



MINUTES: Meeting of the Board of Directors

Tuesday, April 22, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:00pm by Chair Dave Stevenson. The Catalina Island Tourism Authority (CITA) meeting was held in the Founders Room of US Bank with in-person attendance. Remote attendance as posted on the agenda: Bergman at 4653 Ensenada Drive, Woodland Hills; Latorre at 320 Golden Shore, Suite 220, Long Beach; Villalobos at 30 Auvergne, Newport Coast, CA 92657. [Google Meet joining info/video call link was posted on the agenda](#)

DIRECTORS PRESENT (14)

Stevenson, Alkibay, Bombard, Cassidy, Allen, Bradley, Flathers, Garcia, Glass, Maistros, Paret, Say, Upton, Vega

DIRECTORS ATTENDING REMOTELY VIA GOOGLE MEET (3)

Bergman, Latorre, Villalobos

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DIRECTORS ABSENT (2)

Beach, Wright

STAFF PRESENT (3)

Luttjohann, Warner, Johnson

GUESTS (6)

Tyler Wilson, Jeff Skelton, Heather Milburn, Bre Bussard, Rixie Serpas, Sue Yoon

BOARD CHAIR REMARKS

Stevenson asked guests to introduce themselves. At 1:02 Latorre came on-line to attend. Stevenson remarked on the CEO first quarter review that will take place after this meeting. He reminded the gages include hotel occupancy, cross-channel transportation, targeted media, and membership growth. He said the visitor-driven revenue started off good this year and hopes it keeps going.

2.3.2 New Annual Planning Cycle Begins

Stevenson explained that Cassidy has put effort into the 2025-26 work plan. This will lay out the upcoming year's priorities and she will work with Luttjohann and Stevenson on a measurable list. At 1:04 Villalobos joined the meeting on-line. Cassidy explained the work plan has items A-H however due to the big work done by Charney last there will be no major changes. She would like to address New Board Orientation and at each Board meeting ask a few Board members to share updates for more business engagement. She would like a bi-annual informal meeting with City of Avalon (COA) manager and mayor. This will allow conversations to be proactively addressed at a less public level. The once-a-year formal presentation will continue as required. She likes the idea of a 360-view moving forward and receiving more input from the Board and CITA staff. Cassidy hopes for more responses now that the Board Evaluation form is fillable on-line. With social engagement the Board will learn more about each Board member, not just their business but on a personal level sharing experiences and where those have brought them. She feels confident the Board is headed in the right direction with Charney work and Luttjohann's efforts.

CONSENT ITEMS

Luttjohann stated a motion is needed for the March 2025 minutes included in the packet. Hearing no discussion or questions, Stevenson requested a motion.

A motion approving the Minutes from March 20, 2025 by Glass, second Bradley; passed with an abstention by Latorre.

CEO/ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

Seatrade Global 2025 was attended by a larger than normal contingent. Luttjohann explained the group attends as a Cruise the West partner. This advantage provides more access like tradeshow participation, and events with networking opportunities to speak to cruise executives where appointments might not have been scheduled. Appointments are made in advance and some included discussion with cruise lines making inaugural visits. Virgin Voyages has an interest in including a mermaid experience as an excursion option. Luttjohann facilitated some media meetings and established relationships for further conversations with writers, Afar and more. Bergman arrived on-line at 1:16 to join the meeting. Luttjohann announced some follow-up work with Princess and Holland American will include a site visit to expand their offerings on Catalina Island. These sister cruise lines have had declining port visits over the years but there is hope for more in the future. Vega said overall cruise lines are happy with Catalina Island. Maistros mentioned Carnival is addressing the recent complaints, working with passengers about unruly and bad behavior and allowing no boom boxes. Upton praised Luttjohann for his advocacy work that seeks a better percentage rate for excursions provided by Catalina Island businesses. Say enjoyed speaking with Executives of each cruise line as their business is basically a moving hotel. She said it was a great experience with a lot of good information received, and that Luttjohann did a good job. She feels it is important for Catalina Island to be represented each year and is excited to see Virgin, a high-end line, come to the West Coast.

