

**Bend Sustainability Fund
Advisory Council Project Review
Draft Minutes
October 19, 2023 - 1:00pm-3:30pm
Embark
2843 NW Lolo Dr., Bend OR 97703**

In Attendance:

Advisory Council Members:

Beau Eastes – Old Mill District; Brent Fenty – Oregon Desert Land Trust; Bronwen Lodato –Bronwen Jewelry; Susan Strible - Oregon Outdoor Alliance; Todd Wells – LOGE Camps; Sean Woulfe, CarbonHero; Paul Nanawa – Edelrid North America; Wendy Kelley – Wall Street Suites. ZOOM: Jared Garfield - Wanderlust Tours; Clara Soh - Climber/Medical Consultant.

Land Manager Liaisons:

Rachel Colton – Bend Parks and Recreation District; Ben Hemson – City of Bend; Josie Norris – The Conservation Alliance (VB board).

Visit Bend Staff:

Kevney Dugan – President/CEO; Serena Bishop Gordon – Sustainability Manager.

Minutes: Shari Crandall.

Absent:

Advisory Council Members: Derek Cuny – UBCO; Kevin Hoar – Fly and Field Outfitters; Cliff Eslinger – 900 Wall; Raul Ainardi – Fairfield Inn; Austin Smith.

Land Manager Liaisons: Lisa Clark – BLM; Lisa Machnik – Forest Service; Will Groves – Deschutes County; Jeff Kitchen – BLM.

Gordon called the meeting to order at 1:00pm.

I. Introductory Remarks and Meeting Logistics

Bend Sustainability Fund's (BSF) top priority is to take care of the places that take care of us, the community. BSF invests in projects that protect, steward, and create sustainable experiences in Bend's community.

This meeting will be recorded. Statements made during the meeting will be captured in the Minutes which are public record and available to the public upon request. Gordon encouraged AC to be respectful and conscientious during its dialogue.

While a conflict of interest with an organization or project up for review does not bar AC participation, BSF does require full disclosure for the record. An AC member has a conflict of interest if she/he/they has a direct roll with the organization or project; is a board member/employee of an applying organization; and/or has a financial stake in the organization or project. One conflict is noted: Colton, BSF Land Manager Liaison is employed by Bend Parks and Recreation which has submitted an application for FY24.

BSF is in its third year. Visit Bend completed a resident survey through OSU Cascades which shows residents are paying attention, residents are aware Visit Bend is giving back to the community.

While Visit Bend would prefer to stay within a relatively strict timeline for this funding cycle, it is willing to push back that timeline a few weeks to better define the future direction of BSF and get its funding right, if necessary. Regarding AC's initial review of the applications, Visit Bend received diverse, and at times competing, feedback; in addition, several funding concerns were raised. Visit Bend would like to balance ideas and build consensus, where possible. Therefore, unlike the previous two cycles, today's discussion will not address final funding specifics. Instead, Visit Bend would appreciate a robust dialogue in which AC discusses the specific FY24 applications while addressing some tough questions that could well set precedent and the shape of BSF's future funding.

As BSF continues to evolve: what direction shall it take? Will BSF continue to fund For-Profit, Nonprofit, and Public Sector applicants? If yes, under what circumstances? Will BSF fund projects that have already begun? Will it fund projects already completed? Will it fund debt incurred by an applicant before its application? Other topics or issues AC would like to address?

BSF may only fund projects that fit within the legal definition of Tourism-Related Facility as outlined in ORS 320.300. Sections relevant to BSF include the legal definitions below:

- Funds must be used for projects that would be considered a “Tourism-related facility.”
 - A conference center, convention center or visitor information center.
 - Other improved real property that has a useful life of 10 or more years and has a substantial purpose of supporting tourism or accommodating tourist activities.
- A “Tourist” means a person who, for business, pleasure, recreation or participation in events related to the arts, heritage or culture, travels from the community in which that person is a resident to a different community that is separate, distinct from and unrelated to the person’s community of residence, and that trip:
 - Requires the person to travel more than 50 miles from the community of residence; or
 - Includes an overnight stay.

With respect to the FY24 applications, BSF will award grants to shovel-ready projects that meet the following criteria:

- Will protect, steward or create a “tourism-related facility” with an impactful life of greater than ten (10) years;
- Said “facility” will have substantial use by out-of-town visitors;
- Has a clear timeline and measurable outcomes within the next 12 months; and,
- Has grassroots/community support.

The Visit Bend team (Team) performed due diligence; each of the ten projects to be discussed has met the above criteria. During discussions of various projects, Gordon will provide the information she has obtained in response to questions raised during the initial reviews.

Additionally, Visit Bend’s BSF goal is to consider the importance of a “Balanced Bend.” Visit Bend’s sustainability model seeks to find balance between the economy, people, and place. The Bend community is dependent on each of these elements, and it is important to find a balance between them as Visit Bend strives towards a thriving, sustainable community for residents and visitors alike. As it makes funding decisions, Team and AC are to keep in mind where the funding comes from and what its responsibility is to the Bend community and visitors. Visit Bend would like award recipients to manifest the following three pillars (a project may emphasize a particular pillar):

<i>Economy</i>	□ □	<i>People</i>	□ □	<i>Place</i>
Tax Revenue		Supporting Workforce		Environmental Stewardship
Consumer Spending		Resident Sentiment		Responsible Recreation
Wages Earned		Guest Satisfaction		Thriving Space

Correspondingly, Visit Bend asked AC to implement the Trust Based Funding Model into its discussion to allow broader perspective and more viewpoints in which to better represent the Bend community. The Trust Based Funding Model states:

We recognize that racial, economic, and social inequities exist within the systems we operate and the community we live in, and we take a trust-based approach to change the practices and behaviors that perpetuate harm.

