

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
BIG BEAR MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT  
HELD ON THURSDAY, May 21, 2026**

**1. OPEN SESSION**

President Bradford opened the regularly scheduled Board meeting at 1:00 PM at the Big Bear Municipal Water District located at 40524 Lakeview Drive, Big Bear Lake, CA 92315 on Thursday May 21, 2026.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Craig Brewster, Director  
Steve Ludecke, Vice President  
Tom Bradford, President  
Mark Lee, Director  
Craig Peterson, Director

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Tom Bradford, President

**3. PUBLIC FORUM**

Daniel Gulbransen, resident of Big Bear Lake, made a public comment about his concerns over local public corruption. He stated "Things are starting to happen, its about time, ". He stated that the attorney general of CA is not doing anything and the governor and his wife are corrupt and he hopes that they go to jail. He stated that there was an arrest made for a culprit in orange county recently.

**4. REPORTS**

- A. General Manager Jared Cheek reported that the lake level is down 6 feet 2 inches, consistent with year-over-year pattern. He also reported that launch activity is increasing, with 735 vessels launched so far this season and 86 decontaminations completed.

Mr. Cheek attended the weekly virtual meeting with Hydro JPA partners for SAHWA. He attended the CSDA Special District Leadership Academy (SDLA) conference with Directors Brewster, Ludecke, and Peterson. He said the time was well spent and very informational.

Mr. Cheek attended the Association of San Bernardino County Special Districts meeting and plans to attend future meetings when availability allows.

Mr. Cheek attended a General Manager breakfast at San Bernardino Municipal Water Department in San Bernardino. He reported that multiple Aquatic Invasive Species/WIT trainings were held since the last board meeting, which were in-person led by Drew Pappas, Lake Operations Manager, and Administrative staff for marina personnel as well as District staff.

District staff hosted a booth at Bear Valley Electric Service's Earth Day to promote public awareness for lake health.

Maintenance staff completed the re-roofing of the West Ramp facilities in-house. He is appreciative that we can do these types of services in-house and not have to contract them out.

Mr. Cheek reported that additional interviews for seasonal employment were conducted and offer letters have been sent.

Mr. Cheek reported that the U.S. Rowing special event wrapped up restoration activities in preparation for Memorial Day weekend and that the overall event went well.

## 5. CONSENT CALENDAR

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

None.

- A. Minutes of a Regular Meeting on May 7, 2026.
- B. Warrant List dated 05/12/2026 in the amount of \$63,207.80.

**Discussion:** No comments were made.

With a motion made by Vice President Ludecke and seconded by Director Brewster, the consent calendar with a change to item 5A, Minutes of a Regular Meeting on May 7, 2026, to read in section 4B "President Bradford reported we will talk about the Operations Committee within Business Item 6B." was approved unanimously:

AYES: Bradford, Brewster, Lee, Ludecke, Peterson

NO: -

ABSTAIN: -

## 6. BUSINESS

- A. PRESENTATION ONLY: BIG BEAR AREA REGIONAL WASTEWATER AGENCY TO UPDATE THE BOARD ON THE STATUS OF BBARWA'S WATER RECLAMATION EFFORTS**

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

None.

### **DISCUSSION**

- a. David Lawrence, General Manager of the Big Bear Area Regional Wastewater Agency (BBARWA), was introduced by Jared Cheek and provided an update on BBARWA's Replenish Big Bear water reclamation efforts. Mr. Lawrence thanked the Board for its financial and staff support, stating it has had a significant positive impact on advancing the project. He explained that the agency is modifying its approach to Replenish Big Bear by moving from the original proposal to a phased implementation due to greater interest/support for a more limited scope. Phase 1 will consist of the Greenspot Recharge Project in the Erwin Lake area, and Phase 2 will still involve sending program water to Big Bear Lake and Sand Canyon for additional recharge at a later time.

Mr. Lawrence described the Phase 1 project as a groundwater recharge effort at a site in Erwin Lake off of State lane that was previously studied in 2004. This location is above existing CSD and DWP wells, which would benefit from recharge. He said that BBARWA's role is limited to recharge and not water supply. The agency is currently in escrow to acquire the property, of which approximately 3.5 acres are needed for recharge, with the remaining land would potentially be declared surplus but that is not decided. The project will finish an existing 6-inch pipeline with an 8-inch pipeline and construct a spreading ground approximately 3.5 feet deep. The system is expected to recharge about 500 acre-feet annually over roughly nine months each year, excluding winter. Although a smaller footprint than the original proposal, he said that the project is expected to provide the same overall benefit.

Board members asked questions regarding water quality, potential uses, and infrastructure. Mr. Lawrence confirmed that water quality standards will be consistent with those required for discharge to the lake. President Bradford suggested that they consider supplying water to a nearby county park on Hatchery. Discussion occurred regarding the pipeline size and DWP's ability to send water to Sand Canyon.

Mr. Lawrence said that the project would be permitted similarly to BBARWA's Lucerne Valley disposal operations. He also said that the property acquisition had been approved in closed session, requiring a minimum 4/5 vote, so he could not confirm which votes were made.

Mr. Lawrence reported the total estimated project cost at \$88.7 million and confirmed the recharge site would be secured to prevent wildlife access. Director Brewster asked about any potential fee/rate impacts, Mr. Lawrence said that is not yet determined and BBARWA's finance team is scheduled to meet in August.

Presentation only, no Board action needed.

**B. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION OF JOINT EXERCISE OF POWERS AGREEMENT CREATING THE SANTA ANA WATERSHED HYDRO AUTHORITY (SAWHA)**

**PUBLIC FORUM**

Daniel Gulbransen, resident of Big bear Lake, expressed criticism of the City's actions, which he said are inappropriate and has concerns about financial accountability. He mentioned a forensic audit related to expenditures. He said Chief Willis' spouse is involved in a legal matter with the Department of Water and Power. He also commented that there are too many local hotel operations and he has concerns about racism in the community.

