



Thursday, June 19, 2025

MINUTES: Cruise Committee

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 11:15am with a quorum of Board of Directors in the Founders Room of US Bank with in-person attendance only.

DIRECTORS PRESENT (12)

Stevenson, Bombard, Cassidy, Allen, Beach, Bradley, Flathers, Garcia, Glass, Maistros, Say, Upton

DIRECTORS ABSENT (7)

Alkibay, Bergman, Fornasiere, Latorre, Vega, Villalobos, Wright _

GUESTS (1)

Gregg Miller

No action was taken. The discussion was on future conference attendance. Luttjohann was directed to draft a policy to bring back at the next meeting.

MINUTES: Meeting of the Board of Directors

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:02pm by Chair Dave Stevenson. The Catalina Island Tourism Authority (CITA) meeting was held in the Founders Room of US Bank with in-person and remote attendance. Remote attendance as posted on the agenda: Villalobos at 2601 E. Spring St., Long Beach, CA 90806.

[Google Meet joining info/video call link was posted on the agenda](#)

DIRECTORS PRESENT (15)

Stevenson, Alkibay, Bombard, Cassidy, Allen, Beach, Bergman, Bradley, Flathers, Fornasiere, Garcia, Glass, Maistros, Say, Upton

DIRECTORS ATTENDING REMOTELY VIA GOOGLE MEET (1)

Villalobos

DIRECTORS ABSENT (3)

Latorre, Vega, Wright

STAFF PRESENT (4)

Luttjohann, Miller, Warner, Johnson

GUESTS (7)

Tyler Wilson, Jeff Skelton, Heather Milburn, Risix Serpas, Nicole Hohenstein, Maria Leyva, Lance Ware

PRESENTATION

Lance Ware, AVX Networks, provided updates on the undersea fiber sub-cable project. He explained the Federal Funding Account Two opportunity which includes Orange County. A map shows two routes from the mainland to the island providing redundancy. Garcia left the meeting at 1:06. This is a \$41.9million ask and Ware feels their position is good. He

pointed out the two cables; Huntington Beach to Avalon, and Two Harbors to Long Beach. Garcia returned to the meeting at 1:08. It must be proven to the commission the island is underserved so a survey is planned for community participation. Another map indicated the downward trend for internet speed. Ware said Starlink is not designed to serve the density of Avalon; when visitor numbers increase, speeds drop. Cassidy left the meeting at 1:11. Ware disclosed Starlink now charges for overages so hotels using their service will pay more for guest usage. He also stated there is a possibility of utilizing the oil platforms in the middle of the channel. Cassidy returned at 1:13. AVX is awaiting the challenge process and may or may not need help if challenges are presented. Bombard asked about the process after challenges and Ware stated they have two weeks to rebut. He would like to be approved before the end of 2025 and hopes for a quick process after that. AVX Networks plan to provide 100GB+ where currently on a good day, internet speeds are 5-7.5GB in Avalon. Wireless can't solve the problem with 1200 homes and busy visitor counts. Ware added it is possible to prioritize importance like credit card terminals over lower non-important needs.

BOARD CHAIR REMARKS

Stevenson reported a hybrid meeting of the Governance and Membership Committees was held on May 29 with the Governance Committee reconvening the following Friday.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Stevenson presented the May minutes included in the packet and hearing no discussion requested a motion for approval of the Minutes from May 15, 2025.

Motion for approval Cassidy, second Say; passed with abstentions of Garcia and Fornasiere

BOARD PROCESS

Adoption of the final slate of Directors for FY 2025-2026—In accordance with Policy 2.9.7, Cassidy presented the slate recommended by the Nominating Committee of Jeff Skelton, Maria Leyva, Andrew Welham and Nicole Hohenstein. She stated there are four seats available and six nominated. Cassidy explained that the Charney document requires the Nominating Committee to determine a recommended slate and in their lengthy meeting each candidate was considered taking an analytical approach of their skills and offerings. She informed, that additional names are included on the ballot. When voting, each Board Member votes for the recommended slate or four individuals from the listing of six. Ballots were passed out for an anonymous paper vote of all board members present. Cassidy requested staff collect the ballots. Attending online, Villalobos sent a text to the Board Chair with his vote.

