



MINUTES: Meeting of the Board of Directors

Thursday, March 21, 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 and via Zoom. Attendance and voting utilized roll-call procedure. 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 attended online using this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82301353406?pwd=Sm42R0RFUHVRa2RZWm1CV0wzQ3diZz09>

DIRECTORS PRESENT (16)

Bombard, Fornasiere, Stevenson, Villalobos, Alkibay, Allen, Bradley, Cassidy, Flathers, Foley, Garcia, Glass, Hohenstein, Latorre, Maistros, Vega

DIRECTORS ABSENT (3)

Noll, Paret, Wright

STAFF PRESENT (5)

Luttjohann, Miller, Warner, Johnson, DeMyer

GUESTS (10)

Krista Bernasconi, Kayla Scott, Sara Cassidy, Devin Hart, Kayla Fearheller, Grayce Upton, Bre Bussard, Erin McAleavy, Yolanda Say, Tyler Wilson (italics indicate remote attendance)

CONSENT ITEMS

Chair Bombard explained there is a need to vote to approve Cassidy's remote attendance. Cassidy could be seen on the screen and she revealed that Sara Cassidy was not visible but sharing her space and could hear the meeting.

Approved with abstention by Cassidy.

Bombard called attention to the guest sign-in sheet and asked in-room visitors to please sign.

Chair Bombard mentioned a slight change to the February Minutes. Latorre entered the meeting at 1:07pm. Jim read the change in wording which applied to the February closed session.

Motion to approve with the noted change by Stevenson, second Hohenstein.

Approved with abstention by Foley.

Luttjohann announced that the February 2024 financials are delayed due a QuickBooks software issue. They will be brought to the next meeting for review and approval.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

April 30 Special Meeting—Bombard reminded attendees of the April 30 full-day meeting. This will include a discussion with Charney Associates about the February Board Workshop and recommended updates. This special meeting is a closed session for Luttjohann, Miller, and board members only.

Audit of board member partial and full terms—Bombard referred to the Term Spread Sheet and asked Luttjohann to expand on that page of the board packet. Luttjohann said one discussion at the Board Retreat was how to treat partial terms vs. full terms of board members. It was proposed that 18 months or longer should constitute a full term if the

revised by-laws are adopted. Bombard asked for questions and hearing none asked the board to move on and discuss it further at the April 30 meeting.

PRESENTATION, CITY OF AVALON

Devin Hart arrived at the meeting at 1:11pm and gave a PowerPoint presentation on the City of Avalon's (COA) new public transportation system and digital signboard program. The public transport has been named COAST (City of Avalon Shuttle Transit) and moves COA to a micro-transit model. Circuit Transit is in 40 other cities and will officially launch on April 4, 2024. The fleet consists of five Gem vehicles and two Ford e-transit vans. Passengers can hail the vehicle, call, or use the app which will ping where the pick-up is. The app works in Long Beach and other communities and is a seamless transfer to Avalon for those already using the app. The COA website will be updated April 1, 2024 with the new information. Businesses can pre-purchase an offer/promo code for their guests to enter when ordering a ride on COAST. The promo code can be customized, pop-up advertising will be available and the vehicle wraps can be purchased to include advertising. Bombard requested this information be provided to Luttjohann for him to share with Catalina Island businesses. The next slide in Hart's presentation showed Mark I as the person to contact, but there was not enough time for attendees to copy the contact information before the next slide. Villalobos asked how many vehicles and if ride share would be utilized. Hart said sharing is likely when busy and repeated there are 5 Gems, two Ford vehicles and no more Garibaldi bus. Foley hopes the current employees are hired by Circuit. Hart responded, yes, and further stated the vehicles will have a hot spot available. Villalobos asked about luggage and added that possibly passengers could use empty seats if the vehicle is not full. Hart explained the vehicles can carry luggage on the back of the vehicles.

Hart continued with material on the upcoming digital signboard program that will begin with two screens; near WetSpot Rentals looking toward the Pier and the second next to Via Casino arch. This is an attempt to assist visitors with wayfinding. These signs will have interactive directory, specials, event locations, directions (which can be downloaded to user's phones), and advertising opportunities. The two locations are the Beta Test for the system and if successful it is possible three more screens could be added. Bombard asked how businesses would notify of specials, changes, etc. Hart said possibly Catalina Express (CatEx) would be given access to make needed information changes. Hart said there are too many business license holders to include all, but COA will work directly with each business that wishes to participate. Luttjohann wondered if there is an audio component and Hart responded, yes. She went on to say the Via Casino screen will have a wrap on the back showing the current view so those at the Naughty Fox do not notice an obstructed view. Hart told Hohenstein Rotary Club would be allowed to add information. Hart left the meeting at 1:27pm.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Draft Policies Manual—Bombard said a few edits are already acknowledged for the emailed doc. Luttjohann read part of a letter from Charney and Associates and requested all board members read and provide feedback no later than two weeks prior to the April 30 Special Meeting. This will allow time for Charney to work on the document and John Lambeth at CIVITAS to review it prior to the Special Meeting. Luttjohann read several policy questions. Maistros entered the meeting at 1:35pm. Bombard requested all board members email comments to her and Luttjohann by April 16.

