



EXPLORE BUTTE COUNTY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tamba Sellu, President
Courtyard by Marriott, Chico

Matt Reed, Treasurer
Butte County Fairgrounds, Gridley

Kate Pinsonneault, Secretary
Hotel Diamond, Chico

Jason Olivares
Oxford Suites, Chico

Ashley Dekellis
STVR Operator, Chico

Melissa Schuster,
Chapelle de L'Artiste Château & Retreat,
Paradise

Sareena Merchant
Hampton Inn, Oroville

Natalie Sheard
STVR Owner, Oroville

Aaron Wright
CA State Parks, Oroville

Megan Kurtz
CSU Chico

Megan Gaddis
Community at Large

March 26, 2026
Time: 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm

BCAG Board Room
326 Huss Dr, Board Room, Chico, CA 95928

Agenda

Public Notice Information: In accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act, EBC agendas are available for public review outside the BCAG Board Room at 326 Huss Dr, Building E at least 72 hours prior to each meeting. The agendas are also posted on the EBC website at explorebuttecounty.com. Questions on agenda items may be directed to Nichole Farley, EBC Executive Direction, at nichole@explorebuttecounty.com.

MISSION: Explore Butte County inspires people to discover Butte County, creates tourism opportunities that contribute to economic vitality, and builds community through partnerships.

VISION: Explore Butte County champions a diverse and flourishing tourism industry, making it THE must-visit destination in the North State.

VALUES: Authenticity. Innovation. Stewardship. Equity. Fun.

BRAND POSITION: The Explorer - Adventurer, Pioneer, Seeker, Open-minded, Resourceful, Tolerant, Ambitious, Down to Earth, Authentic, Determined, Outdoorsy

1. OPEN MEETING - 1:00PM

Board Members: Tamba Sellu, Melissa Schuster, Ashley Dekellis, Megan Gaddis, Aaron Wright, Jason Oliveras, Natalie Sheard, Matt Reed, Kate Pinsonneault, Megan Kurtz

Attendees: Nichole Farley, Lina, Lucia, Will Firth (Butte County Development Dept), Scott Nash (Oroville Chamber of Commerce), Cindy Daniluke, Ronald Lassonde, Nichole Hill, Pat Macias, Ashley Baer, Melody Espindula, Erik Gustafson (Chico Assistant City Manager),

2. CONSENT CALENDAR

- 2.1. [Approve Minutes from January 15, 2026 Board Meeting](#)
- 2.2. [Approve Minutes from January 22, 2026 Closed Session Meeting](#)
- 2.3. [Approve December 2025 Financials \(with authorization to update for TBID assessment revenues attributed to December\)](#)
- 2.4. [Approve January 2026 Financials \(with authorization to update for TBID assessment revenues attributed to January 2026\)](#)
- 2.5. [Approve February 2026 Financials \(with authorization to update for TBID assessment revenues attributed to February 2026\)](#)

Move: To Approve the consent calendar as presented

Motion: Aaron Wright

Second: Jason Oliveras

Vote 10 - 0 - 0 Motion Passed

3. ADMINISTRATION

3.1. END OF YEAR FINANCIAL UPDATE (Nichole Farley)

Analysis of our 2025 fiscal performance, highlighting key revenue drivers, expenditure trends, and our final year-end liquidity position.

Nichole Farley EOY Update Looking at the 2025 PBID collections – 2 things happened last year, we increased the TBID from 2% to 2.5% and also included Airbnb's into the assessment. Based on what we budgeted from 2025, we were under \$101,830.65. Chico was down about 4%, Oroville was down about 22% and Paradise saw the most significant decrease at only 23% collected (77% down from budgeted funds).

Deferred revenue that we held back in 2024 was also down at ~70% used. Program income was short about 12% when looking at what was budgeted vs actual.

We came in under budget on everything, BUT printing and postage was over by 23% due to paying a 2024 bill for Adventure Guides print and more was spent on postage.

Tamba Sellu It seems that our liabilities are increasing gradually in the deferred revenue, what can the board do to help you?

Nichole Farley We are actually planning to spend the restricted funding down in the year in order to not have any restrictive funds on the books any longer. These funds have been given to our cities through Micro-Zone Funding.

Tamba Sellu I more so meant what can we do to assist in collecting the funds due to us from Paradise.

Nichole Farley The communications have started, so now I am working with the city to connect with 3rd party services to help the hotels get in contract with companies that can help streamline the process.

Melissa Schuster Luckily, we have 2 commercial hotels in Paradise, although we do have some short term lodging they are still in process of being recognized. But we do need to find a solution to collect, it just might not necessarily require us to hire a 3rd party.

Natalie Sheard Are you currently working with AirBnB to be able to add the short term vacation rentals onto the site?

Nichole Farley Currently, AirBnB is not seeing the assessment as a government levy and is pushing back and saying that this is a responsibility that should be on the business owner. So we are working on that.

3.2. MICRO-ZONE FUNDING FOR CHICO, GRIDLEY, OROVILLE, PARADISE
(Nichole Farley)

Micro-Zone Committees have provided recommendations for allocation of the 10% micro-zone funding collected in 2025. Grants total \$45,000 to 27 organizations.

Recommendation: Approve Micro-Zone Funding Grants as presented.

Nichole Farley A call was put out to local organizers to accept micro-grant funding requests. We brought these applications to the tourism committees and are now coming to the board to ask for approval of funds. 10% of what each zone brings in is allocated to the following year's Micro-Grant Funds.

Chico is looking at awarding \$20,000 in funds between 14 organizations.

Oroville is looking at awarding \$15,000 in funds between 7 organizations.

