**Board of Directors Meeting Summary**

February 18, 2025

**District Office Building | 799 SW Columbia | Bend, Oregon**

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**BOARD PRESENT**

Donna Owens

Jodie Barram

Cary Schneider

Deb Schoen

Nathan Hovekamp

At the Feb. 18 BPRD board of directors meeting, the elected officials discussed a possible bridge crossing and adopted a policy for future stipend payments. A [video recording](https://www.bendparksandrec.org/about/board-meeting-videos/) of the meeting is available.

 **Deschutes River Trail South UGB Connection & Bike/Pedestrian Bridge workplan options**

The possible Deschutes River Trail South UGB & Bike/Pedestrian Bridge project would close one of the remaining gaps on the Deschutes River Trail by connecting it to the Deschutes National Forest trail system within the Rim Rock (aka Good Dog) trailhead and recreation area. Dozens of individuals attended the meeting to provide public comment.

The project was first identified in the City of Bend’s Urban Trail Plan (1996) and is included in the Deschutes National Forest Alternative Transportation Feasibility Study (2015) and the district’s Comprehensive Plan (2018 & 2024). The district paused the project in 2019 after the board of directors passed Resolution No. 419, which removed the project from the Capital Improvement Plan and from the System Development Charge eligible projects list, and postponed the project until such time that the district, other agencies and the broad community share a vision on how to proceed.

At the board’s request, staff reviewed the project’s history and met with the US Forest Service and Oregon Parks & Recreation Department to evaluate potential options for moving the project forward and to better understand the current regulatory framework. This presentation provided an overview of findings and three potential options for the Deschutes River Trail South UGB & Bike/Pedestrian Bridge project.

The board of directors voted unanimously to direct staff to collaborate with stakeholders and the community to develop and evaluate alternative trail alignments to connect the southern portion of the Deschutes River Trail to the Deschutes National Forest. This will include hiring consultants for facilitation and engineering expertise in addition to involvement from BPRD staff and other state and federal agencies.

***Director Hovekamp made a motion to direct staff to collaborate with stakeholders and the community to develop and evaluate alternative trail alignments to connect the southern portion of the Deschutes River Trail to the Deschutes National Forest, Director Schoen seconded. The motion was approved unanimously, 5-0. (Hovekamp, Schneider, Schoen, Owens and Barram)***

**Stipend for board service**

Offering a stipend for board service is a best practice that can help offset expenses that members incur while participating in meetings and fulfilling their board responsibilities, such as transportation, childcare, or lost wages and can better attract and retain board members of all backgrounds.

After consulting with Special Districts Association of Oregon and the Oregon Ethics Commission, it was determined that the board of directors can adopt a policy and vote to approve stipends for board service, set to begin on July 1, 2025, following the May election. Only newly elected board members will be eligible, and participation is optional. The budget impact is estimated to be $12,000.

***Director Schoen a motion to approve the board policy on stipends and reimbursements to take effect July 1, 2025 for newly elected board members. Director Owens seconded. The motion was approved unanimously, 5-0. (Hovekamp, Schneider, Schoen, Owens and Barram)***