

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
BIG BEAR MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT  
HELD ON THURSDAY, February 5, 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 February 5, 2026.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Tom Bradford, President

President Bradford informed the Board and Public of the passing of former Director Reh fuss. He noted that Mr. Reh fuss is survived by his wife and two children and had an outstanding reputation in the Valley as a businessman. Director Bradford acknowledged the insight Mr. Reh fuss brought to the Board and stated that he will be missed.

With a motion made by Director Ludecke and seconded by Director Lee, the motion to add Business Item 6G to the agenda regarding the filling of the District 2 Board seat was approved unanimously:

AYES: Lee, Bradford, Brewster, Ludecke

NO: -

ABSTAIN: -

**3. PUBLIC FORUM**

Dan Gulbranson, a resident of Big Bear Lake, stated that he has been tracking local agencies and expressed his concerns regarding alleged corruption in the community. He alleged that the City Manager made derogatory remarks toward a former female employee of the District and stated that no apology had been issued. He stated that the Mayor also did not take action in response to the matter. Mr. Gulbranson stated that he was present at City Hall conducting a First Amendment audit recently and that sheriff's deputies were called. He expressed concerns regarding security cameras at City Hall and said that he had contacted the County regarding cameras. He also expressed concern about the security and supervision of a local ballot drop box at City Hall.

**4. REPORTS**

- A. General Manager Jared Cheek reported on the recent Watermaster meeting with the Big Bear Watermaster Committee on 01/21/2026. Himself and Facility Manager, Jim Cummings, attended a presentation with an underwater camera imaging consultant who

has technology capable of imaging to millimeter depth. In response to a question from Vice President Ludecke regarding whether objects at the bottom of the lake can be identified, Mr. Cheek confirmed that they can and the imaging is very detailed.

Mr. Cheek reported that an employee recognition lunch was held on January 23, for no lost time due to injuries in 2025.

He also attended the following committee meetings which will be reported on in Director reports: January 26: Operations Committee meeting, January 27: Administration Committee meeting, January 27: Meeting with Jim regarding birds, January 28: Finance Committee meeting, January 28: BBARWA meeting, February 2: Lake Improvement meeting.

Mr. Cheek announced that seasonal recruitment has opened and encouraged spreading the word. He noted that two staff members are attending Boating Under the Influence (BUI) training in San Diego this week.

- B. Vice President Ludecke reported the Watermaster Committee's met on 1/21/26 with other Watermaster members, where financial figures were reviewed. He noted that the annual report is expected to be completed and released on time this year.
- C. Director Lee reported the Operations Committee's met on 1/26/26 to discuss a change of date for the Polar Plunge event and encouraged the submission of an application from US Rowing.
- D. Director Brewster reported the Administration Committee met 1/27/26 to discuss proposed changes to the Administrative Code and Employee Handbook which will be addressed under Business items.
- E. Vice President Ludecke reported the Budget and Finance Committee met on 1/28/26 and were presented with the monthly financial report. He noted a few unexpected expenditures during the reporting period but stated that overall finances remain in good standing.
- F. President Bradford reported the Lake Improvement Committee met on 2/2/26 to discuss implementation of a carp shocking schedule. Additional seasonal staff may be needed. The carp roundup event was also discussed, including a proposal to discontinue counting fish and instead conduct monthly prize drawings through a raffle system. Director Bradford noted the significant time and effort required to host the event and expressed hope for a productive carp shocking season.

Vice President Ludecke commented that current weather conditions are favorable to begin operations. Director Brewster noted that this was discussed during the Committee meeting.

## **5. CONSENT CALENDAR**

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

N/A

- A. Minutes of a Regular Meeting on January 15, 2026.
- B. Warrant List dated 01/29/2026 in the amount of \$110,073.88.