- We lead with trust
- We prioritize relationships
- We strive for systemic equity
- We work to simplify the process
- We decenter decision making
- We are always learning.

Gordon asked AC to share their knowledge of the organizations, the projects, the applicable laws/rules/regulations; ask any additional questions and voice their concerns; discuss the different/relevant aspects of the project; and, provide their feedback on whether they would like to fund, partially or in full, or not fund the project.

FY24 Budget Overview

Total Bend Sustainability Fund Budget	\$897,896	15% of Visit Bend’s total budget
FY24 Grant Fund Expenses	\$32,900	Marketing, Admin, Platform
FY23 2-year Grants Committed*	\$300,000	Catalyst - \$200,000

		Museum at Warm Springs - \$100,000
FY24 Available for Grants	\$564,996	Available for 1 year and 1 st year of 2-year grants
Total Grant Dollars to Distribute FY24	\$864,996	

*FY23 second year checks to be written in November 2023.

The projects to be reviewed at this meeting, listed in alphabetical order, include:

- Bend BMX - Bend BMX Improvements
- Bend Endurance Academy - New Capacity for State and PNW Events and Conferences
- Bend Park and Recreation District - Miller's Landing Access and Restoration Project
- Cascades Theatrical Company - Cascades Theatre Restoration-Preservation Plan
- Deschutes Public Library Foundation - Early Learning Children's Discovery Area at Stevens Ranch Library
- High Desert Climbers Alliance - Enhancing Climbing Safety and Conservation Efforts at Smith Rock State Park
- NWX2 LLC - The Discovery Park Art Corridor
- The Campfire Hotel - The Cabin at the Campfire Hotel
- Tower Theater Foundation - "Get Comfortable Again!"
- Trout Unlimited - Lower Fall River Habitat Conservation Project

Organization	Project Name	Total Amount Requested (\$)	1- or 2- Year Request
Bend BMX	Bend BMX Improvements	\$113,183	1 Year
Bend Endurance Academy	New Capacity for State and PNW Events and Conferences	\$250,000	2 Year
Bend Park and Recreation District	Miller's Landing Access and Restoration Project	\$300,000	2 Year
Cascades Theatrical Company	Cascades Theatre Restoration – Preservation Plan	\$55,850	1 Year
Deschutes Public Library Foundation	Early Learning Children's Discovery Area at Stevens Ranch Library	\$250,000	2 Year
High Desert Climbers Alliance	Enhancing Climbing Safety & Conservation Efforts at Smith Rock State Park	\$20,000	1 Year
NWX2 LLC	The Discovery Park Art Corridor	\$150,000	2 Year
The Campfire Hotel	The Cabin at the Campfire Hotel	\$459,712	2 Year
Tower Theater Foundation	"Get Comfortable Again"	\$59,500	1 Year
Trout Unlimited	Lower Fall River Habitat Conservation Project	\$69,850	2 Year
	Amount Requested	\$1,728,095	
	Total Bend Sustainability Fund Budget	\$897,896	
	FY24 Grant Fund Expenses	\$32,900	
	FY23 2-year Grants Committed	\$300,000	
	FY24 Available for Grants	\$564,996	
	Total Grant Dollars to Distribute FY24	\$864,996	
	Difference	-\$1,163,099	

Briefly, the project review and funding discussion needs to keep in mind:

- Funding requested: \$1,728,095
- Funding available: \$564,996 for 1 year and first year of 2-year grants.
- FY23 2-year grant obligation: \$300,000.

Of note: In the fall of 2022 BSF chose to fund Central Oregon Trail Alliance (COTA) – Wanoga Mountain Bike Hub Development with a contingency. Since applicant had taken the requisite steps necessary to implement the project, including speaking with the land manager and applying for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) permit, BSF chose to fund the project based on final approval of the permit. Since NEPA has not yet been approved, the contingency was not met and

the \$157,000 was not allocated, the funds were rolled back into the available funding for FY24. COTA will need to reapply when the final permit is approved. This was a lesson learned for future BSF reviews.

Note, too: Over the last few years, the Forest Service has had a backlog in NEPA permit approvals that they are now completing. The expectation for BSF is there will be a greater number of “environmentally-based” applications next grant cycle.

Gordon reported there are more applications for FY24 than the previous two cycles. BSF is more competitive with more funds requested. Of those reviewed this cycle, a few applications received higher approval and significantly more support than others. The AC will address those first.

II. Discussion of Projects

Tower Theater Foundation – “Get Comfortable Again” (Tower)

Statement of Success:

- All seats in the Tower Theater will be inspected, repaired and refurbished to maximize patron comfort (455 chairs)
- This project is the culmination of a long and larger sequence of refurbishments designed to ensure the Tower’s facilities and equipment meet contemporary industry standards and provide outstanding patron amenities.

Amount requested: \$59,500 – 1-year grant

Previous funding: N/A

The applicant’s funding request to refurbish seats is a small part of a larger project to raise the Tower’s standard of patron comfort. BSF is not the only funding source. AC appreciates Applicant is repairing and refurbishing existing seats rather than buying new ones and would like to fund this request. A concern raised was Applicant’s omission in its submittal regarding seating for inclusive sizing and additional ADA/wheelchair space.

