



MINUTES: Meeting of the Board of Directors

Thursday, April 18, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:00pm by Chair Amanda Bombard. The Catalina Island Tourism Authority (CITA) meeting was held in the Founders Room of US Bank and via Zoom for guests only. Attendance and voting for slate utilized roll-call procedure. There were no on-line guests.

This note was on the posted agenda:

Remote attendance: In accordance with legal advice, under the Brown Act rules in effect as of January 2024, board member's remote attendance is **limited to locations identified in advance on the agenda**. For a full guide to Open and Public meetings under the Brown Act go [here](#).

Members of the public may attend online using this link.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82301353406?pwd=Sm42R0RFUHVra2RZWm1CV0wzQ3diZz09>

DIRECTORS PRESENT (15)

Bombard, Fornasiere, Noll, Stevenson, Allen, Bradley, Cassidy, Flathers, Foley, Garcia, Hohenstein, Maistros, Paret, Vega, Wright

DIRECTORS ABSENT (4)

Villalobos, Alkibay, Glass, Latorre

STAFF PRESENT (4)

Luttjohann, Miller, Johnson, DeMyer

GUESTS (5)

Lisa Beach, Jeff Skelton, Grayce Upton, Yolanda Say, Tyler Wilson

CONSENT ITEMS

Chair Bombard asked for discussion and approval of Minutes from March 21, 2024 CITA board meeting

Motion to approve Paret, second Hohenstein; passed unanimously.

Approval of February 2024 Monthly Financials

Luttjohann reminded the February 2024 financials were delayed due a QuickBooks software issue which is now resolved.

Motion to approve Noll, second Paret; passed unanimously.

Approval of March 2024 Monthly Financials

Motion to approve by Cassidy, second Fornasiere; passed unanimously.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Reminder--April 30 Special Meeting—Bombard reminded attendees of the April 30 full-day meeting which is scheduled as a closed session. Luttjohann explained that since the two-day session in February he's had several consultations with CIVITAS and Charney; many are pro-bono hours. Foley and Wright entered the meeting at 1:05pm. With all the red-line edits to update the existing bylaws, Charney and CIVITAS recommend creating new bylaws. Luttjohann is awaiting final advice on the closed session; the April 30 meeting could be an open meeting with more than board members and key staff attending. Bombard stated this upcoming meeting might be hybrid, open or closed session.

Draft Policies Manual—Bombard reminded the policies manual will be presented for approval at the April 30 meeting. Today is the last day for board members to provide feedback on this document.

Excused Absences of Villalobos, Latorre and Alkibay for the April 18 meeting—Bombard expressed that each absence today is due to work conflicts. She added that Wright requested an excuse for the March meeting that is not listed on the agenda. Bombard requested each absence be presented as its own motion.

Motion to approve the absence of Villalobos as excused by Noll, second Bradley; passed unanimously.

Motion to approve Latorre's excused absence by Garcia, second Cassidy; passed unanimously.

Motion to approve the absence of Alkibay as excused by Hohenstein, second Fornasiere; passed unanimously.

Motion to approve Wright's March absence as excused by Hohenstein, second Garcia; passed with abstention by Wright.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS

Report of the Nominating Committee—Stevenson handed out a sheet listing the proposed 2024 Slate of Directors and Officers. This included notes on the five potential board members and their associated business. He mentioned the nominations closed April 12. All guests were asked to leave the room and the board moved to a closed session at 1:16pm for discussion.

The closed session ended at 1:29 and all guests were invited back into the room. Stevenson read the slate of proposed directors and requested a motion.

Motion to approve Grayce Upton, Yoli Say, Lisa Beach, Cinde Cassidy, and Amanda Bombard as the 2024 Proposed Slate of Directors by Noll, second Garcia. Roll-call vote passed with abstentions by Bombard and Cassidy.

Stevenson welcomed the new board and said these terms begin July 1. He reminded all board members to work as a team for the overall good of Catalina Island business. The Proposed Slate will be sent to the CITA membership for final approval.

Stevenson announced the board position of Marketing Chair will remain open and officer nominations are being accepted until June 1. Luttjohann said the Executive Committee Slate will be presented at the May or June meeting adding the Treasurer position could change in November/December. Luttjohann encouraged the incoming board members to attend the April 30 meeting at the Catalina Canyon Inn and explained the benefits of their attendance.

President's Report—Luttjohann stated his report in this month's board packet has more detail than normal. He gave a brief report on his recent attendance at SeaTrade and noted that Vega attended as well. He and Vega participated in the Cruise the West booth which garnered some discussions with cruise executives. He mentioned Catalina Island received positive feedback and decent scores, although a bit lower than the previous year. Luttjohann was surprised to learn only six Catalina Island shore excursions are currently available onboard cruise ships. A discussion on excursions included Flathers informing there is a required dress code for participating on-shore businesses; surprisingly a belt is one of the requirements. Garcia has tried several times to submit activities for her businesses to be booked on-board cruise ships. She said it is quite hard to be accepted. Stevenson explained Catalina Island Co (CICo) offers their tours to Royal Caribbean and Disney, but no longer does business with Carnival. Several mentioned the large commission required to participate. Luttjohann informed of the recent Santa Barbara decision to limit cruise ship calls to that port. This could affect Catalina Island either way; possibly good if Avalon is substituted as a port of call for Santa Barbara, however if California Coastal Cruises are pulled, there would be less stops here. Luttjohann submitted his report as written.

Visitor and Member Services Report—Hohenstein presented two new membership applications for approval: Catalina Sea Spa and Empress Wellness.

Approval of New Member Catalina Sea Spa

Motion for approval Hohenstein, second Noll; passed unanimously.