- C. Consider approval of special event permit for the Polar Plunge being held on April 18, 2026 at Veterans Park

**Discussion:** No comments were made.

With a motion made by Vice President Ludecke and seconded by Director Brewster, the consent calendar was approved unanimously:  
AYES: Lee, Bradford, Brewster, Ludecke  
NO: -  
ABSTAIN: -

## **6. BUSINESS**

### **A. THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE (DIRECTORS REHFUSS & LEE) RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT FROM HUECO TANKS REGARDING US ROWING TRAINING BE PRESENTED AND CONSIDERED BY THE FULL BOARD FOR APPROVAL.**

- a. General Manager, Jared Cheek stated that Operations Committee, consisting of Directors Rehfuss and Lee, recommended that the Special Event Permit application submitted by Hueco Tanks for US Rowing training be presented to and considered by the full Board for approval. He reported that the application had been received and that the Board would now receive a presentation.

Damien Navarro, Hueco Tanks, provided an overview of the proposal and recognized Director Rehfuss and as a great public servant. He explained the ownership of Hueco Tanks and noted their involvement in hosting the Polar Plunge and other events. He described the proposed special event application for US Rowing training as sports tourism, estimating an annual economic impact of approximately \$300,000 to the local community. He stated that the US Rowing team, including 15 men and 15 women, is preparing to compete in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

Damien stated that the group is coordinating with Loren Hafen at Grays Marina on the North Shore and is focusing on minimizing impacts. The training would take place during early morning hours and include temporary, removable safety measures, with full District oversight and coordination. He added that any questions raised on social media would be addressed. Athletes would be required to wear personal flotation devices.

Vice President Ludecke asked how many boats would be operating at one time, and Johnny Burnham, Hueco Tanks, responded that one boat would be out supervising at a time. Vice President Ludecke asked whether the boats could operate in choppy conditions, and Johnny confirmed they could. Vice President Ludecke also inquired about moving buoys in-house; Mr. Cheek stated that doing so would take approximately half a day.

President Bradford asked how fast the boats travel, and Johnny responded approximately 15 mph. President Bradford raised concerns about potential conflicts with trolling fishermen between Windy Point and the dam during April and May. Johnny explained how a coxswain maneuvers the boat, and in response to a question from Vice

President Ludecke, stated that the boats can stop very quickly. Damien clarified that priority on the lake would be given to whoever is present first.

President Bradford expressed enthusiasm about hosting world-class athletes in Big Bear. Director Brewster complimented the presentation and stated he would like to see more events of this nature in Big Bear. Director Brewster asked about patrol boat presence; Mr. Cheek stated that a patrol boat would be nearby or trailing and that adjustments could be made as needed. In response to whether Lake Patrol would require other lake users to move, Mr. Cheek stated that no, Lake Patrol would not be clearing the lake for this event to take place.

President Bradford noted that weather conditions could allow for similar training during fall or winter and asked that Hueco Tanks be prepared to consider those seasons in the future. Johnny responded that this year's training aligns with the World Championship competition schedule.

Vice President Ludecke asked about the plan if conflicts with fishermen or events escalate. Damien stated that concerns would be elevated to Lake Patrol and emphasized that the intent is to coexist without disruption.

With a motion made by Director Brewster and seconded by Vice President Ludecke, the Special Event Permit from Hueco Tanks for US Rowing training was approved unanimously:

AYES: Lee, Bradford, Brewster, Ludecke

NO: -

ABSTAIN: -

**B. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE (LUDECKE & BREWSTER) RECOMMEND RESOLUTION 2026-02 "A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF BIG BEAR MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT UPDATING EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION PLAN TO INCLUDE THE POSITION OF MAINTENANCE WORKER II FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 AND AMEND RESOLUTION 2025-11" FULL BOARD DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL.**

- a. General Manager Jared Cheek reported that he is reviewing the structure within the Maintenance Department to create opportunities for advancement. He proposed reclassifying the Maintenance Coordinator position to Maintenance Worker II, which would include a \$0.32 per hour wage increase. He explained that other departments currently have Tier II positions and that this adjustment would create consistency across classifications.

