



MINUTES: Meeting of the Board of Directors

Thursday, June 20, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:02pm by Chair Amanda Bombard. The Catalina Island Tourism Authority (CITA) meeting was held in the Founders Room of US Bank with in-person attendance for board; remote attendance was offered for guests only.

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://meet.google.com/vee-cpzt-eug>

DIRECTORS PRESENT (13)

Bombard, Noll, Stevenson, Villalobos, Alkibay, Allen, Bradley, Flathers, Hohenstein, Latorre, Paret, Wright, Bergman

DIRECTORS ABSENT (5)

Cassidy, Garcia, Glass, Maistros, Vega

STAFF PRESENT (5)

Luttjohann, Miller, Johnson, Warner, DeMyer

GUESTS (9) *Italics indicate remote attendance*

Lisa Beach, Tyler Wilson, Jeff Skelton, Yolanda Say, Heather Milburn, Lance Ware, Grayce Upton, *Nate Leach, Michael Piasecki*

PRESENTATION

Lance Ware of AVX Networks made a PowerPoint presentation on the status of the funding for an undersea fiber cable. He explained a few of the grant opportunities. The projected cost for the redundant subsea fiber cables is \$35million. These will be installed under water until coming ashore in Huntington Beach. On the island, they will connect at Pebbly Beach, Avalon, and Two Harbors. Noll left the meeting at 1:07pm and did not return. The presentation included a map of the final version. Ware stated the cable must be placed three meters underground which requires trenching and a marine survey. The last communication with the CPUC was June 13 and approval isn't expected until Fall. Luttjohann added the City of Avalon (COA) made a commitment for \$100K. Say asked about the AT&T issues. Luttjohann said other businesses in town call for maintenance and are told by AT&T they won't be fixed. Ware added that AT&T has been fined. Hohenstein wonders how AVX makes money and if CITA should explore other options. Luttjohann said that Ware initially became part of the connectivity committee meetings due to his interest and experience on such matters and to date has been the only provider willing to pursue a Catalina project. Other fiber providers were sought but none found; Verizon committed to buy bandwidth from fiber sources. Ware said for him, this is a labor of love. Piasecki stated that Catalina Broadband is the incumbent but supports AVX and will buy bandwidth from them. Ware created AVX to be the lead. Many grants require proof of sustainability and there are ongoing maintenance costs. Bombard thanked him for his presentation and requested quarterly updates.

Bombard asked the Marketing Report be bumped up on the agenda so another guest is not required to remain for the entire meeting. Hearing no objection, Miller began the Staff Marketing Report with a reminder of the Cast Away campaign. A slide presentation by Nate Leach showed results of that campaign that ran January 2 through May 31. All the programs exceeded the pre-campaign benchmarks. He mentioned the target audience was southern California area

from Ventura County to San Diego. The Cast Away video was shown without sound for the room. Miller said this ran all Winter and into Spring and performed well. Miller explained, the responsive search ads in the GoTo Catalina promo gave good results. These ads are a partnership with Catalina Express (CatEx) and Catalina Island Co (CICo) and will run through June, be dark in July and then back in August. With schools beginning earlier and earlier, August promotion can capture those that can travel. She spoke of the DAM photo/video library and the recent updates. Raw videos were shown on the meeting screen to indicate the type of footage and models. Quick access is available on Love Catalina's website in the image library. Miller also praised Lynn Stevenson as she constantly uploads content to VisitCalifornia.com and for the third month in a row Catalina Island is a top performer.

BOARD CHAIR'S REMARKS

Bombard encouraged regular attendance saying that today is the last time to approve absences. Moving forward three will be allowed in accordance with the new bylaws that go into effect July 1, 2024.

Requests for Excused Absences—Bombard presented excused absence requests for Garcia and Vega missing today's meeting, and Allen for the April 30 meeting he missed.

Motion to approve the absence of Garcia and Vega as excused by Allen, second Villalobos; passed unanimously.

Motion to approve Allen's excused absence by Stevenson, second Hohenstein; passed with abstention by Allen.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Bombard asked for discussion and approval of Minutes from May 16, 2024 CITA board meeting.

Motion to approve Hohenstein, second Bradley; passed unanimously.

BOARD PROCESS

Luttjohann explained the new reporting templates provided by Charney Associates are now being implemented. A motion was requested to adopt the **Ends Monitoring Schedule** for Policy 4.4.6.

Motion to approve Paret, second Stevenson; passed unanimously.

