



MINUTES: Meeting of the Board of Directors

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:03am by Chair Amanda Bombard. The Catalina Island Tourism Authority (CITA) meeting was held in the Catalina Canyon Inn, Catalina Conference Room with in-person attendance for board; Zoom was offered for guests only. Attendance and voting 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 the public session of the meeting online using this link.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82301353406?pwd=Sm42R0RFUHVRa2RZWm1CV0wzQ3diZz09>

DIRECTORS PRESENT (14)

Bombard, Noll, Fornasiere, Stevenson, Alkibay, Bradley, Cassidy, Flathers, Glass, Hohenstein, Latorre, Paret, Vega, Wright

DIRECTORS ABSENT (5)

Villalobos, Allen, Foley, Garcia, Maistros

STAFF PRESENT (3)

Luttjohann, Miller, Johnson

GUESTS (8)

Tom Keyse, Bill Charney, Lisa Beach, Tyler Wilson, Lance Ware, Grayce Upton, Yolanda Say, Sheila Bergman

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Bombard reminded the importance of today's meeting. A presentation by Charney staff will include discussion and voting on new documents: bylaws, policies manual, and nominating standards for board and officers.

Report of the Nominating Committee (petition status)—Stevenson stated the nominating committee is accepting nominations for the executive slate until May 2.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS

Request for Financial Support of AVX Networks Application for Undersea Fiber Project—Ware shared financial and other information on the fiber optic project to improve connectivity on the island. There are a few grant opportunities; the State of California and PUC offer matching funds. He added a commitment from ATT places funding at 50%; Verizon promises \$1.5mil now and \$1.5mil after approval. Ware is also looking at a rural community grant for additional funding. He requests \$100K or more from several island businesses adding any amount would help. He hopes committed monies arrive in time to qualify for the matching funds. Luttjohann added that at a 2017 City of Avalon (COA) Council Meeting, he was asked to make fiber optic internet connection a priority. Much has happened since then to cause delays. Ware noted AVX is the only applicant with no challenges to their proposal. He added, T-Mobile is interested but has not pledged funds, Catalina Broadband will commit. Luttjohann reported the fiscal year true-up funds according to COA's

Matthew Baker are estimated at \$176K. From those expected funds, board approved \$67K for updated photo/video and \$24K for Pride. Luttjohann recommends \$50K be pledged to AVX now with another \$50K allocated in the 2024-25 budget. Fornasiere asked for confirmation that TOT funds can be used for this. Luttjohann said it is a benefit for the visitor as well as the community. Cassidy stated businesses close when the internet goes down and their card machine is no longer connected. Say said phones go down too as many systems are internet based. Stevenson wanted to know the total ask. Luttjohann said the request is for \$100K, \$50K now and \$50K in the next fiscal year. Cassidy stated connectivity has been a number one issue for 15 years or more and it is still a work in progress. She is in favor of fiber optic saying merchants are dead in the water when the internet goes down which happens too often. Stevenson said Descanso Beach Club also has limitations so he agrees with the principal but is uncomfortable with the spend. Fornasiere feels it is best for the entire community. Bombard wonders if COA is contributing. Luttjohann stated Maistros and council member Lisa Lavelle planned to attend this meeting and provide COA's perspective. Luttjohann shared that in his last meeting with COA Manager, it was noted by Maistros the city council must direct COA decisions but he anticipates council's support. Bombard would like to know what it looks like for visitors. Ware said it would improve hotel connectivity but there is no model for free visitor internet, adding there was discussion about the possibility of member businesses providing Wi-Fi for a fee. Luttjohann said not paying for service is something currently held back and reminded Catalina Broadband and AVX both charge for usage. Glass stated we pay and then also get charged so there is no free internet. Stevenson agreed and added the fiber cable will do something good for all. Cassidy stated her business already pays for Verizon and Catalina Broadband and it is not working so she would rather pay and have it work. Say asked about timing once funding is there. Ware believes three years is feasible adding some items cannot be rushed such as permit approval and the undersea cable route. He stated the Federal grant is redundant with hopes to provide better access at Pebbly Beach, Isthmus, and the back side of the island. Beach noted that students, many that post to Instagram, and herself use their cell data, not the internet. Discussion continued about cell service, T-Mobile and other providers on loss of service, and connectivity locations. Bombard asked if the board needed more information before the vote to fund \$50K and Luttjohann inserted there is a lot to share and learn. Stevenson would like to see this placed on the May agenda but Ware cautioned, if funding is delayed the matching funds will be less. Cassidy has encouraged Avalon businesses to request council members vote to support fiber optics. She said the island seems to wait for others to pay and she understands all concerns but feels it is necessary to fund this project.

