

**REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
OF BIG BEAR VALLEY RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT  
AND RECORD OF ACTION**

April 21, 2026

**FROM**

**NOEL CASTILLO, Director, Department of Public Works – Special Districts**

**SUBJECT**

Waiver of Big Bear Alpine Zoo Admission Fees for County Employee Appreciation Month

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

Acting as the governing body of the Big Bear Valley Recreation and Park District:

1. Find that waiving the admission fees for County employees, and up to six immediate family members per employee, for County Employee Appreciation Month at the Big Bear Alpine Zoo, from May 1, 2026, to May 31, 2026, will serve the public purpose of promoting enhanced communication among employees and improve employee morale throughout the County, and expresses gratitude for the dedicated service provided by County employees.
2. Approve the waiver of admission fees for County employees and their immediate family members during the County Employee Appreciation Month at the Big Bear Alpine Zoo, from May 1, 2026, through May 31, 2026.

(Presenter: Noel Castillo, Director, 387-7906)

**COUNTY AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

**Improve County Government Operations.**

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Approval of this item will not result in the use of Discretionary General Funding (Net County Cost). Based on an estimated total of 1,900 fee waivers for County employees and their immediate family members, at an average cost of \$15 per person, the amount of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo (BBAZ) admission fee revenue not realized during County Appreciation Month is estimated to be \$28,500. However, it is expected that this loss of attendance revenue would be offset by the proceeds from concessions and the sale of gift shop merchandise by County employees and their family members.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The County has periodically held appreciation days to provide employees and their immediate family members with an opportunity to come together in an off-work social setting. The last Employee Appreciation Month for BBAZ was May 2025. The waiver of BBAZ admission fees for County employees and their immediate family members attending was approved by the Board of Directors on April 29, 2025 (Item No. 79). The benefits of these events and the waiver of related fees enhance communication among employees, improve employee morale and provide an opportunity for the County to express its gratitude for the dedicated services provided by its employees.

**Waiver of Big Bear Alpine Zoo Admission Fees for County Employee  
Appreciation Month  
April 21, 2026**

Approval of this item will waive the admission fees at BBAZ during Employee Appreciation Month from May 1, 2026, through May 31, 2026, for County employees and up to six of their immediate family members. In addition to the previously identified benefits of appreciation days, this fee waiver will also increase public awareness of the BBAZ. The BBAZ will remain open to the public during this period.

**PROCUREMENT**

Not applicable.

**REVIEW BY OTHERS**

This item has been reviewed by County Counsel (Aaron Gest, Deputy Director, 387-5455) on March 25, 2026; and County Finance and Administration (Matthew Dalton, Administrative Analyst, 387-5005) on April 1, 2026.

**Waiver of Big Bear Alpine Zoo Admission Fees for County Employee  
Appreciation Month  
April 21, 2026**

Record of Action of the Board of Directors  
Big Bear Valley Recreation and Park District

**APPROVED (CONSENT CALENDAR)**

Moved: Joe Baca, Jr. Seconded: Curt Hagman  
Ayes: Col. Paul Cook (Ret.), Jesse Armendarez, Dawn Rowe, Curt Hagman, Joe Baca, Jr.

Lynna Monell, SECRETARY

BY  \_\_\_\_\_  
DATED: April 21, 2026



cc: File - SDD/Big Bear Valley Recreation and Park District  
CCM 04/24/2026