Luttjohann stated the **Governance Committee** requires at least three Board Members, including the Chair-Elect. A motion was requested to adopt Policy 2.8.2.C which includes the final slate of Officers and Directors for the FY 2024/2025. The list below was included in the Board Packet for the FY 2024/2025. Officers will make up the Governance Committee.

Final Slate of Directors & Officers, Board Seats (19)

1. Amanda Bombard, Catalina Express—one-year term extension per bylaws
2. Lisa Beach, Scuba by Design—three-year term (new)
3. Cinde MacGugan-Cassidy, Cassidy family of businesses and Aurora Hotel Manager—three-year term (returning after a 14-month partial term ending June 30, 2024)
4. Grayce Olivette Upton, WetSpot Rentals—three-year term (new)
5. Yoli Say, Hotel Metropole, Metropole Marketplace, and Catalina Xtreme Parasail (returning after absence of more than one year)

Board members continuing to serve

6. John Alkibay
7. Andrew Allen, Two Harbors seat
8. Sheila Bergman, Catalina Museum for Art & History seat
9. Mesa Bradley
10. Janet Flathers
11. Elaina Garcia
12. Bart Glass
13. Whitney Latorre, Catalina Island Conservancy seat
14. David Maistros, City of Avalon seat
15. Jason Paret, Catalina Island Health seat
16. Dave Stevenson, Catalina Island Company seat
17. Conrado Vega

- 18. Ben Villalobos
- 19. Megan Wright

Officers FY 24-25

Dave Stevenson, Chair
Amanda Bombard, Past Chair
Cinde MacGugan-Cassidy, Chair Elect
Ben Villalobos (July -December 2024), John Alkibay (January-June 2025), Treasurers

Motion to adopt Policy 2.8.2.C which includes the final slate of Officers and Directors for the FY 2024/2025 by Hohenstein, second Paret; passed unanimously.

Bombard turned the floor over for appointment of the **Membership/Business Community Linkage Committee**. Luttjohann explained this committee will deal with adherence to the Member Code of Conduct and problems should they arise amongst members. Chair-Elect Stevenson requested volunteers for the new committee. Paret offered to head the committee with Beach and Flathers, the trio along with the Board Chair round out the committee. A motion to adopt Policy 2.8.4.C and appoint Paret, Beach and Flathers to the Linkage Committee was requested.

Motion to approve Hohenstein, second Villalobos; passed unanimously.

Bombard announced the membership approved the completed Bylaws and confirmation to accept the new Bylaws is a Board vote. Luttjohann said 22 member votes were required to act and 53 were received; all yes, zero opposed.

Motion to accept Bylaws as approved by the membership by Hohenstein, second Allen; passed unanimously.

Bombard asked Warner to explain the RFPs received for next year's production of the Visitor Guide and Map. Warner stated seven bids were received and those were narrowed down to three. The current vendor is the lowest cost and the other two had a few negative points. Working with BobCo Design in the past, it is known he provides extra work, is helpful and has a passion for the island. Luttjohann added new bidders would require a lot of introductions to the island which translates to training time by staff. Warner presented the staff recommendation of accepting the BobCo bid.

Motion to approve staff recommendation of BobCo Design's bid for production of the Visitor Guide and Map for two years with three, one-year options at the discretion of CITA by Bradley, second Hohenstein; passed unanimously.

MONITORING CEO PERFORMANCE

Chair Bombard stated staff is seeking approval of the April financials believed presented at the last meeting, but the vote was not recorded in the minutes. These financials are included in the packet and presented again for approval.

Motion to approve April financials by Villalobos, second Hohenstein; passed unanimously.

Chair Bombard requested approval of **CEO Monitoring Report (Policy 3.5) Financial Planning and Budgeting** along with the May financials all included in the Board packet.

Motion to approve May financials and Financial Planning and Budgeting Policy Monitoring Report by Hohenstein, second Paret; passed unanimously

Luttjohann referred to the proposed 24-25 budget included in the packet. He said the yellow highlights show areas of savings and that budget cuts are required. The TOT estimates are down which translates to decreased payments from COA. New Year's Eve Gala (NYE) 2024 proposed cost increase to \$101K with less services than last year's elevated experience at \$97K; still in negotiation with CCo. NYE discussion to decide whether to continue this annual event can be after the vote. Hohenstein would like to know if CITA does not do NYE, will CCo pick it up. Stevenson does not believe so as labor must be hired from the mainland in the winter. Hohenstein hopes the event at least breaks even. Luttjohann said it varies but the NYE event drives room nights during a quiet time of year. Hohenstein and Say agree that due to late boats there are less hotel stays. Villalobos left the meeting at 2:28pm. Say requested CatEx not offer a late boat. Bombard replied they can't take it away if demand is there as they are public transport. Hohenstein revealed that her