Motion to Approve \$50K from the anticipated true-up funds and allocate another \$50K in the 2024-25 fiscal year budget by Cassidy, second Fornasiere.

Roll-call vote approved with 12 yes and two no votes

Bombard appealed to Ware to participate in more discussion at future meetings. Stevenson and Glass wished the board were presented the proposal prior to the ask. Bombard requested Ware return to board meetings at least once per quarter and more often if additional information is available. She would like him to provide updates and further educate the board on the program and its options. Ware feels financial support from CITA will show the State of California a community commitment and Glass added it puts pressure on COA to provide further funds.

Approval of Draft Bylaws—Charney and Keyse presented a PowerPoint display on the large screen. They stated the original plan to bring the bylaws into compliance was a red-line revision. After seeing the extent of edits, it was decided a new set of bylaws were best for Brown Act and non-statutory status. New bylaws are first approved by the board then membership approval is necessary. Luttjohann added CIVITAS will lead CITA through the voting process and reminded the group CIVITAS is donating some legal fees. Bombard provided time for any questions or feedback and hearing none requested a motion.

Motion to Approve the new bylaws document by Noll, second Glass.

Roll-call vote approved with all ayes

Adoption of Proposed Governing Policies Manual—Charney and Keyse moved on in their presentation to the new policies manual. After many discussions between Luttjohann, CIVITAS and Charney staff a new policy manual was drafted. This document was sent to the board prior to the meeting and now read aloud by Charney and Keyse. Some discussion and feedback generated a few changes that improved clarity or inclusiveness. Board members were reminded they would acknowledge and sign the policies each year.

Motion to Approve the Governing Policies Manual as presented and revised by Glass, second Cassidy.

Roll-call vote approved with all ayes

CORRESPONDENCE

Luttjohann called attention to correspondence included in the board packet. The legal-looking document, received by regular mail, has been submitted to legal counsel for their opinion. It is believed there is no threat or correlation with any incident on Catalina Island. Luttjohann wished the board be aware the document was received. A few board members wanted clarification on the purpose of this paper. Luttjohann explained most readers do not fully understand the rambling and incohesive dialog of this correspondence.

CLOSED SESSION

Moved to Closed Session at 9:39am to continue the Board Retreat Workshop begun in February. Board Members, staff and invited guests listed above attended today's closed session. Wilson, Ware and Johnson left the meeting room.

RECESS OF SESSION

Recess for break at 9:40am, April 30, 2024. Vega was called out at 9:42am and did not return.

CLOSED SESSION

Resumed Closed Session at 9:48am. Alkibay left the session at 10:35am, returning at 11:07am. Stevenson left at 11:20am; Paret and Noll left at 11:44am, returning after the lunch break as noted below.

RECESS OF SESSION

Recess for lunch break at 12noon, April 30, 2024.

CLOSED SESSION

Resumed Closed Session at 12:20pm. Stevenson arrived back at 12:28pm. Alkibay left at 12:30pm and was unable to return. Maistros entered the closed session at 1:00pm. Paret and Noll returned at 1:30pm.

OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

The closed session ended at 2:39pm and the board meeting resumed as an open session. Bombard called for a motion on the newly-drafted ends policy.

Motion to Adopt the Ends Policy and make it part of the Governing Policies adopted earlier in the day by Noll, second Hohenstein.

Roll-call vote approved with all ayes

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chair Bombard adjourned the board meeting at 2:42pm, April 30, 2024.