Jeff Cooper, Pleasure Point Marina, asked if this was the Authority that had been previously discussed, and the Board confirmed and he believes the Authority is a good decision for the District.

**DISCUSSION**

- a. General Manager Jared Cheek said that this item had been presented at the previous meeting May 7th, where a motion was made to approve the agreement as originally written. He stated the document before the Board today is the final, executable version, with only minor revisions made, primarily cleanup items, as detailed in the staff report. Notable changes include a terminology update from "agreement" to "authority" and clarification on how services will be provided to Fontana. Vice President Ludecke asked whether the revisions were primarily grammatical rather than substantive and asked if staff and counsel was comfortable with the changes. Counsel confirmed that the revisions do not alter the substance of the contract.

With a motion made by Vice President Ludecke and seconded by Director Lee, the motion to approve the Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement creating the Santa Ana Watershed Hydro Authority as written was approved:

AYES: Bradford, Brewster, Lee, Ludecke, Peterson

NO:

ABSTAIN: -

**C. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF AIRWAVE INVOICE FOR RADIO REPEATER AND LICENSE**

**PUBLIC FORUM**

None.

**DISCUSSION**

- a. General Manager Jared Cheek explained that radio coverage for operations staff on the lake has been an ongoing issue for many years and funding for radio improvements was included in the current fiscal year FY26 budget.

Lake Operations Manager, Drew Pappas, reported that the existing repeater, located at the west ramp and estimated to date back to 2014, is inadequate, particularly with communication gaps on the east end of the lake. To address these issues, staff proposed replacing the existing west-side repeater and installing an additional repeater on the east end in the future to eliminate dead zones and improve overall coverage. He emphasized the importance of reliable communication for operations and public safety. The project is within the approved fiscal year budget and includes a simulcast license allowing up to two repeaters, with a one-time fee and a 10-year frequency license term.

President Bradford asked the estimated lifespan of the equipment, Drew stated approximately 10 to 15 years with continuous use however the lake only uses the radios during the season so about half the year.

With a motion made by Director Brewster and seconded by Director Peterson, the motion to approve Airwave Invoice for Radio Repeater and License the was approved:  
AYES: Bradford, Brewster, Lee, Ludecke, Peterson  
NO:  
ABSTAIN: -

**D. SECOND DRAFT BUDGET FY2026-27 REVIEW & DISCUSSION**

**PUBLIC FORUM**

None.

**DISCUSSION**

- a. General Manager Jared Cheek presented the second reading of the budget and highlighted updates made since the prior version. He reviewed revisions made, including updated language on page 9 related to salaries and benefits to improve clarity, adjustments on page 17 to retirement and group insurance figures reflecting updated CalPERS unfunded liability information and projections for the upcoming fiscal year, and changes on page 24 to fund balances to incorporate a newly identified emergency reserve fund.

Vice President Ludecke requested clarification regarding the SAWHA fund title and fund balance page.

Mr. Cheek also discussed the potential cost of developing a strategic plan, which he suggested a proposed budget of approximately \$45,000 for, with the intent to issue a request for proposals (RFP) if approved. He said this process often attracts smaller consulting firms. The board agreed to add funds for this consulting to the next and final Budget.

Review & Discussion only, no Board action needed.

**E. RESOLUTION 2026-04 "FY 27 COMPENSATION SCHEDULE" EXHIBIT A (FULL TIME) AND EXHIBIT B (SEASONAL) FOR FULL BOARD APPROVAL.**

**PUBLIC FORUM**

None.

**DISCUSSION**

- a. General Manager Jared Cheek stated that as a part of annual budget process the District evaluates annual CPI and follows the administrative code on how its calculated. This past year, the COLA is 3.4% average.

Vice President Ludecke asked if there were no more increases and Mr. Cheek confirmed this is the COLA amount. VP Ludecke also asked about the layout of the document and

how the titles were ordered. Mr. Cheek confirmed that the current alphabetical format reflects standard industry practices.

With a motion made by Vice President Ludecke and seconded by Director Peterson, the motion to approve Resolution 2026-04 "FY 27 Compensation Schedule" was approved:

AYES: Bradford, Brewster, Lee, Ludecke, Peterson

NO:

ABSTAIN: -

#### **7. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR**

None.

#### **8. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

General Manager Jared Cheek announced that the West Launch Ramp will open on Saturday and remain open through Labor Day. While the District's main office will be closed on Monday 5/25, both Lake Patrol and launch ramp operations will remain open. Beginning Saturday 5/24, West Ramp will operate from 6:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and East Ramp will operate from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Staff will also remain on-site for an additional half hour after sunset to issue vessel bands as needed.

#### **9. DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

Vice President Ludecke commented on the launch ramp operating hours, he observed three boaters waiting to launch before 7:00 a.m. the other day. He also reported that the Board's recent training session was valuable and informative and encouraged all Board members to participate in Special District Leadership Academy (SDLA) training.

President Bradford reported that water quality conditions on the lake have begun to improve and expressed his satisfaction with the current water quality.

#### **10. CLOSED SESSION**

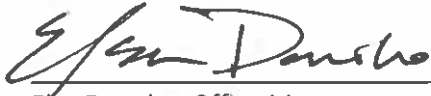
None.

#### **11. ADJOURN**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:56 PM.

#### **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:**

Date: 06/04/2026  
Location: 40524 Lakeview Drive  
Big Bear Lake, CA 92315  
Time: 1:00 PM



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Efsa Donoho, Office Manager  
Secretary to the Board of  
Big Bear Municipal Water District



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