

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

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MARCH 13, 2025, 9:00 A.M.**

MEMBERS:

Kevin Germain	Chair
Sarah Blechta	Vice Chair
Grace Young	Secretary and Treasurer
John Zirkle	Director
Michelle Kendziorski	Director

STAFF:

Daniel Bierschwale	Executive Director
Jackie Haines	Director of Economic and Strategic Development
Kristin Drain	Finance and Compliance Manager
Tammy Estensen	Communications and Community Engagement Manager
Jenny Christensen	Deputy Director
Kim Beatty	Legal Counsel

Minutes taken by Bethany Young of Minutes Solutions Inc. from a recording.

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, and adequate and proper notice of the meeting having been given, the meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Sarah Gaither, Operations Manager of the Big Sky Food Bank, thanked the Board and Big Sky community for their financial and emotional support five years ago when COVID-19 shutdowns began and demand for the food bank quadrupled. Support from the Board allowed part-time staff to be hired, hours of operation to double, and food to be ordered to successfully meet the needs of the Big Sky workforce.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

On a motion made by Sarah Blechta, seconded by John Zirkle, it was resolved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Grace Young stated that operating expense overages are forecasted in the coming months. It was reported that December 2024 collections were up 5%, January 2025 collections were up 12%, and overall year-to-date collections are up 10%.

4. OLD BUSINESS

4.1 Property and Facilities Budgeting

Kristin Drain reported that the first draft of the corner lot property budget for the next fiscal year will be presented at the April 2025 Board meeting. She expects the budget to be larger than the current fiscal year, since it will include line items related to maintenance, utilities, and

landscaping of the property that were not budgeted for this year. It was reported that two tenants will be leaving at the end of April and open spaces are being offered to the community. The corner lot is currently being surveyed to understand constraints on the property. The Board requested community input on the best use of the parcel.

4.2 Wellness District Budget

On a motion made by Sarah Blechta, seconded by Grace Young, it was resolved to approve a Wellness District subcommittee budget not to exceed \$500,000 for legal fees. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed the funds paid to date for the Wellness District Coalition effort. The subcommittee reported that there is a need for additional funds to cover legal fees for ongoing litigation regarding the Wellness District. The subcommittee stated that they prefer a solution not involving litigation, but the first mediation attempt was unsuccessful.

The floor was opened for public comments and questions.

Mariei Butan thanked the Board for their continuing work to make the Big Sky community better and healthier.

4.3 Livable Big Sky Voter Education

Daniel Bierschwale provided an overview of the Livable Big Sky presentation given to various boards in the community. He explained that Livable Big Sky voter education events provide a larger presentation and a question-and-answer session. He noted that all materials are available online at <https://resorttax.org/livablebigsky>. He listed the upcoming voter education events.

4.4 Resolution 2025-01R Playing Field Surface Amendment

On a motion made by Sarah Blechta, seconded by Grace Young, it was resolved to approve Resolution 2025-01R as amended. Motion carried.

The Board stated that condition 2.h. was removed from the resolution, since the playing fields at the Big Sky Community Park will now be natural turf. In section 2.b., the specific reference to HB 162 was replaced with descriptive language. The Board thanked the Big Sky Community Organization (BSCO) for listening to the community regarding the playing field surface.

The floor was opened for public comment.

John McGuire, Chair of the BSCO Board, explained that, in response to community comments, they have determined it is possible to achieve most goals for the playing field improvements with natural grass instead of artificial turf, protecting the environment and the Gallatin River. Plans include improved grading and drainage, field expansion, and lengthened playing seasons. He acknowledged Whitney Montgomery's service to BSCO and the community and introduced Madeleine Feher as the new CEO of BSCO.

Madeleine Feher, CEO of BSCO, noted that it was the third anniversary of the BASE community center. She thanked BSCO Board members John McGuire and Liz McCrae and the BSCO leadership team for their time spent on making the decision to use grass instead of artificial turf for the playing fields. She noted that the decision is right for the community and environment.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1 Microgrant – Big Sky Winter Pride Festival

On a motion made by Grace Young, seconded by Michelle Kendziorski, it was resolved to approve funding of \$9,500 for the Big Sky Winter Pride Festival. Motion carried.