Stevenson and Johnson tallied ballots; Stevenson declared the recommended slate is elected for 2025-26

Cassidy presented the Governance Committee nominations for treasurer and chair elect. She explained that John Alkibay is the only nominee for treasurer. She added that two nominations for chair elect were received; Say and Fornasiere. Paper ballots were again distributed to Board Members, collected by staff, and tallied by Stevenson and Johnson in the same manner. While awaiting the outcome, Cassidy explained the Governing Board as defined in the Charney doc. She said the Nominating Committee must screen and propose a slate and officers for the following year. Luttjohann was directed to ask Charney about best practice to properly screen.

Stevenson announced Alkibay as treasurer and Fornasiere, chair elect for the 2025-2026 year

Cassidy presented the Linkage Committee stating that Beach, Paret and Flathers have been serving. She said Flathers and Beach are willing to continue with Upton and Bombard volunteering to be on the committee.

Motion for the Board to approve Beach, Bombard, Flathers and Upton to serve in accordance with policy 2.8.4.C on the 2025-2026 Membership/Business Linkage Committee by Say, second Fornasiere; passed unanimously

Luttjohann reminded that current officers are in place through June 30 and the new 2025/26 Board will be installed at the July meeting.

2025-26 Final Slate of Directors & Officers, Board Seats (19)

1. Nicole Hohenstein, Catalina Canyon Inn—three-year term (new)
2. Maria Leyva, Leyva's Electric Bikes—three-year term (new)
3. Jeff Skelton, Catalina Horseback Adventures—three-year term (new)
4. Andrew Welham, Catalina Classic Cruises—three-year term (new)

Board members continuing to serve

5. John Alkibay
6. Andrew Allen, Two Harbors seat
7. Lisa Beach
8. Sheila Bergman, Catalina Museum for Art & History seat
9. Amanda Bombard
10. Mesa Bradley
11. Cinde Cassidy
12. Janet Flathers
13. Gail Fornasiere, Catalina Island Health seat
14. Elaina Garcia
15. Whitney Latorre, Catalina Island Conservancy seat
16. David Maistros, City of Avalon seat
17. Yoli Say
18. Dave Stevenson, Catalina Island Company seat
19. Grayce Upton

Officers FY 2025-26

Cinde Cassidy, chair
Dave Stevenson, past chair
Gail Fornasiere, chair elect
John Alkibay, treasurer

MONITORING CEO PERFORMANCE

3.5 Financial Planning & Budgeting—Luttjohann stated the budget in the packet includes an error caught by Alkibay and an amendment will be presented. Luttjohann explained several line items on the budget saying membership dues are projected to be up slightly with the formation of the Hispanic Business Alliance, City TOT may remain flat, and plans to reduce the Certified Folder spend. He announced an intention to bring a current contractor on board as an employee who will not join the health care plan. The error by Alkibay shows on line 7600 of \$20K; this will be moved to its correct place and cover new staff. Current discussion on Placer AI might lead to no renewal of that contract saving more funds. Cassidy asked about the rent expense of \$22K. Luttjohann said this error on line 7600 is the one Alkibay found, as explained earlier. Luttjohann stated the New Year's Eve (NYE) contract must be signed by June 30 to avoid a rate increase. He added that title and table sponsors are options to off-set NYE costs; champagne will be excluded saving \$10K. Glass feels 22% for advertising is a small part of the budget. Luttjohann responded that hosted media, Visitor Guide and Map, website, and some other items are not included under advertising. A few questions from Board Members were for clarification on expenses. Say left the meeting at 2:08. Discussion continued and Miller explained parts of 62Above's plan, the VIA62 program, presented at the May meeting. Say returned at 2:09. The discussion moved to the Event Sales position which may be added in 2026 to seek large-scale concerts, gravel events, etc. This position is not related to DeMyer's position and the job descriptions are different. Discussion on website, 62Above, event position, TOT and advertising continued until Stevenson called for a motion and vote.