With a motion made by Director Brewster and seconded by Director Lee, Resolution 2026-02 "A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF BIG BEAR MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT UPDATING EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION PLAN TO INCLUDE THE POSITION OF MAINTENANCE WORKER II FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 AND AMEND RESOLUTION 2025-11" was approved unanimously:

AYES: Lee, Bradford, Brewster, Ludecke

NO: -

ABSTAIN: -

Brewster, Lee

**C. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE (LUDECKE & BREWSTER) RECOMMEND EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK – GENERAL UPDATES FOR FULL BOARD DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL.**

- a. President Bradford requested that the item be pulled and brought back for workshop discussion at a later date. Vice President Ludecke requested that the workshop be scheduled within the next week or as soon as feasible. Vice President Ludecke and Director Brewster support further workshop review.

With a motion made by Vice President Ludecke and seconded by Director Brewster, moving Business Item 6C to a later date was approved unanimously:

AYES: Lee, Bradford, Brewster, Ludecke

NO: -

ABSTAIN: -

**D. THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE (LUDECKE & BREWSTER) RECOMMEND RESOLUTION 2026-03 “RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF BIG BEAR MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT AMENDING RESOLUTION NO. 2026-01 (ADMINISTRATIVE CODE) AS IT RELATES TO GENERAL UPDATES” FULL BOARD DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL.**

- a. President Bradford again requested that the item be pulled and brought back for workshop discussion at a later date.

With a motion made by Vice President Ludecke and seconded by Director Brewster, moving Business Item 6D to a later date was approved unanimously:

AYES: Lee, Bradford, Brewster, Ludecke

NO: -

ABSTAIN: -

**E. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF BIG BEAR MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT PURCHASING POLICY.**

- a. General Manager Jared Cheek reported that the item is an update to the Purchasing Policy. He explained that the Administrative Code was recently reviewed and updated, and the proposed policy revisions align with the updated thresholds in the Administrative Code. He noted that the policy remains substantially similar to the existing version and that the updates provide greater operational efficiency.

With a motion made by Director Brewster and seconded by Vice President Ludecke, the new Purchasing Policy was approved unanimously:

AYES: Lee, Bradford, Brewster, Ludecke

NO: -

ABSTAIN: -

**F. BOARD TO HEAR THE APPEAL REGARDING APPLICATION FOR DOCK LICENSE 212 AND 212A**

- a. General Manager Jared Cheek introduced the item and stated that his administrative decision was to uphold the existing resolution. The Board established procedural limits for the hearing: 10 minutes for the appellants to present, 5 minutes for public comment, and 5 minutes for rebuttal.

With a motion made by Vice President Ludecke and seconded by Director Brewster, establishing the Appeal hearing procedure of 10 minutes for the appellants to present, 5 minutes for public comment, and 5 minutes for rebuttal was approved unanimously:

AYES: Lee, Bradford, Brewster, Ludecke

NO: -

**Appellant Statement:**

Elaine Alewyn, Dock Owner 212A, addressed the Board in support of the appeal. She stated that their families are seeking a configuration that supports their lifestyle and safety needs. While she understands the neighbor's desire for his own slip and the purpose of rules and regulations, she asked the Board to consider the variance from a safety standpoint rather than precedent. She explained that their property is located at the end of a peninsula where water conditions are more turbulent, with frequent wake and wind. Because there are only two families involved, they prefer a two U-shaped configuration for safety reasons. She stated they would not have access to all three sides of their boats under other configurations and expressed concerns about docking, covering boats, and loading or unloading during rough conditions. She referenced a prior drowning at their current dock configuration as a constant reminder of safety concerns. She stated that easement rights were granted when they purchased the home and that a common dock would reduce conflict with adjacent properties. She also noted that a recent survey indicated the easement measures 15 feet and that access to certain homes is through their driveway. They are requesting two slips in what they believe to be the safest configuration and stated they will remain within any guidelines granted.

Vice President Ludecke asked whether the trail shown on the plot map represented the actual easement or was illustrative; the appellant stated it was not the formal easement boundary. Director Brewster clarified that there are three parcels involved. Vice President Ludecke asked how long the properties had been owned; responses stated ownership since 2018 and 2023.