Paradise/Magalia is looking at awarding \$8,000 between 5 organizations. Paradise Chamber of Commerce, Paradise Chocolate Festival, Paradise Grazing Festival, Magalia Concert Series, etc.

Move: To Approve the the Micro-Zone Funding Grants as presented

Motion: Melissa Schuster

Second: Kate Pinsonneault

Vote 10 - 0 - 0 Motion Passed

4. EXPANDING & DIVERSIFYING VISITOR EXPERIENCES

4.1. SPORTS DESTINATION DISTRICT ADHOC COMMITTEE FORMATION
(Nichole Farley)

Establish a committee to make recommendations to staff on the direction of Phase Two of the Sports Destination District.

Recommendation: Adopt an AdHoc Committee for Phase Two of the Sports Destination District.

Requesting for the board to adopt an AdHoc Committee to push forward phase 2 of the Sports Destination District for Nichol to be able

to have a small committee to go to for advice as needed. Chair - Jason Olivares as he has just gone through the process of building a new hotel, Aaron Wright, and Sareena Merchant. Only board members can be on the AdHoc Committee due to the Brown Act.

Move: To Approve the the formation of an ad hoc committee for phase two of the Sports Destination District with Jason Oliveras as the chair and Sareena Merchant and Aaron Wright as committee members

Motion: Tamba Sellu

Second: Aaron Wright

Vote 10 - 0 - 0

4.2. UPDATE: SPORTS TOURISM MARKETING (Ashley Baer)

Update on efforts with Fleet Feet Chico on expanding marketing efforts for new and existing events.

Ashley Baer As part of the expansion for Butte County to be a Sporting Destination, we are working with local businesses and influencers. The first was Fleet Feet collaborating with Tris Murphy. We are working with Fleet Feet to get comped event fees for summer races for anyone who books through Ripe.com. We are covering fees for up to 20 racers to start off and test the partnership. They would book through Ripe and then Lucia would follow up with a promo code for them to book the race

Kate P Can hotels offer discounts to anyone booking through Ripe? Maybe? This has never been done before!

Tidbit - Butte County Mile song is now on Spotify and Apple Music!

5. INNOVATIVE & EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING

5.1. UPDATE: EBC BRAND REFRESH (Ashley Baer)

A look at the new direction of the Explore Butte County Brand, as a result of the Brand Workshops conducted on February 4, 2026 with Madden Media.

Thank you for coming to the brand refresh meetings at the beginning of the year! Stakeholder meetings took place in Chico, Paradise, and Oroville. Recurring themes that came out of all the communities include Water, College to Community, Sensory "Unfiltered" Authentication, and Scrappy/Resilient Nature. On April 2nd, Madden will bring all of the items that came from those meetings and the creative brief they prepared to prepare guiding documents for the board to review.

6. BOARD UPDATES & PUBLIC COMMENT

The public is invited to address the Board regarding any non-agenda items at this time. Time is limited to three (3) minutes per speaker. The Board may not take any action on public comment.

Melissa Schuster 2 weeks away from the opening of Hope Plaza in Paradise! April 11, 2026, we will be hosting a grand opening celebration from 1-3pm, with a private dedication the night before for the loved ones of those lost in the campfire. Saturday at Burnt Barn Distilling Co there will be a pop-up market.

Megan Gaddis The Thursday night Market will begin in a couple of weeks and we are introducing some changes, like including closures to Main Street. Monthly expos will be taking place in the plaza, these include Health Expo, Pets Expo, etc.

Nichole Hill The Lupine Legacy Foundation is working with Sound Source AV (Ryan Sanders) to bring Saturday monthly concert series at the Children's Park. Every Saturday in May, with hopes to bring it back in the Fall. Also, check out the new Chico Bike Park. Nichole Farley

Will AARPA funds just wrapped up, we are now looking forward to the Grand Opening of new hiking/biking trails.

Erik Gustafson City of Chico initiated the economic development engagement looking at a 5-6 months timeframe to layer in an entertainment zone in downtown chico and meriam park area. PBID initiatives include fresh coat, clean and safe, etc. to address continuous issues like parking and the increased homeless population.

Cindy Daniluke We are hosting BAM!, an open-air art market in downtown Oroville. Offering free vendor space for local artists in the street closure in front of the Oroville State Theater. April 4, 2026. Dream Big Music Festival just passed and it fundraised for local kids music groups. Melissa Schuster will connect Cindy with the Paradise Art Center.

Ronald Kicking off from a recovery focus to an economic development focus in Paradise. Paving of the public roads is nearly complete and should be complete by the end of the year. 244 vacant poles are being pulled up by PG&E and a new school is opening this Fall, so a lot of changes to the look of Paradise. Just proposed a healthcare recovery plan to bring better healthcare to the ridge. Doing work to encourage businesses to move back to the downtown area.

Pat Macias monca has kicked off a capital campaign with Bonnie Pipkin managing it and are working to fundraise 9M to build out their backroom!

Molly Kopta Chico Chamber is working on a community communication campaign to solicit feedback from the community to make sure that the entertainment district is something they want. Also working with the city and PG&E on topics like the increased sewage rates and other changes that will



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affect the business owners. The chamber is taking new offices on 430 Broadway St. Suite 201, Downtown Chico. April 7th Lunch & Learn with Celeste from DCBA.

[Heather \(Downtown Oroville\)](#) Many new restaurants and shops are opening in downtown Oroville! We encourage you to check out what's new 😊

[Matt Reed](#) Gridley Gearhead Classic coming to the Butte County Fairgrounds in Gridley. Tomorrow starts our performance palouzza for a week long dog show at the fairgrounds.

ADJOURNMENT - 2:03PM