

Big Sky Resort Area District
(406) 995-3234
PO Box 160661, Big Sky, MT 59716
www.ResortTax.org
info@resorttax.org



Big Sky Relief Fund

Operational Partners Coordination Meeting, No. 1 – 3/24/20

On Tuesday, March 24, the first BigSkyRelief.org Operational Partners Coordination Meeting kicked off at 12:30 p.m. and lasted approximately 30 minutes.

The purpose of the virtual bi-weekly meetings is to consolidate regular updates for the Big Sky Community as well as to identify and coordinate needs.

Big Sky Resort Area District board Chairperson Kevin Germain coordinated the meeting, beginning the dialogue with an emphasis on the promotion of social distancing in the community, practicing “The Five” as prescribed by The World Health Organization; hands, wash them often; elbow, cough into; face, don’t touch it; space, keep safe distance; and home, stay if you can.

Updates in order of presentation:

Taylor Rose, Director of Clinical Services & Operations at Bozeman Health Big Sky Medical Center (BHBSMC):

- Already, community member-based pledges and gifts, of various cash values, have been received by BHBSMC and its supporting foundation; those pledges and gifts have been directed toward facility, equipment, and supply needs
- BHBSMC has begun construction on shell space to accommodate four additional rooms, with rough estimates of between 4-6 weeks for completion
- Bozeman Health is receiving three COVID-19 test analyzers for several facilities, including one for BHBSMC; there is a 30-60 day delay due to a national demand, placing pressures on distribution and supply
- Three additional ventilators are expected to arrive at BHBSMC between 12-14 days, bringing facility capacity to four total ventilators
- Gallatin County had 16 confirmed cases at the time of the call with three having ties to Big Sky; there is evidence to suggest community transmission in Big Sky
- BHBSMC officials in Big Sky are preparing to move from a containment approach to mitigating transmission; they further stress the importance of social distancing and hygiene, including regular and thorough hand washing; visitor restrictions and screening are in place
- BHBSMC is confident in facility and staff abilities to address the situation and adequately treat patient needs, with reduced volumes of more traditional patients (trauma) due to

the resort's closing and due to suspension of non-urgent appointments; demand has been reduced

- BHBSMC has begun segregating patients based on respiratory versus non-respiratory ailments
- The b2 UrgentCare Big Sky clinic will be closed for the season; BSMC is looking into the possibility of using this space to address the community's health needs as the situation develops

Interim Chief Greg Meegard, Big Sky Fire Department (BSFD):

- BSFD continues to be ready and available wherever needed
- BSFD is following recommendations from The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in all procedures
- BSFD is urging people to take the situation seriously, and follow social distancing guidelines
- BSFD is in need of personal protective equipment, but is in "overall good shape" at this time

Sergeant Brandon Kelley, Gallatin County Sheriff's Office (GCSO):

- GCSO is "business as normal," fully staffed
- GCSO is working to distribute additional equipment, such as hand sanitizers and masks, as needed for people taken into custody
- GCSO is working to segregate jails on a health needs-basis to mitigate potential spread of COVID-19
- GCSO is working to release a larger number of misdemeanor offenders to reduce potential exposure while in custody
- GCSO has a large quantity of protective equipment, and is "doing well"

Sara Gaither, Program Coordinator of Big Sky Community Food Bank (BSCFB):

- BSCFB is already seeing financial support from community members
- To encourage social distancing, BSCFB is continuing with a drive-up-service that began Friday, March 13
- The facility has increased service days from two to four days per week, allowing for improved client pickup flexibility
- BSCFB is experiencing nearly double the demands compared to typical offseason needs, distributing nearly 90 food boxes per week, compared to between 40-50 in a typical off season
- BSCFB reports roughly 1-in-4 clients has plans to leave Big Sky in the immediate future, with others staying due to stable housing, lease requirements or an inability to find alternative housing elsewhere
- BSCFB is beginning to service clients that have never needed food bank services in the past, with expectations of growth in this demographic

- BSCFB needs immediate funding for food orders up to 5-times normal period costs, as well as contract staffing requirements

Jean Behr, Executive Director of Women In Action (WIA):

- WIA is in a “holding pattern” right now
- All WIA mental health practitioner suspended in-person therapy sessions last week, opting for telehealth formats
 - WIA is working around a practitioner preference for at least two in-person sessions before transitioning to a telehealth service format
 - Said practitioners are no longer taking on new clients
- WIA is seeking additional mental health resources to distribute via social media and email, along with formulating new methods to help clients isolated at home foster connections with the outside world
- WIA ask members of the community to bring any ideas or information on alternative mental health programs to their attention; “There are quite a bit of resources in the mental health pot to apply to that”

David Kack, Coordinator of Big Sky Transportation District (BSTD):

- The BSTD winter Skyline bus service schedule has been significantly revised as of Monday, March 23, down from 14 daily Bozeman-to-Big Sky round trips to four
- There will be Demand Response local services in Big Sky for no more than three healthy passengers at a time; individual rides can be requested for at-risk individuals; (406) 995-2867
- BSTD services will continue seven days a week
- BSTD will reassess demands, and subsequent impacts on services, at the end of the week

Candace Carr Strauss, CEO of Big Sky Chamber of Commerce (BSCC) & Visit Big Sky (VBS):

- BSCC and VBS have been notified of indefinite closures of Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks; impacts to local businesses in shoulder season expected
- The Wilson Hotel and Rainbow Ranch Lodge are the only two lodging options currently available in the community
- BSCC and VBS continue to work closely with local businesses, restaurants and food purveyors to provide community members with accurate business hours and available services; BSCC has also compiled business, financial recovery, public health, medical, food and community assistance, mental health, tourism and community update resources for members of the community and business owners; bigskychamber.com/communityupdates
- BSCC is currently working with the BSRAD for financial assistance for local small businesses

Ciara Wolfe, CEO of Big Sky Community Organization (BSCO):

- All BSCO parks and trails remain open
- All public facilities, e.g. bathrooms, are closed
- BSCO is working to keep community members updated on smart, safe social distancing measures while recreating
- BSCO is working with Lone Mountain Ranch to keep as many cross-country trails open as possible
- BSCO is recruiting, screening and collecting as many volunteers as possible for organizations across the community; currently, as many as 15 vetted volunteers are available for community deployment
- The Big Sky Post Office is working on creating a program for at-risk individuals to pick up their mail at times separate from less-vulnerable populations
- BSCO is aiding Morningstar Learning Center in providing childcare support

Dustin Shipman, Superintendent of Big Sky School District (BSSD):

- Since the March 16 closure of Big Sky schools, BSSD has distributed between 50-60 pick-up meals per day, five days a week; BSSD is switching to a Monday, Wednesday, Friday model effective this week
- BSSD is preparing for a Gov. Bullock-mandated extension of school closures from Friday, March 27 to Friday, April 10
- BSSD has been able to engage 95% of its students via online educational correspondence services, with 335 students, total, logged-on Monday, March 23
- Essential staff has been kept onsite; several staff formerly in non-direct student interface roles have been repurposed

A cohort of Resource Partners was also invited to the virtual meeting. Those names and organizations included:

Daniel Bierschwale, *Big Sky Resort Area District*

Taylor Middleton & Troy Nedved, *Big Sky Resort*

Matt Kidd, *CrossHarbor Capital Partners*

Kevin Hinkle, *Lone Mountain Land Company*

Hans Williamson, *Yellowstone Club*

Heather Morris, *Moonlight Community Foundation*

Loren Bough, *Yellowstone Club Community Foundation*

John Haas, Spanish Peaks Community Foundation