Appointment of Nominating Committee FY 2024-25—Bombard said Stevenson will head the committee along with past-chair Noll and asked for volunteers to join the committee. She warned that those on the committee should not expect to be appointed to board roles. Glass and Garcia both volunteered to meet and work with Stevenson and Noll on the committee.

Excused Absences of Villalobos, February 28/29, and April 30—Bombard asked for discussion and a motion on the excused absence requests by Villalobos due to work conflicts.

Motion to approve both absences by Glass, second Fornasiere.

Approved with abstention by Villalobos.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS

Direction on establishing Care Fund 501c3—Bombard noted this agenda item was a request by Hohenstein and turned the floor over to her. Hohenstein explained that currently Kind Traveler can set up a fund to collect from guests and the Catalina Island Conservancy (CIC) and Marine Animal Rescue (MAR) are participants. However, she would like assurance that if her hotels collect funds from guests, those funds go to environmental concerns and not directly to CIC or MAR for

them to use toward payroll or other expenses. She is interested in CITA revisiting the establishment of the Care for Catalina fund. Luttjohann considered adding a care fund pre-Covid but it was parked. He is now looking at that again as a Love Catalina Island sister 501c3 with an oversight committee. Glass asked the cost. Luttjohann believes it is minimal and that some of the cost would be legal hours to review. Bombard wondered if it can be set up for donations to be tax deductible, like the fireworks. Maistros said COA does not send out tax docs to those making fireworks donations. Bombard continued that Kind Traveler is not just for ecology, but funds can also help the community with scholarships. Glass would like to see housing considered as that is important to the community. Luttjohann believes that housing might be argued as valid to Kind Traveler. Hohenstein stated that two hotels currently participate: Zane Grey and The Avalon Hotel but her hotels will hold off until they know where the money is being spent. Fornasiere asked if it was known where the current donations are going. Luttjohann said that The Avalon Hotel funds go to MAR and Zane Grey to CIC. Hohenstein believes Wi-Fi is important and Luttjohann said it is up to Kind Traveler to approve funding options. Bombard said if fireworks were approved as a valid fund, it could possibly influence more to donate. Fornasiere and Luttjohann informed the group that Avalon Beautiful is already a 501c3. Fearheller said her company, Bleu World, has organized community clean-ups, worked with the school, and could put together a pitch to be included to receive funds. Bombard advised the board needs to give direction to Luttjohann on moving ahead with the 501c3 and the use of Kind Traveler or another organization. Luttjohann clarified that the Care Fund does not have to be exclusive to the Kind Traveler program, but would be eligible to do so.

Motion for Luttjohann to move forward with the 501c3 paperwork by Hohenstein, second Bradley.

Approved unanimously.

Bombard added that Luttjohann will look into the Santa Monica model for Kind Traveler funds.

President's Report—Luttjohann submitted his report as written and it is included in the packet.

Visitor and Member Services Report—Hohenstein presented two new membership applications for approval: Avalon History Tours and Taylored Catalina Charters.

Approval of New Members

Motion for approval Hohenstein, second Garcia; passed unanimously.

Sales & Marketing Report—Fornasiere announced that CITA won two NATJA awards and reported on the IPW trade show. She explained the current contract for the Visitor Guide production needs renewal and RFPs will be posted and sent to prospective vendors. The 2024-25 map is nearing production and is on track for Spring delivery.

Luttjohann stated that two 62Above proposals are in the packet and need approval on one to move forward. Miller said the \$67.5K is for videos, drone, swing camera and stills that will be used more for social media which needs to be kept fresh. Glass believes that for \$67.5K CITA should own the rights forever, not just for a limited time. Stevenson stated the limited-time agreement is generally driven by talent. Miller would like to use local talent which could drive the price down and allow for unlimited use. Fornasiere said the amount was not in the budget and needs board approval.

Discussion included Villalobos asking if editing is included and Miller agreeing to squeeze the contract to CITA's benefit.

Motion to approve the smaller proposal in the amount of \$67,500 (FY 2023-24) subject to staff negotiation on additional services by Hohenstein, second Glass.

Approved unanimously.

Fornasiere continued that CITA is seeking approval of \$11,085 for 2024-25 FY Travel Trade Shows. Warner explained the discount for paying in advance and that the cost includes three shows: Bay Area, Phoenix, and Los Angeles. Luttjohann added that Phoenix was new for CITA this year and a good show.