Financial Condition & Activities—Luttjohann explained that within the Charney report a policy had been missed but now corrected. Each month the credit card statements are to be shared with the treasurer for approval. Moving forward CITA will be in compliance. Alkibay was sent the recent statements last week after this oversight was noticed and requested a review of some items with Johnson.

Visitor and Member Services Report—Luttjohann informed of Urban Adventure Quest's new ownership and that a new member application was received too late as the agenda had been posted. Next month Catalina Camp at White's Landing will be formally presented.

The Hispanic Business Alliance (HBA)—Vega has six people signed up for a May 14 meeting and is still seeking more participants. Say asked if the HBA will be a sub-committee. Luttjohann said that is to be decided after the May meeting, but a sub-committee is most likely for the HBA.

Events Update—Luttjohann said Taste Around, Pride, Shred and the Summer Concert series are all events that are underway. The Taste Around banner is up for the May 29 event and he reminded the board that Restaurant Week was dropped. He stated US Bank will again be the title sponsor for Pride and he is awaiting promised hotel packages. Luttjohann announced LA Pride agreed to Catalina Pride being their pre-game event giving Catalina Island more exposure. LA Pride is Sunday with Catalina Friday and Saturday. Stevenson met with Mike Bone and the general events steering committee. More of this will be discussed with Luttjohann during the CEO review. This year's Shred event requires a commitment by April 24 and currently there is room for more. Boxes will be accepted on April 28, noon-3pm at the Avalon Freight.

PR Partners Meeting—Luttjohann met with partners 62Above, Catalina Express, Catalina Museum, Catalina Island Co., and Catalina Conservancy on March 21. Discussion included methods to better co-host media. This group will convene at least annually and possibly more often. Bombard said the Michael Connelly book will bring Catalina Island awareness which means more press and a boost to media visits. Luttjohann has received several follow-ups from the book's PR firm. They are interested in a tour and possibly a contest for a Catalina Island visit. He said CITA's pocket map will be turned into a Night Shade map for those that wish to visit particular sites. Cassidy inquired about the book. Luttjohann explained Connelly typically writes mysteries set in southern California. This book is based on Catalina Island and in a way is related to the Avalon TV series that never went into full production. Originally a short story now expanded to a novel, it shows potential to become a series. Luttjohann reported the first day of pre-orders saw 10K copies ordered. Connelly is already touring universities doing a lecture series on the novel. Warner informed that Connelly has posted promo videos using Catalina Island locations like the view from the overlook near Mt. Ada.

BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Bombard reported Catalina Express is very close to offering Wi-Fi on their boats. Within the next few days, it will be available on a few boats and she asks for gentle feedback. Catalina Express and Starlink worked together for a system that functions with the navigation. Passengers should be able to make calls and social media posts, but not stream movies. Warner asked if the service would require payment. Bombard responded that for now the service is free.

Maistros announced the Green Pier project begins Monday. A barge with a crane will replace 23 piles. During this construction project all businesses on the pier may remain open. It will be noisy at times, should take three weeks, and work will continue weekends.

Cassidy asked for comments on AT&T landlines. Chet's Hardware still has a landline and would like to know when AT&T will pull the plug as they receive daily calls from vendors seeking to port their numbers over. Say shared that Hotel Metropole used GeoLink then Catalina Cable and now Starlink. She regrets their phone system is still not as reliable as a hard land line and is surprised to know that some AT&T land lines remain. Luttjohann believes the PUC told AT&T that they can't cancel service. Maistros said COA received similar notification and switched. Cassidy wondered if she has days or longer. Paret finds it interesting that AT&T has Starlink installed on its roof. Say added she had to fight an AT&T \$67K bill, despite AT&T cancelling yet still billing.

Warner reminded the Mixer is tonight at Catalina Canyon Hotel, 6pm; Tuesday this month to coordinate with the Board meeting.

Luttjohann pointed to a paper at each place on the table with a QR code for voting in USA Today's Reader Choice Awards. Catalina Island is listed among Best Summer Destinations. Last year Mackinac Island won but he hopes that sharing the QR code with Board members and their customers will elevate Catalina Island's chances to win.

Stevenson believes feedback is a gift and asked to please follow-up with evaluation providing ways to improve.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chair Stevenson adjourned the meeting at 1:44pm.