Hemson reported if an entity goes outside the City-approved accessibility plan, the entity would have to go back to the City for re-approval. AC recognizes Applicant has already done a lot of work and has taken the requisite steps to get authorization to refurbish the seating. On another point, AC does not want applicants to amend their BSF applications after submittal. In this case, they felt it was appropriate to provide input and to ask whether Tower has plans to address the ADA/sizing concern. Gordon will ask Applicant whether Tower has plans for providing inclusive-size seating and additional space for ADA/ wheelchairs.

Cascades Theatrical Company – Cascades Theatre Restoration & Preservation Plan

Statement of Success:

- Installation of new seating to improve comfort and visitor experience (131 chairs).
- Prioritized accessibility and improved aesthetics
- Improved durability and reduced maintenance
- Might increase seating capacity.

Amount requested: \$55,850 - 1 year grant

Previous funding: \$45,000 - last year

Last cycle, BSF partially funded renovations to the theater’s Restoration-Preservation Project which was created to provide a larger space to create productions, new educational opportunities and to welcome larger/more diverse audiences. With the exception of seating, Applicant has finished those projects. This cycle, Applicant is requesting funds for removing and replacing the old chairs. Applicant is prioritizing ADA seating.

AC would like BSF to support the arts which can create a stronger community vibe. While Cascade Theatrical Company does not bring in as many visitors as the Tower, AC noted the theater has less capacity and funding than the Tower. The issue of what is “substantial use” arose, as it has each funding cycle. Dugan explained, he doesn’t see this as a hard line, a defined percentage. He would prefer BSF to not get too restrictive in its application of the term. Anecdotally, he has noticed many examples in the community that with the right facility/project, “if you build, they will come.” He continued: he would like to maintain and build onto the qualities that bring people to Bend by investing in assets which already exist and building new

facilities to fulfill the needs of community and visitors, to create broader availability, to continue to provide and improve upon amazing experiences.

Applicant is promoting the arts, community engagement, and educational opportunities such as tuition-free teen education and have increased their marketing and advertising. And, as one AC member stated, it is providing a quality indoor experience during the smokey late summer period. Applicant reports they saw a 25% increase in tourist traffic. A concern: What was meant by Applicant's statement "25% increase in tourism"? For example, was the increase something like 10 to 12, were the numbers more substantial? AC would like Applicant to provide data/numbers in support of its claim. Gordon will request Applicant to provide data/numbers, or information on what Applicant used, to calculate the percentage increase in tourist attendance.

Another concern: Applicant did not report matching funds or other funding sources. This topic also appears in other applications. One AC member affiliated with a nonprofit organization stated the issue for organizations like hers – they need the funds and wouldn't be asking if there were other sources. Further, there are times that in order to get additional funds, the organization needs to show it already has seed funding.

Gordon explained: currently, BSF does not require matching funds, nor does it require an additional funding source. While this larger topic won't be discussed further today, it can be included on a list of topics for a later discussion. In the meantime, if Applicant were not to receive full BSF funding, it is reasonable to ask what Applicant's plans are to achieve its Statement of Success as written in application? Not do the project? Seek other funds? Chip away at the project over a longer period of time as funds become available?

In this case, Applicant's Statement of Success includes: installation of new seating to improve comfort and visitor experience; prioritized accessibility and improved aesthetics; improved durability and reduced maintenance; and possible increase in seating capacity. Gordon will ask Applicant what its plans are to achieve its Statement of Success if BSF does not fully fund its request.

Another larger topic included whether to fund an organization which has been previously funded. Gordon explained: BSF wants to lower the barrier for projects to obtain funding. It is a matter of whether the recipient is a good and trustworthy partner, has applied the funds toward the project(s) which BSF previously awarded, has completed the project(s), etc. Applicant is such a partner.

Trout Unlimited – Lower Fall River Habitat Conservation Project

Statement of Success:

- A Fall River that runs clean, without sedimentation and pollution from roads, parking lots and poorly maintained trails.
- Plantings of trees and shrubs will improve fish habitat thus enhance and sustain the fishing experience.
- Trail signage will provide visitors with educational and access information about the Fall River and recreational opportunities.
- Engagement in trail maintenance will create a stewardship network of knowledgeable volunteers to support the river into the future.

Amount requested: \$69,850 – 2-year grant

Previous funding: \$74,000 (30 + 44k)

This is a LaPine State Park/Fall River project. In answer to Gordon's questions, Applicant has affirmed the work planned has useful life over 10 years. The work will decrease the effects of erosion. This is an area of increased popularity: many residents and tourists hike the trails, fly fish the river.

AC liked this project – it restores, preserves and takes pressure off other overused areas, such as the popular Deschutes River. While it primarily brings in visitors during the over-crowded summer months, it helps mitigate heavy use and resultant impact of other areas. AC liked the engagement of the community, including kids, to help do the work.

Applicant has completed past funded projects. The question did arise: does BSF want to fund an organization for the third time? Because Applicant has been a trusted partner who accomplished previous goals and it involves the community, AC felt this a good fit for BSF funds.

A concern: the budget showed 15% of any funds received would go to national headquarters. AC members with experience in this matter suggest the local chapter may be able to speak with National about decreasing the percentage amount (i.e. the percentage would shift valuable resources away from completion of this important project). It was suggested for future cycles, BSF advise applicants it will only cover “x” percent of funds awarded – for example: 5% but no more than 10%. Gordon offered to speak with Applicant to determine whether there is a way to lessen the percentage to National.

