

Joint-County Commission & BSRAD Meeting Minutes

October 4th, 2023 | 9:00am

This meeting was held at the Wilson Hotel and virtually using ZOOM.

I. Open Meeting

[00:11:05](#) Danny Bierschwale welcomed the community and introduced the meeting.

A. Roll Call

In attendance: Scott MacFarlane, Gallatin County Commission; Kevin Germain, BSRAD Board; Bill Todd, Madison County Commission; Zach Brown, Gallatin County Commission; Grace Young, BSRAD Board; Ron Nye, Madison County Commission; Steve Johnson, BSRAD Board; Jennifer Boyer, Gallatin County Commission; Ciara Wolfe, BSRAD Board. Sarah Blechta, BSRAD Board, attended remotely.

B. Public Comment

[00:13:07](#) Tammy with the Big Sky Resort Area District (BSRAD) invited the public to meet with Bill Todd at the BSRAD office the second Thursday of every month.

C. Regular Agenda

1. Old Business

a. MT64 Updates: Discussion

- TIGER Grant

[00:14:16](#) Danielle Sharf with Sanderson Stewart, thanked the community for their patience during construction and traffic control. Danielle gave an overview of completed projects and updates on projects still in progress. Chipseal and final pavement markings will happen in Spring 2024.

[00:18:03](#) Ciara Wolfe thanked everyone for the work and patience to make this project happen.

[00:18:46](#) Sarah Blechta asked where to direct questions regarding additional work/concerns for MT64 and Danielle directed questions to the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT).

[00:19:43](#) *Public Comment:* Question regarding turn lanes at the Medical Center, Danielle explained that there was not a need to warrant a full turn lane.

- US 191/MT64 Optimization Plan

[00:21:03](#) Dave Gates with MDT gave an update on the US 191/MT64 Optimization Plan and study.

[00:22:41](#) Tim Erikson explained partnerships and collaborative focus of study and Optimization Plan for 191/64 corridor.

[00:26:00](#) Spencer elaborated on goals and strategic funding, including federal funds. Tim discussed partnerships and community engagement.

[00:30:12](#) *Public Comment:* Jim Delzer asked about intentions to fill potholes before winter; Dave Gates explained planning and discussed challenges. Jim Delzer also asked about community impacts and business opportunities to engage in optimization planning. Dave discussed impacts, education/awareness, and opportunities to pursue innovated traffic services.

[00:35:23](#) Danny Bierschwale invited everyone to the Community Celebration where the public can engage directly.

[00:35:51](#) *Public Comment:* Kenny Holtz asked about boundaries of study/Optimization Plan and Dave Gates clarified. Kenny Holtz shared concerns about the intersection of MT64 and Sitting Bull Road.

[00:36:35](#) *Public Comment:* Tracy Gibbons shared concerns with traffic volume, high speed limits, and resident safety on MT64 and shared concern with the 12-18 month wait to fix current issues. Dave Gates discussed challenges and funding opportunities.

[00:38:40](#) Zach Brown and Jenifer Boyer asked, and Dave Gates discussed corridor study's access control plan updates.

[00:42:01](#) Kevin Germain shared appreciation for all partners involved in the TIGER Grant including the state of Montana and all those involved in solving the community's traffic and safety concerns.

b. Madison County Polling Station & Redistricting: Discussion

[00:43:48](#) Bill Todd, Madison County Commissioner, confirmed the Fire Department can be used as a Polling Station and explained the commissioner redistricting. Bill Todd is the commissioner for Big Sky, Madison County.

c. Trails, Recreation, and Parks District: Discussion

- District Assessment

[00:45:07](#) Ashley Wilson thanked Gallatin and Madison County commissioners for supporting and passing the District Assessment.

- Big Sky Community Park Renovation Plan

[00:45:56](#) Ashley Wilson shared project updates including the maintenance building which includes workforce housing, skate park expansion, and park redesign.

[00:48:26](#) Ashley shared plans for a new South Fork neighborhood park to include parking, a multiuse sports field, playground, tennis courts, and a dog park.

2. New Business

a. Big Sky Capital Improvement Plan: Action

[00:50:33](#) Colin McAweeney shared background around Capital Improvement Plans (CIP); Big Sky Community Capital Improvement Plan was last reviewed in 2011 and only included Gallatin County. Colin explained the CIP is intended to be a working document.

[00:53:12](#) Colin explained that the CIP is a guiding document and does not represent BSRAD or County commitment but rather guides long-term planning and partnership opportunities. Colin reviewed population growth and projections. Overall, \$777 million infrastructure needs were identified over a 10-year timeline; Water & Sewer, Roads/Transit, and Housing are the biggest needs.

[00:59:00](#) Colin reviewed funding strategies including BSRAD Resort Tax, Mill Levy authorities, Rural Improvement Districts (RIDs), service charges, and Targeted Economic Development Districts (TEDD). Community lead initiatives exploring a wellness district, library district, park district, and transit districts have the ability to levy stable and predictable revenue.

