

**MADISON and GALLATIN COUNTIES JOINT COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
Ballroom at the Wilson Hotel in Big Sky Town Center  
145 Town Center Avenue, Big Sky, Montana  
04.06.2022**

**Call to Order:** 10:12 a.m. by Gallatin Commissioner Joe Skinner

**Welcome & Introductions – Kevin Germain**

- Joint BRSD/MadCo/Galco Sub-Committee developed to coordinate address planning, budgeting, growth.
- Kevin Germain thanked everyone for attending.
- Collaboration at Federal and State have allowed changes. Thanks Commissioners for the continued partnership.

**Big Sky Transportation District – David Kack**

- Cindy Williams, Board Chair announced David Kack will be leaving in August.
- Darren Brugmann will be the new Director and comes from Jackson Hole, WY. Jackson Hole has experienced similar growth that Big Sky has, so he brings a wealth of knowledge.
- David Kack announced that ridership July 1 – June 30:
- March was up 30 percent. This was due to workers in Bozeman, plus carpooling.
- April 24 – Winter ridership will end, and to expect a slowdown.
- May 23 – Summer season will begin.
- Board opening on the Transportation District board has one opening for Madison County.

**Childcare Connections, Tori Sproles, Executive Director**

- C.H.I.L.D. Taskforce
- Childcare Connection covers Region Four, sister organization located in Butte, MT.
- Only 12 percent of Montana families can afford infant care.
- Twenty-five percent of family income pays for one child and one toddler.
- Early Childhood Professionals have challenges including the job being labor intensive, and underpaid.
- Childcare costs broken down: 12% overhead, 23% classroom materials, 65% personnel.
- How Childcare Connections is helping:
- Statewide: ARPA Funds - \$110 million towards children.
- Stabilization of workforce, expansion of innovation grants, licensing regulation revision.
- Locally: Developed Child Task Force: Cooperative, Holistic, Innovative, Local, Design Task Force
- Workforce: Salary studies, professionalizing field, support/build up workforce.
- Financial: Financial aid made for child care.
- Innovation: Financial solutions.
- Community Initiatives: access for training.
- Developing Employer Supported Child Care: Tier 3 – Employer provides access to Childcare, Tier 2 – Employer provides financial assistance, Tier 1 – Employer supports organizational practices.
- How community can help: Grant match, add childcare to community budget, sponsor existing programs, Contribute to childcare scholarships for families. GAP scholarships.
- Support the business, profession, and employees.
- Chamber has sent out a survey.

**Big Sky Park District, Steve Johnson**

- 2012 Formed Big Sky Park District was formed with an Interlocal agreement.
- The current Interlocal agreement is expired and needs to be updated.
- An attorney has simplified and drafted a revision.
- Madison County is currently renewing.
- Resolutions are needed by both Counties to accept.

- Would like to implement per parcel assessment – upkeep.
- Gallatin River Task Force – Kristin Gardner
- Sustainable water supply is the current hot topic.
- Currently studies are being performed on the ground water and the impact of development that it is having on the water supply.
- Big Sky drainage – water supply, study is almost finalized. In May there will be a public meeting.
- Second study is being performed on Gallatin Canyon. Results will show the impact that growth and development are having on the water system in the area.
- Water budget analysis will be performed; water inflow/out with focus on snow pack and rain, wastewater cycling and water conservation.
- Big Sky Owners Association, Grant Hilton
- Currently 2,400 property owners. Focus should be collaboration. Big concern on community impact on local resources.
- Hoping Tiger grant will help with congestion, specifically around the Lone Mountain Trail. Making right and left turns a challenge during peak season.
- It's essential the road project be done.
- Is requesting a traffic study to better understand the impact on resources.
- Emergency Planning
- No clearly defined evacuation plan.
- Twenty-thousand people a day during peak season.
- Ensure evacuation through the 64 or Jack Creek Road.
- Should hire an outside party to complete study.
- Both counties need to see what results are from a comprehensive study.
- Water Resources
- Need updated resource plan.
- Environmental Issues
- Do not meet water quality standards and need to adopt regulations.
- Adopt regulations for better control.
- Big Sky is showing signs of over development.
- New developments need to be considered in a sustainable way.

### **Transportation**

#### **Tiger Grant, Scott Macfarlane/Danielle Scharf/Bill Fogarty**

- Gallatin applied for Tiger grant six years ago, awarded four years ago.
- Gallatin was only bid received.
- Per the administrator of grant, \$3.3 million over budget.
- State of Montana will contribute \$2.1 million.
- Between Gallatin Resort tax, Gallatin County and Madison County they will split the shortfall by 1/3 (\$300,000 each)
- Current plan is to purchase buses to reduce traffic.
- Next step will be to amend agreement and then award grant, contract, and then schedule. Work will be performed in 2022 and 2023.
- MDT to assist with paying to help communicate with community on traffic and construction.

#### **MT64/US191 Planning, Bill Fogarty**

- 2020 study complete.
- Working with MDT to mitigate work that needs to be completed outside of Tiger grant.
- Jack Creek Road “Emergency Egress” Project, John Heckler
- Jack Creek falls under District 3 in Madison County.
- Jack Creek is one of two exits out of Big Sky.
- Currently trying to determine how much traffic Jack Creek can handle in an emergency situation. E.g.; 300 cars in two-hour period.
- Commissioner Heckler says the road could not handle that much traffic.