High Desert Climbers Alliance – Enhancing Climbing Safety & Conservation Efforts at Smith Rock State Park (Park)
Statement of Success:

- Installation of WAG bag dispensers and LNT informative signage will promote sustainable tourism and reduce the impact of tourism on the fragile desert ecosystem.
- Hardware enhancement efforts will provide climbing access and inclusion of all skill levels for visitors and the community.
- Bolster the region's economy by promoting tourism during non-peak seasons (the climbing season is Fall-Spring) and supporting rural communities.
- Help preserve Smith Rock State Park and mitigate the impact of increased visitor numbers.

Amount requested: \$20,000 – 1-year grant

Previous funding: N/A

Two members in AC are involved in the climbing scene: Soh and Nanawa. Gordon asked for their input of this project. They liked the LNT informative signage, mitigation of visitor impact, and hardware enhancement (bolts and epoxy) but felt WAG bags were not a good long-term solution to the human waste problem.

Soh requested information regarding Applicant's overall budget, particularly the line items that address the \$5,000 portion of Applicant's request. Gordon received the budget the morning of this meeting and will forward it to Soh for review.

AC agreed with Soh and Nanawa's assessment: they, too, liked the project but did not want to award BSF funds for WAG bags. It was noted that people already leave dog poop bags along the trails, and don't see that improving with human waste bags. Further, due to the very high visitor traffic at the Park, the bags would probably be a cheaper product and the smell would be bad. On an aside, data shows the Park has the highest visitor numbers compared to all other Central Oregon destinations. The Park currently has two composting toilets, AC would like to see a third compostin toilet. Soh informed AC that the cost of a composting toilet large enough to meet Park users' needs would probably cost about \$200,000. Gordon will speak with Matt Davey regarding the Park's future plans to include an additional composting toilet.

AC addressed its desire to not fund WAG bags. The query: if BSF funded the full \$20,000 request for items but not pay for WAG bags, would Applicant use the additional funds to expand the scope of its work to include more LNT signage and bolting routes? Gordon will ask Applicant.

An AC member noted the application had a strong climber focus but most Park users are hikers, does Visit Bend know the breakdown of hikers to climbers? Dugan doesn't have that breakdown but one-half million visitors per year go to the Park. The member also wondered whether climbers stay overnight somewhere other than Bend to maximize their climbing time. Soh stated she is at the park as many as 200 days per year, either climbing or providing rescue services. She reported, anecdotally, on a three-day visit a climber will typically climb two days in a row and then take a rest day; the significant majority of climbers travel to Bend for a good meal but she does not know the percentage of those who stay the night in Bend.

Bend BMX – Bend BMX Improvements (BMX)

Statement of Success:

- Host a Regional Gold Cup Championship by 2025 and a National event by 2026.

- Increase spectator capacity and aesthetics including covered awning structure, elevated seating, bleachers, and fencing.
- Improve recreation opportunities for Bend's Eastside by updating our facility, and continuing to make BMX accessible to all families helping develop the next generation of cycling talent.

Amount requested: \$113,183 - 1 year grant

Previous Funding: \$80,897

Gordon reported Applicant's request for funds this year is complicated for several reasons. Colton (BPRD) and Will Groves (County) have done an enormous amount of work to get this project shovel ready. The \$113,000 budget includes an awning and viewing area for \$69,890; 3-sets of 5-row Aluminum Bleachers for \$31,293; and 400 ft split rail fencing for \$12,000.

Gordon asked Colton to explain. Colton reported BPRD owns Big Sky Park. BPRD wants to support any entity who has a lease on its property and they have been excited to see the work done by BMX. However, BPRD was not aware BMX had submitted the BSF application until Colton looked at the application portal. To do the work requested in this application, Applicant must get authorization and permits. BMX has already received the authorization for its starting gate plans and has obtained the necessary permit for the awning to be placed over the track's starting gate. At time of Applicant's submittal, it had not requested authorization/permits for the remainder of the work. Applicant needs to produce a comprehensive site plan and requisite permits before it can go forward with the work represented for seating/bleachers/fencing in the application. If everything falls into place without any delays, BMX may be shovel ready in a year but she can't guarantee the timing. When Applicant realized it would need to do more work to obtain approval for the 5-row seats, it suggested a revision of their application to 3-row seats which do not require permits and their ADA plans.

Gordon reported with Applicant's request to revise its application to 3-row seating, Applicant would also amend its request from \$113,000 to \$88,000. This is an unfortunate incident in which an all-volunteer organization thought they had done all they needed but, in fact, hadn't done all their homework.

Dugan noted Applicant is already hosting regional events and is now attempting to host national events. He stated this is the "coolest BMX track" – it is incredible and all it is missing is the seating and ADA access required to do a national event. He really likes the idea, especially since the events are held in the shoulder season, but he does not want BSF to give up on its ADA standards just because Applicant could skirt them. He also reported this is similar to last year's application when BMX didn't have approval for the awning. He suggested one possibility is for BMX to reapply in a year or two when they have met all the building requirements and ADA standards.

The conversation shifted to whether to fund the awning at the start gate. AC discussed its general concerns: all BSF projects are required to be shovel ready and whether a proposal would need substantive revision after it had been submitted (see Tower note above). Precedent needs to be addressed: applicant can't introduce a new body of work/new programs after the review. This proposal does include the awning but the remainder in the application requires more work. At what point is the change in a submitted application too much to not warrant full or partial funding. Gordon suggested possibilities: advise Applicant to reapply when it has met all the planning/permitting/ADA requirements; fund the awning since it already has the requisite authorization and permit; or, AC can look at the overall FY24 amount it chooses to fund and if \$69,000 is still available, possibly fund the awning.