Motion to approve the CEO's monitoring report on policy 3.5, Financial Planning & Budgeting as recommended by the Audit and Finance Oversight Committee and dependent upon receiving a detailed report on advertising, web expenses and media spend. Motion by Bombard, second Bergman; passed with abstentions by Stevenson and Maistros.

CEO/ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

Due to time Stevenson requested the balance of the meeting be kept short where possible.

Events Report—Luttjohann reported for DeMyer on Taste Around Avalon participants, Trey Hill concert (with lower lodging cost due to band/crew size), and Pride (with \$7.5K US Bank sponsorship).

Quarterly Report of Council—Luttjohann noted the Q4 marketing report one-sheet placed at each place on the table was handed out for reference.

NATJA Conference—Luttjohann attended the NATJA event in Palm Springs. There were 15 media meetings with three media members traveling to the island right after the conference to be hosted.

July 4th Funding—Luttjohann pointed to the Fourth of July Celebration hand-out at each place. He said letters were mailed seeking donations.

Visitor and Member Services Report—Luttjohann presented a new membership application for Madison the Mermaid LLC which is included in the Board packet.

Motion to accept new member by Cassidy, second Glass; passed unanimously

VP OF MARKETING AND SALES UPDATE

Miller gave a public relations update on upcoming media visits in June and reminded of the wind down for July and August, picking up again in the fall. She reported on paid media and said foot-traffic numbers are an ongoing total with tracking done for 60 days after an ad exposure. The result as of May 30 is the highest number to date with 39,207 visits that began with viewing a Love Catalina ad. April and May numbers can still be updated as the lookback window is still open. By July 30 visitation data will be received for the 2024-25 fiscal year. Miller said except non-paid social, the media campaign goes dark for July with paid media beginning again mid-August. The Love Catalina photo shoot has been rescheduled for Aug 4-5. Nestle's Ciao water promotion is extended through Sept 30 with digital and PR support. On May 8, the Australian Tour Operators arrived with 12 for a FAM tour; hosted by CITA, Catalina Express and Catalina Island Co. The 2025-26 pocket maps are on the island with 175K printed for distribution. Maps have been sent to Certified Folder, Catalina Express, and are available at the Visitor Center.

PROPOSED 2025-26 MEETING SCHEDULE

Stevenson asked for discussion on the 2025-26 Board meeting schedule printed as part of the Board packet. Cassidy asked about the bonus attendance. Luttjohann explained benefits of the Visit California Outlook Conference saying if Board Members attend this San Diego event, it allows them to skip another meeting without affecting their attendance record. The October meeting was pointed out as a Wednesday due to conflicts on the Thursdays in October, and the November date remains pending.

BOARD MEETING EVALUATION

Stevenson is thankful for the returned evaluation forms saying they are helpful. He also welcomed Fornasiere back to the Board, taking the dedicated seat for the hospital/clinic.

BOARD & MEMBER UPDATES

Cassidy announced that as of May 27 she and her husband are the new owners of Snug Harbor Inn.

Bombard said Catalina Express officially offers free Wifi on the Jet Cat and Cat Jet with a bonus that lands travelers on an activity page and allows them to book. She said the fall schedule, Sept 3-Oct 20 is posted.

Beach reported on the Long Beach Scuba Show, May 31-June 2. Scuba by Design attended in partnership with Catalina Express. She was impressed by the constant stream of people coming to their booth.

Villalobos attended IPW in Chicago recently. Maverick Helicopters has a new office at the Santa Monica airport. This gives Maverick the benefit of flying from Santa Monica without additional fees; pricing is similar to Long Beach flights. He added the Queen Mary is very busy this weekend which could increase travel to Catalina Island. He thanked Stevenson for his leadership as chair as this is his last Board meeting.

Stevenson reminded the Brew Fest is this weekend at Two Harbors.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chair Bombard adjourned the Board meeting at 3:14pm.