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### **BigSkyRelief.org**

*Operational Partners Coordination Meeting, No. 6 – 4/10/20*

On Tuesday, April 10, the sixth BigSkyRelief.org Operational Partners Coordination Meeting kicked off at 12 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, kicking off the discussion with an emphasis on maintaining social distancing. Germain underscored that everyone must “do their part,” as peak needs are projected to arrive in several weeks, and the community should avoid placing undue strain on the Bozeman Health Big Sky Medical Center when that date arrives.

Updates in order of presentation:

#### **Dr. Kathryn Bertany, President of Bozeman Health Deaconess Hospital (BHDH) and Bozeman Health Big Sky Medical Center (BHBSMC):**

- Bozeman Health has developed a team dedicated to forecasting for COVID-19 needs and cases projections; said team is working with the Montana Health Department, World Health Organizations and others to develop accurate local projections
- The Bozeman Health “planning horizon” is an 8 week period starting now through the first week of June, with the peak surge arriving around the week of April 27; current projections hold as many as 83 patients needing hospital care and 17 needing ICU care in Bozeman Health hospitals at the peak surge date; Bozeman Health is planning for 20 percent growth and sustained volume over the next 6-8 weeks; Bozeman Health, as a system, feels confident it can manage this projected surge; the BHDH Campus has an additional 38 beds; BHDH is using other areas of the hospital, like the perioperative area and the post-anesthesia care unit (which has the capability of having negative pressure) for tentative additional space needs; BHBSMC also has a perioperative area for flex rooms, which would provide seven additional hospital rooms; the additional four-room shell space build-out is in the drywall stage, and is expected to be completed by May 5 and fully equipped by May 12
- Bozeman Health encourages continued social distancing to protect area healthcare systems
- BHBSMC continues to operate their Viral Triage Clinic, which separates patients with respiratory and viral symptoms from patients visiting the Well Clinic, which can be moved to b2 UrgentCare Big Sky overnight if needed to accommodate a surge at BHBSMC
- Current BHBSMC patient numbers are low but are expected to grow in time

- Current BHBSMC services are the Viral Triage Clinic, ER, Well Clinic, drive-up testing, COVID-19 hotline and curbside pharmacy pickup
- All Bozeman Health testing material is currently going to the state lab and turnaround times can take up to 36 hours; BHBSMC is working with MSU to obtain an analyzer to process testing in-house, reducing wait times
- BHBSMC has been able to secure PPE
- BHBSMC has no current needs

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

- BSFD is operating “status quo”
- BSFD is reporting a decline in calls
- BSFD has worked intimately with the Incident Management team in Gallatin County to receive PPE; “Any time our guys go out in public, we ask them to cover up”
- BSFD has no current needs; “Right now, we’re in pretty good shape”

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

- All GCSO deputies assigned to the Big Sky area are healthy and working
- GCSO has received requested masks and is in “good shape” in regards to overall PPE needs
- GCSO is reporting an increase in thefts and advises extra vigilance; lock your homes and vehicles and call-in any suspicious or unusual behavior; GCSO will follow up on all leads; (406) 582-2100

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

- BSCFB is servicing some 35-40 food boxes per week, similar to typical fall “off-season” rates; BSCFB notes approximately half of said clients are Big Sky residents that are new to food bank needs, versus new-to-town clientele
- Projecting forward: “food rescue” resources from around Big Sky will dwindle, as area grocery stores lack the surplus necessary to make produce, dairy and baked goods donations; tourists that typically drop off unused items at the end of vacations are no longer a resource; BSCFB will supplement those needs with produce vouchers
- BSCFB will begin to publish sponsorship opportunities for interested families, individuals and other parties; boxes and individual items/food classes are tentative sponsorship options
- Emergency gas cards are en route

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

- Kasey Anderson, a newly appointed licensed clinical professional counselor under WIA, only has two Big Sky clients as of April 10; WIA asks individuals and businesses to help spread the word that Anderson is able to take on additional clients seeking mental or behavioral health care; due to a “significant budget” allocated to mental and behavioral health needs, there is a possibility of extending the free counseling services
- The “Big Sky Random Acts of Kindness” social media campaign is live; WIA is encouraging community members to lend aid to neighbors and organize socially distanced events, sharing those moments with the #bigskyroak hashtag; “Spread a little cheer”

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

- BSTD will implement the Shoulder Season schedule on April 20, with plans to run the modified Late Winter schedule until that date