The Campfire Hotel – The Cabin at the Campfire Hotel

Statement of Success:

- Community members coming together in a space that delivers creativity and comfort.

- To provide much-needed event/meeting space in the BCD for groups of 20-150 on Campsite property at “The Cabin.”
- Nonprofits and businesses in Bend utilize the Cabin to work together to make Bend a better place.
- Local, regional, national, and international audiences are aware of The Cabin, the Campfire Hotel, Bend, and Central Oregon.

Amount requested: \$459,712 – 2-year grant

Previous funding: N/A

Hemson reported this project is allowed in the mixed-use zone. Permitting takes about 200 days, dependent upon the number of rounds required for review. This Applicant has a team that knows the process; it is using the same architect as the Catalyst project. The City has no concerns with this project.

AC provided disparate feedback following their initial review of this application. Today’s discussion covered several topics.

Contingency. Dugan reported this application again raises the “contingency” issue relevant to some FY24 applicants and previous year grantees such as The Catalyst¹ (Grantee) and COTA (see page 4) projects. As noted in the footnote below regarding Catalyst, there were several markers Grantee had to achieve before Visit Bend allocated funds. Grantee met the first marker and received the first check; it has not yet met the final markers and has not received the second check. Had BSF required applicant to be shovel ready, this delay in monies awarded but not paid might have been allocated to other applicants. Therefore, the question arises: at what point will BSF award funds when an applicant does not have all the requisite permits? And, if BSF awards funds contingent on factors such as permitting, the award agreement must state, with specificity, BSF funds will not be allocated until the contractually-defined contingency(ies) is(are) met.

Gordon stated Applicant is requesting \$459,712 over two years. The total cost of the project is \$1.9million of which \$1.2million was for land already purchased. Therefore, the total remaining cost for the project will be approximately \$750,000. The application stated the project would not go forward if BSF did not cover the full ask. Gordon spoke with Applicant to determine whether it would accept less than the full request: Applicant stated if you give us 90% the project will go forward, if you give us 10% the project will not go forward.

Dugan asked Gordon: if BSF were to award Applicant \$250,000, would Applicant say no to the award? Gordon replied, if BSF wants to fund \$250,000 she would go to Applicant before final AC funding decision and ask whether Applicant would accept that amount. If Applicant said Campfire would not accept the award, then the funds would be reallocated to others.

Applicant Conflict of Interest. AC member noted Applicant, Daniel Elder, sits on the Visit Bend Board. Is this a Conflict of Interest? She is concerned about public perception. Dugan reported a similar situation arose when BSF discussed and then awarded funds for the summer hiking trails at Mt. Bachelor; John McLeod ultimately stayed away from any and all funding discussion and decisions. In this particular instance, Dugan and Gordon had not yet discussed this issue but agree: if AC propose to fund this project Elder would be asked to follow McLeod’s lead—recuse himself from all discussion of and voting for the request for funds.

For future funding cycles, AC requested they be advised of conflicts of interest such as this before their initial review of the applications.

For-Profit Business Applicant: This for-profit organization is requesting funds for expansion of its business. Query: does BSF fund commercial businesses? At least one AC member voiced his strong opposition to BSF funding for-profit entities.

¹ Petrich Properties – The Catalyst. BSF awarded funds for FY23. Catalyst’s Statement of Success provided for a “safe, vibrant, and open-to-the public gathering amenity in the core of Bend Central District (BCD) that fosters tourism, community building, and inclusion. We envision a hub of economic growth, creating a space that brings tourists and locals alike together to experience our ethnic and economic diversity. This project will activate the North East 2nd and Hawthorne corridor by providing a public space for all to enjoy.” Applicant requested \$575,000 over two years. BSF awarded \$450,000 (\$250,00 + \$200,000) over two years, payments were contingent upon grantee obtaining the requisite permits. Upon receipt of the move permit, BSF paid the first of two checks. The Catalyst has yet to obtain the building permit and the related funds have not yet been allocated by Visit Bend.

Gordon explained BSF guidelines do not prevent for-profit businesses from applying. BSF has awarded funds to commercial entities, such as Mt Bachelor's trails, in the last two cycles and, because guidelines do not address the issue, the guidelines will apply to this cycle. AC will be tasked with making funding decisions based on the merits of this application. Dugan noted BSF does have an economic lens; at least one question to ask regarding this application is whether the project would drive tourist visitation.

Applicant's primary priority, as listed in its Statement of Success, is to provide a large event meeting space for nonprofit and for-profit business gatherings in the Bend Central District (BCD). Dugan noted Applicant wrote the chief letter of support last year for the Catalyst project; Applicant is now coming back this year requesting funds for its own event meeting space.

An AC member, also an overnight lodging provider, notes that Applicant is probably struggling to draw shoulder/winter season guests. He believes Applicant perceives the indoor event meeting space as a potential income source during this period. He also thinks if BSF doesn't fund this request, Applicant's private financing will probably cover the expense. He also reported his facility is also planning to create an indoor meeting space and understands what Applicant is trying to do.

It was suggested the discussion regarding funding for-profit businesses be tabled to a later meeting.

Red Flags: Applicant is requesting a lot of money to be spent singularly on the one business. Several struggled with this application – they would have liked Applicant to better explain how it would draw tourists and how it would serve nonprofit organizations. One member stated this seemed like a throw-out sentence without providing much support.