hotels ran at 58% occupancy for NYE. Warner reminded that this year the event will be on Tuesday. Hohenstein would like to see the guarantee of 600 attendees lowered in the contract. Villalobos returned at 2:34pm. Luttjohann said generally sales open in July or August as a longer availability window allows for more sales, which are final. Miller mentioned the TOT loss and companies losing room nights. Stevenson would like to adopt the budget as CICO is still talking NYE with CITA. Luttjohann said 62Above will need time to craft a NYE ad and earlier is best for ticket sales. Alkibay left the meeting at 2:38pm. Hohenstein would like to know why a late boat when there are none that late at other times of the year.

Motion to approve 2024-25 Budget and initiate a NYE survey by Paret, second Hohenstein; passed unanimously. Luttjohann stated he will bring back a mid-year adjusted budget.

BOARD WORK PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Luttjohann said this is the place to include Board Education, Membership/Business Community Linkage, and where the Board instructs the CEO. There are no changes or vote needed today.

CEO/ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

Luttjohann thanked staff, Board, and business members for a successful Taste Around Avalon. He is also thankful to staff and COA for Pride 2024, mentioning there was an issue with sound but the audience was fine and didn't seem to notice. Luttjohann is concerned about the time taken to put together the Board Packet; new procedures have made it quite time consuming. Bombard asked Board members to look at places that can be cut. Paret stated it is just a guide which can be cut where necessary. Alkibay returned at 2:46pm. Stevenson is thankful for the red type and believes this new format is overkill. Stevenson continued, he won't read 60 pages each month, it is a distraction and the Board should concentrate on marketing the island. Luttjohann will make cuts for the next meeting. Bombard said next month the packet will be trimmed down. Hohenstein believes Pride is a lot for CITA, adding many came for the day with some overnight visitors. Villalobos mentioned the sponsorship by US Bank. Luttjohann stated it was a \$7.5K sponsorship and that next year Catalina Beverage plans to add a beverage sponsor. Beach asked if sponsorships could be \$100 as her business does not have \$7.5K to donate. Luttjohann responded, sponsor donations could be any amount.

CLOSED SESSION

Moved to Closed Session at 2:55pm. Board Members and Luttjohann only remained while other staff and all guests listed above left the meeting room.

OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

The closed session ended at 3:04pm and the Board meeting resumed as an open session. Wright left the meeting at 3:04pm and did not return.

PROPOSED 2024-25 BOARD SCHEDULE

Chair Bombard called attention to the included proposed schedule for the next fiscal year. She mentioned a possible conflict with the annual marketing conference set for October 17 and JazzTrax beginning October 18. Hohenstein stated that event is not overly busy and may change to one weekend only.

Motion to approve the schedule as presented by Paret, second Stevenson; passed unanimously.

STAFF UPDATES

DeMyer reported the 18th Annual Taste Around was successful. She stated the ServSafe Fixer, for food service workers was held on June 13 in the Founders Room. The Pride celebration included 17 vendors and next year less live acts are planned. Donations for fireworks on July 4 have reached \$12K so far. The annual installation dinner will be held at the Catalina Museum for Art & History with food provided by Sunset Bar and Grill. She is still in need of raffle prize donations for the nine raffle packages for the Summer Concert Series. The Mixer tonight is hosted by Catalina Coastal Tours and Catalina Xtreme Parasail at the end of the Pleasure Pier. There was discussion on sponsorship of the Summer Concert Series. Luttjohann mentioned a few previous sponsors and Bombard said CatEx is offering the same transport to The Perfect Event crew.

Visitor and Member Services Report—Hohenstein presented a new membership application for approval: Sunset Bar & Grill located at Catalina Canyon Inn. She also notified the Board of Catalina Courtyard Suites new ownership.

Approval of New Member Sunset Bar & Grill

Motion for approval Hohenstein, second Stevenson; passed unanimously.

BOARD & MEMBER UPDATES

Bombard announced all eight boats are running. CatEx is happy they are back for travel in time for July 4.

Villalobos mentioned Maverick Helicopters would like to host a Mixer but as the close dates are all full, they might have an Open House with the hope of CITA's support. Maverick is now doing air tours and their new reservation system is operating.

Skelton was asked to give an update on Catalina Horseback Adventures. He stated things are moving forward and promised at the next meeting to provide more information.

BOARD MEETING EVALUATION

Luttjohann will send a survey as directed earlier in the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chair Bombard adjourned the Board meeting at 3:19pm.