- BSTD is communicating with the Montana Department of Transportation, assessing potential avenues for CARES Act funding via the Federal Transit Administration; received funds may significantly reduce FY21 Big Sky Resort Area District resort tax application requests; BSTD has \$50,000 unused from their FY20 BSRAD allocation, with tentative plans to return those unused funds to the BSRAD should it be determined there is no outstanding need

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

- BSCC continues to distill the federal funding mechanisms available to Big Sky's small businesses; BSCC joins other organizations in questioning as to when CARES Act money will be available to those that have applied, with two weeks passed since the March 27 passing of the legislation
- BSCC advises sole proprietors, self-employed and independent contractors that Payroll Protection Program Loans opened on April 10
- The Employer-Employee Assistance Hotline, manned by business volunteers from the Big Sky community and designed to provide information and assistance regarding to Unemployment Insurance, the CARES Act, Economic Injury Disaster Loans and Payroll Protection Program Loans, is scheduled for a tentative April 14 launch
- BSCC communications are focused on supporting businesses that are still open and those with frontline workers, ensuring the Big Sky community is able to #StayStrong; BSCC launched a new website platform where people can purchase t-shirts, with net proceeds going to small business relief efforts; StayStrongBigSky.com
- BSCC reminds community members business and community support resources are available at [bigskychamber.com/communityupdates](http://bigskychamber.com/communityupdates) and [bigskychamber.com/lovelocalrestaurants](http://bigskychamber.com/lovelocalrestaurants)
- VBS is tracking travel trends and scenario planning around the implementation of recovery efforts
- VBS launched two new landing pages this week on VisitBigSky.com
  - For tourism partners and community stakeholders: [visitbigsky.com/about-us/covid-19-resources/](http://visitbigsky.com/about-us/covid-19-resources/)
  - For consumers: [visitbigsky.com/about-us/riseupbigsky/](http://visitbigsky.com/about-us/riseupbigsky/)
- VBS is working to reshape destination messaging, highlighting the community's resiliency; VBS seeks to work collaboratively with its tourism partners and community stakeholders to bring visitors back to the community when the time is appropriate
- May 3-9 is U.S. Travel's National Travel and Tourism Week; BSCC encourages community members to acknowledge and celebrate the power of travel as an economic driver and job provider for the local community; VBS will host a virtual Marketing Outlook meeting on May 7 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. to share insights on the Big Sky destination's plans to respond to setbacks from COVID-19

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

- To date, there are 58 local volunteers registered to help, as needed, across five weekly shifts; the Big Sky Community Food Bank has been able to cover their needs with staff; BSCO has been able to make six matches in the BSCO "Senior Buddy" and at-risk program, which is designed to connect young, healthy individuals with at-risk senior citizens in need of assistance in safely retrieving mail, groceries and other errands
- Via a collaboration with the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce, there are six volunteers helping with the Employer-Employee Assistance Hotline
- BSCO has organized trash pickup days on April 14 and April 16; on April 14, trash bags will be provided at the Kircher Park Trailhead, but gloves will not be provided; as individuals pick up trash along Lone Peak Trail and U.S. Highway 191, two paved trails expected to see extensive

use as snow melts and muddies other BSCO trails, people can leave full bags along the side of the road for BSCO staff pickup; additional details for April 16 TBD

- BSCO has worked with program partners to build out the BSCO Community Calendar, with said partners volunteering their time and resources; the calendar will provide community engagement opportunities in the forms of virtual events such as group counseling sessions, live theatrical and musical performances, lectures, fly tying classes, golf lessons, and cooking lessons with local chefs and restaurant owners, among others; “There is literally something for everyone for our community to stay connected at this time”; [bscomt.org/events](https://bscomt.org/events)

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

- BSSD continues to manage online and distance learning offerings
- BSSD continues to distribute between 40-50 lunches per day, available in both pickup and delivery options; BSSD reports a large amount of weekend food needs on weekends; meal delivery continues to span locations as far apart as the Mountain Village area and some households close to Four Corners
- Counselors are working individually with students, along with whole-class and small-group sessions
- May 29 is scheduled to be the last day of school, a week earlier than previously expected; BSSD is working on how seniors will finish the academic year
- Per notice from the Office of Public Instruction, Board of Public Education and the Montana Public Education Center, BSSD should plan to postpone any graduation ceremonies or devise an alternative plan

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*