AC members note this space is a closed/exclusive use facility: Applicant would require guests to rent/pay for access. AC compared Mt Bachelor's trails which are free to use to anyone; and, the Catalyst which will provide a gathering space for residents and visitors without requiring payment to be there.

For at least one person, the terms in the application were off putting. This for-profit business (and others) application has an underlying ring of entitlement; something like: "we generate the taxes that pay for these funds, so give us the money."

Positive Aspects: Applicant strongly supports Bend's LGBTQ community and nonprofit sector. Some felt this project would bring in tourists. There is a need for indoor meeting spaces in the off-season.

Gordon notified AC she will be requesting each member to rank the applications 1 through 10, top to bottom. She asked AC to determine how this application ranks when compared to other applications. She and Dugan will then review all feedback and propose a funding scenario to AC for comment.

Bend Endurance Academy – New Capacity for State and PNW Events (BEA)

Statement of Success:

- BEA will become fully established in its new location, hosting regular regional events and conferences.
- BSF funding would be used for debt servicing and to build out some aspects that do not exist due to budget constraints that would significantly make our venue capable of hosting training camps including:
 - Additional holds & volumes: \$11,082
 - Padding & off wall activities: \$5,500

Amount requested: \$250,000 – 2-year grant

Previous funding: N/A

Gordon reported there was much confusion regarding this project. After several conversations with Applicant, she learned the project was already completed except the requested \$16,000. Applicant took out a large loan with a low interest rate from an individual that now has to be repaid either through grant funding or Applicant will have to get a more expensive loan that has a higher interest rate. Reading through the lines, Applicant may have overextended itself financially. Another issue raised on initial review was the 5-year lease. Applicant reports that it has the option to renegotiate the lease or move the equipment to another location.

An AC member provided the history behind the project. BEA had a long-term relationship with Bend Rock Gym. BRG increased its prices and withdrew its discount to BEA, the result of which would have doubled the BRG cost to BEA members. BEA members could no longer use the BRG facility and due to time constraints, they obtained a loan from a person in the community and built their own facility.

AC noted Applicant has one uncompleted project at a small cost of \$16,000. It acknowledged there are times an entity must pay upfront for costs through loans. With the exception of four competitions a year, non-BEA members are unable to use the facility. To gain access, one must belong to the climbing academy or attend the climbing tournaments. If awarded, BSF funds would fund the select members and those who attend tournament events, which do bring in tourists. Funding this project would not make other facilities less crowded.

Gordon would like to have a group discussion on whether BSF is willing to fund completed projects in order to provide debt relief. Consensus seemed that funding a project like this may set precedent and open the door to other organizations who serve tourists and would like to have their debt serviced by another entity.

Bend Park and Recreation District – Miller’s Landing Access and Restoration Project (BPRD)

Statement of Success:

- Success will be a fully accessible Miller’s Landing Park where individuals, regardless of their mobility levels, can enjoy the river independently.
- Construct a roller launch, transfer bench, and shade structure system.
- Construct a zero-entry transfer area.
- Install grouted boulder terracing and steps.
- Install fencing and large woody material.

Amount requested: \$300,000 – 2-year grant

Previous funding: \$350,000

Gordon reported Applicant’s projects which had received prior funding have been completed. In the first round of review, a question arose regarding the allocation of BSF dollars to this well-funded special tax district. Colton explained Bend’s residents enjoy and support its outdoor spaces and because of that BPRD is well-funded through fees and property taxes. Statutory authority restricts the use of property taxes to the delivery of park and recreation services such as care and maintenance of the park and trail system. To help pay for BPRD projects, BPRD applies for funding through numerous grants. With respect to this particular BSF request, if they do not receive the funding, the project will happen but it will be spread out over time, along with its 28 other projects.

AC noted tourists use BPRD-related park/trail systems. Improving access will aid all peoples, including those with ADA needs. In addition, this project will reduce erosion. One member shared: this project is a classic example of what we wish to fund; another stated: ADA focus and huge tourist attraction; and another: “[t]his is a no brainer!” There appeared to be consensus - this project would be an excellent use of BSF funds.

Deschutes Public Library Foundation – Early Learning Children’s Discovery Area at Stevens Ranch Library

Statement of Success:

- Create a dynamic, welcoming place for visitors and residents to explore, learn and create together.
- The Stevens Ranch Library will be a place that the residents of Central Oregon can be proud of and a model of sustainability, imagination, function, and inspiration.
- Grant funds will be used to help pay for design and the implementation of the Learning Center; slated to break ground in December 2024 and be completed by early 2026.
- This project is not supported by the bond measure.

Amount requested: \$250,000 – 2-year grant

Previous funding: N/A

Gordon noted this project would provide an indoor experience focused on children in a safe environment; architects designing the early learning center designed OMSI in Portland. While the new library received funding through a bond, the allocation of bond funds does not support this project. As noted in the header, Applicant would break ground in early December 2024 with completion in two years. Neither Hemson (City) nor Groves (County) have concerns. Its timing will be similar to the BPRD project. Per Applicant, this project is similar to the Missoula, Montana library that draws tourists.

AC members appreciated this new larger building will be LEED Platinum and will offer more hours. The new branch has much crowd support. AC noted DPL will be spending a lot of money on art, members suggested DPL may wish to revise its budget to spend less on art and more on the children's area.

AC noted that while the Missoula library is downtown, easily accessible, and walkable; the new Stevens Branch has none of these – it would be a destination location. The question is: would the children center attract visitors from out of town? AC saw this program more for community member use and not a tourist destination.

