Kevin Germain, seconded by Ashley Wilson, it was resolved to approve the Microgrant Application for the safety events trailer. Motion carried.**

Sgt. Daniel Haydon explained that the trailer, measuring approximately seven by 14 feet, is intended to be filled with cones, barricades, and signs to facilitate evacuation routes, close off subdivisions, and shuttle people in the right direction during significant events like qualifiers or evacuations. In addition to emergency purposes, the trailer will be used at public events to promote a notification app via QR codes, encouraging people to opt into the system for better preparedness. It was clarified that the primary purpose of the trailer is not for entertainment events but for emergencies such as road closures due to fatal accidents, wildfires, or earthquakes.

The notification application Everbridge allows users to opt in at different levels and set specific addresses for alerts. It provides notifications for various emergencies, including weather conditions and incidents near the user's house. The public's immediate interest in downloading the app was noted, and the communication strategy for integrating this project is appreciated for its critical importance. Sgt. Daniel Haydon clarified misconceptions about emergency evacuation plans, explaining that there is a simple, adaptable plan for various events like

floods and wildfires, and stressed the importance of community awareness as fire season approaches.

## **5.2 New Business**

### **5.2.1 Officer Elections**

**On a motion made by Kevin Germain, seconded by Grace Young, it was resolved to schedule a work session for the committees and officers. Motion carried.**

The Board decided to postpone officer elections to a future meeting to allow for a comprehensive working session to align committees, bylaws, and officer roles and ensure they are appropriately structured.

### **5.2.2 Annual Budget Cycle Updates**

The Board discussed annual budget cycle updates, highlighting the importance of feedback from the community and the timing of the grant cycle. One of the significant challenges identified is the short time frame for new board members elected in May to get up to speed and review all the grants, which previously had a more extended period when elections were held in November. Feedback from the public indicated that the budgeting process, although awkward initially, was influential in focusing budgets for impact areas. The fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30, with most grants being extended in the fourth quarter.

The Organization faces challenges in managing cash flow, especially towards the fiscal year-end. The Board is considering transitioning from a grant-making organization to one that also focuses on financing and debt service to fund larger projects. A proposal was on the table to move the budgeting process from November to August and open the application cycle in the fall. This change aims to provide actual dollar amounts for projects and improve cash management. The proposed changes seem beneficial as they would reduce confusion regarding percentages and improve the overall understanding of the budgeting and application process. A survey is planned to collect insights and ensure that the shift benefits the majority while addressing the concerns of those negatively affected.

**Mariei Butan** of the Morningstar Learning Center (MLC) commented on the challenges faced during the budgeting process for resort tax allocation, highlighting the issue of starting the process early in the fiscal year. She suggested that a July start for applications may be unnecessarily early, proposing that a later start could be more appropriate. She also raised concerns about how transitioning to a different first year could affect application scores, particularly in terms of forecasting and funding requests.

### **5.2.3 CIP Questions**

The group discussed the update of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) including the addition of Madison County from the previous version and the removal of projects that are not ready for implementation within the next three years. The team has hired bond counsel from Dorsey Whitney to assist in creating a financing matrix that includes 30 different financial tools, ensuring that appropriate tools are used for the selected projects. The CIP subcommittee is tasked with proposing a structure for discussing and deciding on CIP projects and identifying legislative opportunities for Big Sky in the 2025 session. The team is preparing to solicit feedback from organizations by moving the CIP questions into a digital format to gather responses and refine the plan. It was noted that the CIP should be a live, guiding document for the Board, highlighting the significance of continuous updates.

#### 5.2.4 Wellness District Coalition Funding

**On a motion made by Kevin Germain, seconded by Grace Young, it was resolved to approve the Wellness District Coalition Funding increase of \$75,000 as requested. Motion carried.**

An overview of the coalition's budget mentioned that \$75,000 was initially committed to the effort, with significant portions spent on communication and legal fees. The coalition is now seeking to double this amount due to faster-than-expected expenditure. A Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request has been outstanding for five months, aimed at obtaining information from the hospital district and the county. The coalition emphasizes the importance of funding for addressing behavioral health challenges and improving critical services within the community. The inefficiency of the current \$1.7 million annual expenditure on a hospital that serves no patients from the community was highlighted.

#### 6. PUBLIC COMMENT

A question was directed to Al Malinowski, an audience member, inquiring about the transition of the post office from a contract station to a federal post office. A Board member expressed a desire to collaborate with Al Malinowski and the chamber on organizing a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate a significant achievement led by Al Malinowski for the community. It was noted that although the ideal scenario would have been to celebrate on the opening day, the plan is to have a soft opening and then organize a formal celebration shortly thereafter. Al Malinowski encouraged community members to either visit the new facility upon its opening or apply online to be on the waiting list for a new field.

#### 7. ADJOURNMENT

**On a motion duly made and carried, it was agreed that there was no further business to transact; the meeting closed at 10:40 a.m.**

#### **GUESTS:**

Whitney Montgomery	Coordinating Council of Big Sky and BSCO
Johnny O'Connor	Big Sky County Water and Sewer District
Ron Edwards	Big Sky County Water and Sewer District
Sgt. Daniel Haydon	Gallatin County Sheriff's Office
Mariel Butan	Morningstar Learning Center
Anna Johnson	Lone Mountain Land Company
Laurenz Busch	Bozeman Daily Chronicle
John Bowersox	Lone Mountain Land Company
Al Malinowski	Community Member
Laynee Jones	Community Member
Katie Grice	Wellness in Action

#### DISCLAIMER

The above minutes should be used as a summary of the motions passed and issues discussed at the meeting. This document shall not be considered a verbatim copy of every word spoken at the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

*Grace D. Young*

Grace D. Young (Oct 2, 2024 10:15 MDT)

Grace Young, Secretary and Treasurer







# 07.10.24 Minutes Unsigned\_Updated

Final Audit Report

2024-10-02

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