- Single road bridges, tight turns. Need solution to change configuration of the road.
- Since some tight turns may not be resolved, solution may be to park emergency vehicles along route.
- Work in progress.
- Madison County has spent \$1.2 million on three miles of Jack Creek Road, which only improves 20 percent.

### **Emergency Services**

#### **Public Safety Needs Assessment, Evacuation Plan, WUI, Greg Megaard, Big Sky Fire District**

- Last year banned fireworks, may extend the ban through this year as well.
- District has a new Type 3 Wildlife Fire Engine.
- Created a new partnership with Lone Peak. Installed a 360-degree camera which can identify smoke columns.
- Camera noticed fire in September before the first 9-1-1 call.
- Key is technology – more cameras being installed.
- Staff has been working on a three-part evacuation plan.
- Experts model area and determine zones.
- Technique is used to notify public.
- Gallatin Fire District is working on software to notify public about fire danger, fires, and maps will pinpoint where you currently are and the best route to follow for your location.
- Will continue looking into camera fire detection. Having more cameras will cross triangulate to better assist locating fire for first responders.

#### **Sheriff Interlocal Agreement, John Heckler**

- The current interlocal agreement is up for renewal in July 2023.
- Both Madison and Gallatin counties will contribute over \$300,000 to add six officers.
- Population growth increased call amount.
- Future funding will be fair, to assist Gallatin County Sheriff's Department who already handles administrative costs.
- The current Madison County Sheriff is not running for re-election.
- Gallatin Sheriff had nothing to add.

#### **Water and Sewer Plant and Canyon District Update, Ron Edwards/Mace Mangold**

##### **Ron Edwards:**

- Moonlight Basin and Yellowstone Blub has own water treatment and sewer plant.
- 2002 built sequencing batch plant. Expanding plant new MBR. Allows current plant to stay online.
- Total cost of project is \$48,309,849. Construction company out of Idaho.
- Final completion is expected March 7, 2024.
- Nine wells drilled for exploration.
- Two potential wells close to existing pipe.

##### **Mace Mangold:**

- 2019 Feasibility study was conducted by Big Sky Water and Sewer, Resort Tax, and the Gallatin Water Task Force was formed.
- [Home | Water & Sewer District | Gallatin Canyon \(gallatincanyonwsd.com\)](http://gallatincanyonwsd.com)
- June 2019 - BSRAD Firm
- May 2020 – Feasibility Study
- December 2020 District formed
- District is to ensure drinking water source protection.
- Moving forward river interests, housing interests and community interests.
- Treat water and utilize farming and suitable ground discharge solutions.

### **Big Sky Post Office, Al Malinowski**

- State and local officials have toured current post office.
- Due to lack of space and continued growth, State and local representatives have reached out to Federal Post Office due to explosive growth.
- Since 2004, the Big Sky Post Office has not received enough money to run facility.
- Resort tax has assisted with financed shortfall.
- First time in 17/18 years the resort tax will not be needed since Federal Post Office has given enough money to operate.
- Currently not enough PO Box's for residents.
- Pandemic manifested short falls.
- Growth is making them question if they need a federally operated post office.
- Solutions need to be identified by post office at the federal level.
- A letter was written, and State and local officials have signed. Letter will be sent to the Post Office General. Hopefully it will resolve issues.
- What can entire community do to help? Fill out surveys and explain the experience it has been obtaining a PO Box.
- Representatives in room signed letter.

### **Recreational Marijuana Tax, Kevin Germain**

- Gallatin County charges three percent sales tax on recreational marijuana and four on medical.
- Gallatin County Commissioners have voted to redistribute the money collected throughout the County and focus on rebuilding mental health services.
- Hopefully Madison County will move in the same direction.

### **Our Big Sky Implementation, Ruthi Solari/Jenny Muscat**

- Focused on Big Sky Plan, Community Vision and Strategy.
- Strategies include initiatives and projects.
- Coordinating Council is developing outcomes for strategies which include actionable and measurable goals.
- Tiered approach.
- There are various initiatives and with measurable results, work with community members and then report back to County leadership.
- With measurable goals, community will begin to see results.
- [www.resorttax.org](http://www.resorttax.org)

### **BSRAD FY23 Request Overview, Sarah Blechta**

- Total requests were \$8,765,234. Budget was \$5.1 million. Nineteen percent over.
- Interlocal agreements totaled \$5,176,784.
- Received requests for 66 projects.

### **Public Comment**

- Danny thanked representatives regarding the post office initiative. He said that Representative Gillete had to leave, but she has requested a need for ballot drop on Madison County side of Big Sky.
- David Ting would like to formalize partnerships between counties.

### **On Zoom:**

- Mark Spinner stated all work is inspirational. We need to go back to evacuation plan – how do we get first responders to the mountain? Can we utilize air evacuation?
- Deborah Spinner appreciates Big Sky community. Asking the community to provide more visibility, higher level and be strategic. If results will not be measurable then cannot move forward.
- Kevin Germain stated community is putting out info every day – FAQ's re. marijuana tax. Working hard to educate citizens.

- Kevin Germain would like to thank Commissioner Spinner for all of his hard work. This is his last joint meeting.

Meeting called at 12:15PM.

Candidates running for office invited to say a few words.