NWX2 LLC – The Discovery Park Art Corridor

Statement of Success:

- Installations of three art "discovery" experiences.
- Each installation is intended to be permanent and will be an interactive experience for park visitors.
- The "Natural" and "Blooming" Discoveries will incorporate educational material about the specific piece that will link to information provided at the Warm Springs Museum and the High Desert Museum, providing for another connection to a tourism facility within the region.
- The "Labyrinth" Discovery will utilize natural rock materials while providing ADA access and provide tactile experience for visually-impaired guests.

Amount requested: \$150,000 – 2-year grant

Previous funding: N/A

The project would install three art projects, at least one created by indigenous artists which would be placed along an already developed paved ADA pathway. The path is accessible to a variety of people and provides an interactive arts/culture component. BPRD has an easement for the trail: for the first five years Northwest Crossing will maintain the trail, after than BPRD will assume maintenance.

Gordon reported there was competing feedback during the initial review. Some thought it would only increase value to Northwest Crossing residents; others thought it would provide a great way to recreate. She asked for further discussion.

AC discussion included: The project calls attention to Warm Springs and High Desert Museum. If property adjacent to the path provided overnight stays for visitors, that may make a difference – reportedly, there is an attempt to bring in more short stay visitors to that area. One AC member reported his overnight lodging sometimes sends tourists to Northwest Crossing. The developer of Discovery West has a large pocket book, AC wondered whether Applicant has available funds to support the arts/signage project. Some AC members would like to fund the arts and culture project; if there is a lack of BSF funds, perhaps fund one piece of art and some interactive signage. If BSF funded a portion of the request, perhaps that funding could be used as leverage by Applicant to apply for additional funding. One member who has served on AC from BSF's inception reminded others this project is much like the COCC project. It, too, was a great project with educational signage. The problem was the location – it wouldn't draw tourists. The concern is the same for this project: the trail would be used only by locals, particularly those residing in Northwest Crossing, and would not draw, or be used by, tourists. AC asked: is there any data regarding the use of Discovery Park by tourists? Gordon will attempt to obtain user data for Discovery Park, particularly with regard to tourists.

III. Next Steps

Gordon has homework. Immediately following today's meeting, Gordon will send an email requesting each AC member to prioritize funding the projects, 1-10, and also identify those projects they do not want to fund.

Visit Bend staff will consolidate the discussion notes and AC feedback; obtain answers to questions raised; internally discuss the results; and, then, share the additional information and funding proposals to AC for further comment and consideration. Upon receipt of AC final comment, Visit Bend will provide a list of project recommendations for the Community Ballot (Ballot), all will receive some funding. Subsequent to the Ballot results, Visit Bend staff will provide the funding recommendations to its Board of Directors for approval.

Gordon thanked those present for their valuable discussion and input. She adjourned the meeting at 3:30pm.

IV. Funding Scenario – October 25, 2023

Based upon the feedback gathered through the WizeHive review portal, the Application Review meeting on October 19, BSF Ranking Form distributed after the meeting, and Applicants' answers to AC questions raised at the meeting, the Team has created a proposed funding scenario, see the break down and related chart below.

The Team proposes full funding of five projects:

- Bend Park and Recreation District - Miller's Landing Access and Restoration Project.
This will receive full funding, in the amount of \$300,000 over two years. This was the highest-ranked project based on feedback from the BSF Ranking form and received no "do not fund" points. It is advised that this grant be contingent upon the City of Bend Water Overlay Zone (WOZ) permit being obtained by June 30, 2024.
- Cascades Theatrical Company - Cascades Theatre Restoration-Preservation Plan.
This project will receive full funding, in the amount of \$55,850 for the replacement and repair of all theater seating. Year over year, this theater has seen a 25% increase in tourism traffic, as measured by 2022 vs 2023 ticket sales data, October to January time frame. This increase resulted in 525 additional out-of-town visitors/tickets sold.
- High Desert Climbers Alliance / Enhancing Climbing Safety and Conservation Efforts at Smith Rock State Park.
This project will receive full funding, in the amount of \$20,000, after making slight adjustments to their project budget. \$2,000 was reallocated from the purchase of WAG bags to the bolting of two additional routes (10 in total) and additional LNT signage installed throughout Smith Rock State Park. Itemized budget for rigging equipment was received, reviewed and seems accurate based on retail pricing and number of trained volunteers.
- The Tower Theater / "Get Comfortable Again!"
This project, requesting \$59,500, will be fully funded. Gordon inquired about the addition of inclusive-sized seating, ADA seating, and companion seating as a part of this larger renovation project. Applicant shared that the theater currently has seats ranging in width from 19" - 23", six seats with retractable armrests, is in the process of purchasing adjustable height seating that will move from 16-18.5" in height (this is outside the BSF grant request), and the theater is in compliance with city code on ADA and companion seating. It was also noted that these offerings are not well known and with the renovated seats, they plan to celebrate these inclusive seating options and make them easily available during the ticket booking process.
- Trout Unlimited/ Lower Fall River Habitat Conservation Project.
This project, requesting \$69,850, will be fully funded over two years. BSF requested that the 15% admin/overhead expense for the National office be no more than 5% and the additional funds remain in the budget for the local use.

