

VISIT BIG BEAR / TBID

MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING

June 26, 2025

Regular Session Board Meeting – 8:00 a.m. Open Session

Location: In Person at Big Bear Visitors Center and via Zoom

Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/4403166685>

Call-In Number: 1 (669) 900-6833 | Meeting ID: 440 316 6685

CALL TO ORDER

President Loren Hafen called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Loren Hafen.

ROLL CALL

Present: Christie Brewster, Nick Cargill, Danielle Goldsmith, Loren Hafen, Nick Lanza, Clayton Shoemaker

Also Present: VBB Staff, Public Attendees in the room and via Zoom.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Email re: Fireworks and Eagles

- Strong public concern over July 4th fireworks' impact on local eagles, with 50% of public comments for and 50% against.
- Big Bear eagles have 1.1 million followers; a Change.org petition to stop fireworks reached 10,000 signatures in 24-30 hours.
- Fireworks cancellation could hurt local economy, but negative PR from eagle harm could be worse.
- Suggestions include a Bald Eagle Festival, drone shows, and leveraging eagle fame for tourism.

No vote taken on fireworks; the board will consider all feedback and continue discussions.

1. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

1.1 Approval of Meeting Minutes

- May 29, 2025 Regular BoD Meeting:

Motion to approve 5.29.25 BoD meeting minutes made by Clayton Shoemaker, seconded by Christie Brewster.

AYES: Loren Hafen, Danielle Goldsmith, Nick Lanza, Nick Cargill

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Frank Caruso

2. INFORMATIONAL:

2.1 CalPoly EIM Program Destination Audit – Presented by EIM Audit Students (late addition)

- Cal Poly students audited Big Bear tourism services in March 2025.
- Audit covered 15+ businesses: recreation, dining, lodging, retail.
- Key strengths: strong branding, diverse recreation, helpful Visitor Center staff.
- Main issues: outdated signage, inconsistent digital presence, limited under-21 options.
- Recommendations: improve digital/physical branding, update websites, enhance sustainability, expand bike/pedestrian paths.
- Sustainability: promote Care for Big Bear, reduce single-use plastics, encourage eco-friendly lodging.
- Actionable steps: better infrastructure connectivity, business alignment with core values, regular digital updates.
- Completed full report, videos, and social media posts on Big Bear tourism audit.
- Report covers online presence, on-site experience, strengths, and strategic recommendations.
- Ongoing partnership planned between Cal Poly EIM and Visit Big Bear for multi-phase evaluation.

2.2 Topline Analytics Review – Presented by Karla Reed

- Social saw significant increases May 30–June 6, driven by eaglet fledging video (**500,000 views**).
- Website traffic declined YoY and MoM due to reduced paid ads; focus shifted to organic/social engagement and revenue via booking engine.
- Google algorithm changes (Gemini, SGE) now prioritize direct business listings and images over aggregators; ongoing internal research to adapt SEO strategy.

2.3 Public Relations Stats Review, Marketing and Events Updates – Presented by Damien Navarro

- Cut paid media budget from \$1.3M to \$400K; shifted focus to organic, AEO, and creator-driven content.
- PR and creator campaigns generated major results: 2B impressions, \$264M media value (film festival); 606M impressions, \$68M value (fireworks); 440M impressions, \$44M value (tentpole events).
- Event attendance up 10–30% YoY. Major events (e.g., Fishin for 50K) sold out; new post-event surveys launched.

2.4 Committee Meetings:

- Event Committee: July 23, 2025 @ 8AM
- Marketing Committee: July 23, 2025 @ 10AM
- Board of Directors: July 24, 2025 @ 8AM

3. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:58 AM