[01:02:49](#) BSRAD is requesting Madison and Gallatin Counties to accept report as a guiding document to validate future investments.

[01:03:34](#) *Public Comment* asked about the definition of wants versus needs in relation to the CIP; Colin McAweeney explained how wants and needs can vary and are based on community prioritization.

[01:05:09](#) *Public Comment*: Illana Griffith asked about Rural Improvement Districts (RID) and Colin explained the process for RIDs and voted on by local voters.

[01:06:53](#) *Public Comment*: Tracy Gibbons asked about Gallatin Gateway infrastructure needs and property taxes. Colin explained any property tax increases must be voted on by registered voters. Danny Bierschwale explained the scope of the CIP and it does not include Gallatin Gateway.

[01:08:53](#) Gallatin County Commission previously accepted the CIP report.

[01:09:05](#) **Motion**: Madison County Commissioners recognize the 2023 Big Sky Community Capital Improvement Plan as an update to the existing CIP. Madison County accepts the validity of the report as a guiding document for future strategies to accomplish the community's goals: Bill Todd

[01:09:49](#) **Vote**: Motion Passed

[01:10:27](#) **Motion**: BSRAD Board recognize the 2023 Big Sky Community Capital Improvement Plan as an update to the existing CIP. BSRAD accepts the validity of the report as a guiding document for future strategies to accomplish the community's goals: Kevin Germain

Second: Ciara Wolfe

[01:10:54](#) **Vote**: Motion Passed

[01:11:29](#) **Motion**: Gallatin County Commissioners recognize the 2023 Big Sky Community Capital Improvement Plan as an update to the existing CIP. Gallatin County accepts the validity of the report as a guiding document for future strategies to accomplish the community's goals: Zach Brown

Second: Jennifer Boyer

[01:11:43](#) **Vote**: Motion Passed

[01:11:51](#) Dustin Tetrault, the Big Sky Fire District Deputy Chief, shared updates regarding Spanish Peaks Station 3 Rural Improvement District. Dustin explained impacts including insurance, response times, and current stations.

[01:17:55](#) Dustin reviewed costs and explained the assessment will only include properties located in Spanish Peaks and will not affect taxpayers outside that area; estimated cost of a fire station with associated fees and factoring in LMLC contribution is around \$14 million. Dustin requested updating Gallatin RID Policy and consider waiving the RID petition process.

[01:22:13](#) Ciara Wolfe discussed the impact of wildfires on the entire community.

[01:22:53](#) Commissioners shared concerns about waiving the RID petition process and asked clarifying questions and requested proof of community support.

b. Economic Impact Study Preview: Discussion

[01:27:08](#) Jackie Haines reviewed the Big Sky Economic Impact Analysis Overview including General Demographics, Regional Employment, GDP Comparison, Taxes Overview, and Total Economic Impact. Jackie encouraged the public to continue to complete community surveys.

[01:29:31](#) Jackie reviewed quick stats related to population growth, BSRAD employment data, and workforce in-migration. Jackie explained direct and indirect impacts for a total gross economic impact of \$2,276,889,870 and 26,065 jobs.

[01:38:15](#) Jackie summarized state-wide, regional, and local impacts. Jackie discussed industry diversity and resiliency, infrastructure needs, and alignment of County priorities with Big Sky community priorities. The economic Impact analysis report is forthcoming and will be posted on the BSRAD and Chamber websites.

[01:41:44](#) Sarah Blechta discussed the need for safe and affordable childcare as a form of infrastructure for a thriving community. Jackie shared statistics including 96% of women with children in Big Sky are working.

[01:44:03](#) *Public Comment:* Asked about funding decisions and visitor verses population impacts. Jackie explained how census data is created and how the study will take account for permanent residents and regional impacts of jobs and spending.

[01:51:17](#) *Public Comment:* Ben Keefe asked about taxability of membership dues and fees and Danny Bierschwale clarified that membership dues and fees are taxable under Resort Tax.

c. Infrastructure Investment, Funding, & Voter Representation Roadmap: Discussion

[01:52:30](#) Danny Bierschwale reviewed topics listed in the Infrastructure Investment, Funding, & Voter Representation Roadmap. Danny encouraged community engagement and involvement.

[02:02:29](#) Danny answered questions related to county boundaries and incorporation, explained that there are many myths and conflicting opinions, and a committee is working to explore facts and education revolving around incorporation.

d. RiverView Housing Project: Discussion

[02:05:47](#) David O'Connor, Big Sky Community Housing Trust, shared updates on the RiverView Housing project which is planned to open Spring 2024.

D. Public Comment: *None*

[02:08:36](#) Kevin Germain thanked the commissioners for attending and encouraged the community to meet with Bill Todd at the BSRAD office the second Thursday of every month.

[02:09:42](#) Scott MacFarlane clarified school/education funding will not be affected by the recent mills and levy adjustments and explained the state's school equalization fund. Zach Brown discussed local and state taxes and accountability. Bill Todd clarified litigation concerns and Madison County discussions.

[02:16:15](#) **Motion to Adjourn**