The Team proposes partial funding of two projects:

- Bend BMX / BMX Improvements.
This project requested a revision of their original application and budget, from \$113,183 to \$87,970, adjusting from 5-row bleachers to 3-row bleachers as a result of not having the required planning and building permits complete. Based on feedback from the Advisory Council and positive past relationships, Bend BMX will receive \$69,890 to be used for the shovel-ready, permitted awning structure portion of their application. BSF will encourage Bend BMX to work with Deschutes County and BPRD to develop and submit a master plan and reapply for additional aspects of their BMX improvement project next year.
- Bend Endurance Academy - New Capacity for State and PNW Events and Conferences.
The project will receive \$16,582 to fund the few remaining elements of the climbing facility; additional holds, volumes, padding and off-wall activities. The grant agreement will state BSF funds are not to be used toward the paydown of the loan or administration of BEA.
- NWX2 LLC / The Discovery Park Art Corridor.

This project will be partially funded, at \$100,000, over two years. Applicant was unable to provide Discovery Park visitor data, however, they said, “Given the continued development of both Discovery Park and Discovery West, it is likely that the park will become an even bigger draw for visitors to Bend that are utilizing it to travel between Phil’s trailhead/Shevlin Park, commercial destinations and the summer Farmers Market in nearby Northwest Crossing, which draws 1,600-2,000 guests per weekend (breakdown of visitors and residents not available).” The applicant also shared with us that “Discovery West is currently constructing a short-term rental project that is a block from the park. Twenty luxury townhome units will be offered as vacation rental properties through the property management company, AvantStay. The park will be noted in listings as a nearby amenity when discussing the vast outdoor recreational opportunities in the area.” In regard to Gordon’s questions about their commitment to work with indigenous artists and The Museum at Warm Springs and The High Desert Museum, “In our initial artist research, we found that the pool of female indigenous public art sculptors is extremely limited which is why we didn’t provide a guarantee. We will continue to pursue this option if awarded the grant. We have established relationships with Dana Whitelaw (Executive Director) and Jon Nelson (Curator of Wildlife) at the High Desert Museum. We do not yet have an established relationship with Elizabeth Woody, Executive Director at The Museum at Warm Springs at this time. If we are unsuccessful in establishing a connection with The Museum at Warm Springs, we will work exclusively with the High Desert Museum.” It is recommended that this grant be made with the contingency for a female indigenous artist to be commissioned for at least one “discovery” and partnership with both museums be established and included in the project.

The Team proposes not funding one project at this time:

- The Deschutes Public Library - Early Learning Children's Discovery Area at Stevens Ranch Library. The project will not be funded, based on discussion at the Advisory Council meeting and feedback submitted through the BSF Ranking form.

Applicant Withdrew from the FY24 cycle:

- The Campfire Hotel - The Cabin. Applicant has withdrawn the project from this round of funding. Because the requested \$459,712 could not be fully funded, Applicant has requested an opportunity to step back, reconsider the timing and cost of the project, and potentially reapply next year.

See FY24 Funding Proposal Summary Chart – page 14.

FY24 BSF Funding Proposal Summary Chart

Organization	Project Name	Total Amount Request (\$)	1- or 2-Year Request	Recommended Amount (\$)	Year 1 Amount (\$)	Year 2 Amount (\$)	Difference	Notes
Bend BMX	Bend BMX Improvements	\$113,183	1 Year	\$69,890	\$69,890		-\$43,293	

Bend Endurance Academy	New Capacity for State and PNW Events and Conferences	\$250,000	2 Year	\$16,582	16,582		-\$233,418	
Bend Park and Recreation District	Miller's Landing Access and Restoration Project	\$300,000	2 Year	\$300,000	\$200,000	\$100,000	\$0	With Contingency
Cascades Theatrical Company	Cascades Theatre Restoration – Preservation Plan	\$55,850	1 Year	\$55,850	\$55,585		\$0	
Deschutes Public Library Foundation	Early Learning Children's Discovery Area at Stevens Ranch Library	\$250,000	2 Year	\$0	\$0		-\$250,000	
High Desert Climbers Alliance	Enhancing Climbing Safety & Conservation Efforts at Smith Rock State Park	\$20,000	1 Year	\$20,000	\$20,000		\$0	
NWX2 LLC	The Discovery Park Art Corridor	\$150,000	2 Year	\$100,000	\$100,000		-\$50,000	With Contingency
The Campfire Hotel	The Cabin at the Campfire Hotel	\$459,712	2 Year				-\$459,712	Withdrew Application
Tower Theater Foundation	"Get Comfortable Again"	\$59,500	1 Year	\$59,500	\$59,500		\$0	
Trout Unlimited	Lower Fall River Habitat Conservation Project	\$69,850	2 Year	\$69,850	\$58,474	\$11,676		
					\$564,996	\$126,676		
	FY23 2-year Grants Committed	\$300,000						
	FY24 Available for Grants	\$564,996						
	Total Grant Dollars to Distribute FY24	\$864,996						
	FY24 2-year Grants Committed	\$126,676						
	Difference	\$0						
	Total FY24 Grant Awards	\$691,672						

After reviewing the funding scenario and notes, the Team asked AC to complete a form, voting "Yes" or "No" to this proposal. If "No," the Team requested AC to provide additional comments. AC are to submit their ballots by EOD Friday, October 27, 2023.

OCTOBER 30, 2023: AC approved the above proposal. Ballot will open to the community beginning November 1, 2023. Ballot provides residents and visitors the opportunity to prioritize the eight selected projects. While the Ballot does not determine funding, it will help ensure AC priorities align with the larger community. In a random draw, five Ballot participants will each select one of the eight organizations on the Ballot to receive an additional \$500. Following Ballot voting, the final funding recommendation will go to the Visit Bend Board at its next meeting.

NOVEMBER 14, 2023: Visit Bend Board approved the AC/Ballot proposal listed above.