Taylor McCaslin, a Big Sky OUT Board member, explained the organization's goals and outlined the Big Sky Winter Pride Festival events to be held the week of March 24 to March 30, 2025. He requested increased funding to cover costs incurred from withdrawn donations. He noted that this was a one-time request to help establish the event. The organization intends to be self-funded by spring 2026.

The floor was opened for public comment.

Liv Grubaugh expressed support for the pride event that helps celebrate the community as a space for everyone.

Brad Niva, CEO of Visit Big Sky, encouraged Big Sky OUT to request their support. He stated that they could offer marketing and promotional assistance. He also recommended adding a pride flag to the corner lot flag poles for the duration of the festival.

Eileen Coil, BSCO, thanked Big Sky OUT for their events and noted the impact that has been made in the community in just their first year.

Mariel Butan noted that the event and organization are important to show Big Sky as a community where everyone can feel seen and welcome.

5.2 Big Sky Bravery Local Facility

Crystal Kramer, Director of Development at Big Sky Bravery, provided an overview of the organization and programming. Seth Thomas, Vice President of Development at Big Sky Bravery, described the plans for a special operations forces programming Home Base to be built on 85 acres of donated land in Big Sky over the next three years. The Board inquired about staffing for the facilities and numbers of local residents involved with the organization.

The floor was opened for public comment.

Sarah Gaither reported that 5% to 8% of the Big Sky Food Bank's customers are veterans and she looks forward to working with Big Sky Bravery.

5.3 Madison County Local Government Study Commission

Brian Conklin, a Madison County study commissioner, outlined the local government review process that takes place every 10 years. He explained that the commission will be engaging with the Big Sky community over the next year to determine challenges faced and potential ways the form of government can be adapted to provide solutions. He stated that further information can be found at <https://madisoncostudycommission.my.canva.site>.

The Board offered support to promote the study and host open houses for community engagement. They expressed the need for Madison County to have a professional administrator.

5.4 Gallatin County Local Government Study Commission

Jackie Haines, a Gallatin County study commissioner, shared the timetable for the Gallatin County local government study. She recommended providing voter education on the structure of government and why changes are needed to increase voter support for the November 2026 ballot proposed changes. She explained that the County Commissioner serves as an ex officio member of the study commission, facilitating discussion and knowledge discovery.

5.5 Representative Griffith Legislative Update

House District 60 Representative Alanah Griffith introduced herself and provided an update on the current legislative session. She reviewed three property tax plans that have transmitted from the House to the Senate for negotiation. Representative Griffith mentioned that she has written articles for Explore Big Sky providing information on understanding and following legislation.

The Board thanked Representative Griffith for her work representing Big Sky in Helena. They reminded the community to keep informed of legislation.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Meg O’Leary thanked the community for taking and distributing the Big Sky government study survey. The 10% response goal was surpassed with a total of 355 survey responses. The next public meeting is expected to occur at the end of April 2025.

Jackie Haines provided an update on the status of SB 260, concerning hospital and school special districts. Final drafts of amendments are being completed, and there will be two upcoming opportunities for public comment.

Brad Niva reported that the installation of wayfinding signs will be complete by late May 2025. New restrooms behind the hockey rink will be completed by mid-to-late May 2025. He announced the next Breakfast in Big Sky event on April 1, 2025, with Dr. Bertany providing an update on the Big Sky Medical Center.

7. NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Board of Directors meeting is April 17, 2025, at 11:00 a.m.

8. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly made and carried, it was agreed that there was no further business to transact; the meeting closed at 11:00 a.m.

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 Young
Grace Young (Jun 12, 2025 15:46 MDT)

Grace Young, Secretary and Treasurer

2025.03.13 Meeting Minutes

Final Audit Report

2025-06-12

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