Approval of New Member Empress Wellness

Motion for approval Cassidy, second Fornasiere; passed with abstention by Wright.

Sales & Marketing Report—Fornasiere stated CITA partnered with Visit California sending a dedicated email to a list of 233K+ and the open rate was fantastic at 52.05%. She said the CastAway promotion begins April 25 and on May 7 another sponsored Visit California email blast will go out with this information. CITA was invited to attend a media event earlier in April and made valuable connections. CITA is working with 62Above to follow up and connect with those media contacts. A proposal and budget request at the March meeting approved \$67.5K for photos, videos, and drone content. The negotiations were successful meaning 2.5 days for the price of 1.5; unlimited drone and video usage in perpetuity;

longer photo usage rights; and video delivered in a color format to upload to our DAM system. On-island shoot dates are May 13-15. The 2024-25 Map was printed on Tuesday, is being bound and folded with delivery set for next week. Luttjohann stated USA Today is searching for the Best Summer Travel Destination and Catalina Island is among the nominees; voting can be done daily until May 13. Bombard urged all to set a reminder to vote daily.

Events Report—DeMyer reminded tonight the Mixer begins at 6pm and is hosted by The Avalon Hotel which invited Avalon Smart Homes to co-host. She spoke of other upcoming events like Shred, Taste of Avalon, Restaurant Week, Pride, and the Summer Concert Series with a Beer Garden run by Rotary. DeMyer is meeting with Bleu World to discuss a community clean-up. She asked any businesses willing to donate rooms for Pride to please contact her. Luttjohann announced LA Pride added an event at Universal Studios the evening of June 15; this extension came after CITA chose dates for the Catalina Pride event trying to avoid other mainland celebrations.

BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Fornasiere reported the Catalina Museum for Art & History is having their first Tamale Festival on April 27 with free admission, food vendors and a Mariachi band. The annual Cinco de Mayo event is 6-9pm with live music by Sin Frontera. The Silent Film Festival, May 17-18, will not be held in the Casino Theatre this year and will encompass two days at the museum's outdoor amphitheater. Movies are Hitchcock's last silent film *Blackmail* and a comedy, *Safety Last*, with Harold Lloyd's granddaughter present to introduce the film. Fornasiere announced this is her last meeting as a board member. She accepted a position as Director of Community Outreach with Catalina Island Health. Bombard thanked her for the years she has served in a permanent seat on the board, many times on the executive committee. Luttjohann appreciated how her knowledge and skills were utilized often for CITA. As her report ended the room erupted in applause.

Noll looked at his watch and noted the first Resource Fair just ended, consisting of 11 booths to assist with medical, food and other services. He said the local Sheriffs brought in a few of Avalon's homeless to receive advice and aid. Catalina Island Health plans to hold a similar event in October.

Hohenstein reminded of the upcoming clothing drive on April 27 at the Catalina Canyon Inn. Donations can be dropped at the hotel without leaving your vehicle. Interact students will accept the items making this a drive-by event. Rotarians are delivering the boxes to Palm Springs. Cash donations are also accepted. She thanked the Bombard family for donating the freight to the mainland. The Rotary Club asks for gently used blankets, shoes, and clothing for children and adults. Bombard requested a report on how much is collected and Luttjohann added, the number of boxes or weight would be a nice way to inform on the amount not dumped in our landfill. Hohenstein announced Veronica and Francisco Bravo are opening Sunset Bar & Grill at the Catalina Canyon Inn on May 3. The Rotary Wine Fest is set for June 22 at Two Harbors.

Paret gets a happy feeling when the Disney Cruise line horn plays a few notes from *When You Wish Upon A Star*. He wondered if the chimes tower might respond or play Disney tunes while the ship is in port.

Vega reported that May 13 will be a big day with the potential of 6.5K visitors. Eight volunteers will help direct visitors that day but a few more are desired as at least 15 would be nice. Maistros added, the next three Tuesdays a volunteer system will be tested to see how it works.

Foley announced he is transferring with US Bank to Dana Point. May 10 is his final day at this branch and this is his last meeting as a board member.

Wright mentioned she had success with workers hired at the Avalon High School job fair. She urged others to support the upcoming event.

Skelton gave an update on the Catalina horse riding business. He stated things have not moved as quickly as he would like but they are moving forward. The land has water at the property and a permit was filed with Edison. He has lined up horses and saddles. Phase one is less horses but he promises summer 2025 more horses will optimize the operation. He is looking forward to bringing back something special to the island.

Bombard said Catalina Express extended the Spring Schedule. The Summer Schedule was released and she urged people to book early for travel as reservations were being booked as the schedule was being uploaded. Cassidy asked if Catalina Express would consider updating their travel time. She checked in cranky hotel guests, upset the trip is not one hour as advertised. Cassidy added, the trip has not been one hour for quite some time. Bombard explained they are softening the timing to say approximately one hour or one hour 10-15. It was agreed that passengers do not take into consideration the time it takes to disembark.

Maistros reported the COAST transit has been running for 10 days. City of Avalon is happy with the Ride Circuit partnership. He mentioned the ability to contract with hotels for special events or ongoing offers to their guests. Wheelchair-bound passengers are served by an ADA compliant vehicle. Cassidy reminded wrap advertising was mentioned but she loves the Pier Green color chosen for the vehicles. Maistros said this summer there will be no ads on the vehicles, they will remain as they are. He added the upcoming digital signboard program will have a location near the mole and a TBD site near Via Casino arch. He stated selfies are taken of those interacting with the signs and visitors can connect with COAST on the screen.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chair Bombard adjourned the board meeting at 2:25pm.