Motion to approve \$11,085 for three shows by Stevenson, second Fornasiere.

Approved unanimously.

Miller offered an update on IPW in May that connects exhibitors with travel trade and the media. Luttjohann said Catalina Island is popular with the media. Bombard explained appointments will focus on mostly USA media but a few Canadians.

Events Report—DeMyer's spoke of upcoming events like Shred, Taste of Avalon, Restaurant Week and Summer Concert Series. She announced the Lodging event is cancelled. Pride on June 15 with US Bank as a sponsor will include Pride

Walk, music on the stage and more. She asked for hoteliers to contact her if they are interested in donating rooms for Pride or would give a discount. Tonight, the Mixer is hosted by Catalina Divers Supply with food by El Galleon and April 18 the Mixer is at The Avalon Hotel. Luttjohann reminded of the community clean-up this weekend and stated that in the future it hopes to expand with COA engagement, Interact students and weed warriors. Hohenstein added that Rotary plans to purchase new plants. Fearheller said Bleu World is holding a kayak cleanup.

Luttjohann explained that COA has requested CITA to underwrite the \$40-44K for 2024 fireworks. Maistros said that Garden State is the vendor and this is the only show they hold over water. Last year COA had to travel to the mainland and jump through hoops to make sure the show would proceed. Villalobos had a few questions about a drone show instead. Maistros said drone shows cost more and are a shorter show. Bombard likes fireworks as drones are silent and less impressive. Allen asked Maistros to share information with Two Harbors for their planned fireworks show which is also shot from a barge over the water.

Motion to approve spending up to \$44K for Garden State Fireworks by Glass, second Hohenstein.

Approved unanimously.

Luttjohann requested funding for the Pride event production. He explained that \$16.5K was already approved but The Perfect Event total cost is \$24K which is offset by sponsor money of \$5K. There is also the expense of hotels. Garcia asked how many guests this brought to the island. Luttjohann stated it is hard to gage as the crowd is fluid but that is good for the community; people leave for a tour, meal or shopping and then come back. Say revealed that her hotel has many repeat guests for this event. Hohenstein is curious on how late the event goes as there were previous complaints. Luttjohann said the event is noon to 10pm at the stage with after parties at the Chi Chi Club and other possible locations. He added this year Pulp Vixen is the last act on the stage and is more like a normal concert so not as loud. Fornasiere reminded that last year Catalina Island received very good press due to the event. Bombard said that everyone should see a bump. Garcia agreed as her Mermaids business was up last year during the event weekend. Hohenstein cautioned it is hard to gage as that weekend is the beginning of summer. Say stated summer is not guaranteed anymore and July is when the season really kicks in. Bombard said CatEx numbers are usually up for Pride weekend.

Motion to approve additional spending up to \$8.1K for 2024 Pride by Fornasiere, second Garcia.

Approved unanimously.

Luttjohann announced that Senator Lena Gonzales will be in Avalon April 6. She will hold a community meeting in the Founders Room at 11:30am. The hospitality is hosted by her with CITA promoting the event.

BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Fornasiere shared the Catalina Museum for Art & History opens a new exhibit, Ann Weber 26 Miles on Saturday, March 23. That day is also free SoCal Museum Day and with the exhibit opening and demo by the artist the museum is open until 8pm that day. The artist is bringing media along and the museum hopes for good press. The upcoming 1st Friday event is free admission from 5-7pm. Live music for the Tamale Festival in April and Cinco de Mayo is being finalized. The Silent Film Showcase returns this year with films shown in the museum's outdoor amphitheater for two nights, details are being finalized with the Art Deco Society of Los Angeles.

Villalobos announced IEX/Maverick will now operate a Catalina tour each day. They are working on a new reservation system and hope to increase the number of tours. He asked about Placer ai being added as an agenda item. Luttjohann said CITA is working with Placer ai and POIs still need to be added to accurately show data.

Maistros provided an update on the Cabrillo Mole project saying the first part begins next week with the cruise ship loading queue area extension. The test will be when the cruise ship carrying 5K passengers stops in Avalon. The plan is to expand the walkway near WetSpot Rentals for queueing, and install utilities; temporary facilities arrive in August. The Mole will be an operating area during demo and construction. Parking will go away and move to Pebbly Beach Road as construction containers will be in the parking area for about two years.

Hohenstein reported Rotary is holding a clothing drive April 27 at the Catalina Canyon Inn. They are planning a drive-by event with Interact students helping and packing items for shipping. The freight cost is donated. Rotary will rent a U-Haul to drive the items to Palm Springs Wellness Shelter. Acceptable items are blankets, shoes, and clothing in good condition for both children and adults. She asks for donations of clothing with no holes and no shoes that are ready to toss.

Cassidy stated that she and Mike have been the new owners of Original Antonio's for one week now.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chair Bombard adjourned the board meeting at 2:43pm.