Mr. Hartwig, Dock Owner 212, stated that safety is the primary concern and that T- or L-shaped configurations are not safe at that location. Vice President Ludecke clarified that the prior drowning referenced occurred at a three-slip dock, not a T- or L-shaped dock, and was told yes. Vice President Ludecke stated he did not see how the different dock configurations materially changed safety concerns. In response, Ms. Alewyn reiterated concerns about wind, white caps, and wake in that location, stating that docking alone can be hazardous.

Director Brewster commented that there are many different situations to consider.

Legal Counsel refocused the discussion to questions and answers and clarified that the appeal portion had concluded and discussion would proceed in a structured format.

**Public Comment**

Aaron Davies, Dock Owner 211, expressed condolences regarding Director Rehfuss and described him as thoughtful, noting the loss to the community. He stated that he purchased his property in November 2024 and has worked with District staff to understand dock ownership requirements. He acknowledged the easement at the time of purchase and stated he is not attempting to block the neighboring property owners from their rights. He explained that dock access significantly impacts property value and that the current dock is out of compliance with specifications, noting that the original structure was a two-slip dock later modified. He referred to the 2008 resolution establishing two-slip specifications for the easements. He stated that he proactively contacted staff to address compliance issues and emphasized that he intends to be a good neighbor and comply with the resolution. He requested that the Board uphold the current resolution and stated he holds no ill will towards his neighbors.

**Rebuttal**

Mr. Alewyn, Dock Owner 212, stated he was uncertain how the dock was out of compliance and noted that the dock is six feet above the high water line and does not obstruct views. He expressed concern about the cost of compliance, including a recently purchased boat lift. Ms. Alewyn responded they were unaware the dock was out of compliance but are interested in bringing it into compliance. She stated the issue arose upon change of ownership and that the decision will affect property value.

Vice President Ludecke asked a point of clarification about the location of the dock and confirmed it is at Holloway's. In response to a question regarding compliance of the three-slip dock, Mr. Cheek stated it is out of compliance due to finger width specifications and noted that compliance issues have existed since the 2008 resolution limiting the easement to two slips. He stated that lack of awareness does not exempt compliance requirements.

President Bradford explained that such issues often arise upon property transfer when compliance reviews occur. He stated that rules are in place to standardize what is allowed on the lake and prevent unregulated expansion of dock structures.

Legal Counsel recommended closing the public hearing and continuing Board discussion.

Vice President Ludecke stated that while the situation is unfortunate, he is inclined to deny the appeal and uphold staff's decision to maintain consistency and avoid repeated appeals. He acknowledged safety concerns but noted that boating inherently carries risk. President Bradford stated that similar situations have occurred previously.

With a motion made by Vice President Ludecke and seconded by Director Lee, upholding the initial decision and denying Appeal was approved unanimously:

AYES: Lee, Bradford, Brewster, Ludecke

NO: -

ABSTAIN: -

**6G - Emergency Business Item: CONSIDER PROCESS FOR FILLING UNEXPIRED TERM FOR DIVISION 2 DIRECTOR VACANCY.**

**Discussion:**

- a. General Manager Jared Cheek reported that a vacancy currently exists on the Board. The District has notified the San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters. He explained that the Board may either appoint a replacement or call for a special election. Given the required timeframes and that the seat is already scheduled for election in November, staff recommended appointing a candidate to serve until the November election.

Vice President Ludecke asked about the appointment process. Mr. Cheek stated that the vacancy would be publicly posted at the District office, the Post Office, and on the District website. The Board must make an appointment prior to March 31. The process would include soliciting letters of interest, reviewing submissions, and selecting a candidate for appointment.

President Bradford requested that the vacancy be posted and advertised as soon as possible.

**7. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR**

N/A

**8. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

General Manager Jared Cheek announced the District will be closed for Presidents Day February 16, 2026.

**9. DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

President Bradford expressed that Director Bob Rehfuss was a great friend and had great contributions to the District, noting his significant impact and dedication.

**10. CLOSED SESSION**

N/A

**11. ADJOURN**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:33 PM.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:

Date: 02/19/2026  
Location: 40524 Lakeview Drive  
Big Bear Lake, CA 92315  
Time: 1:00 PM



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



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