



MINUTES: Meeting of the Board of Directors

Thursday, November 21, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:09pm by Chair Dave Stevenson. The Catalina Island Tourism Authority (CITA) meeting was held in the Founders Room of US Bank with in-person attendance by the Board; remote attendance for guests only.

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

DIRECTORS PRESENT (15)

Stevenson, Bombard, Alkibay, Beach, Bergman, Bradley, Flathers, Garcia, Latorre, Maistros, Paret, Say, Upton, Vega, Wright

DIRECTORS ABSENT (4)

Cassidy, Villalobos, Allen, Glass

STAFF PRESENT (4)

Luttjohann, Miller, Warner, Johnson

GUESTS (6) *Italics indicate remote attendance*

Ray McKewon, Tyler Wilson, *Gary Jones, Dan Wilson*, Heather Milburn, Nicole Hohenstein

BOARD CHAIR REMARKS

Stevenson remarked that the CEO review is delayed but the governance committee met. The review will be presented at the January Board meeting.

Stevenson said in the off-season, restaurants remain part of the guest experience. Continued meetings with local businesses have a goal of scheduling restaurant closures to avoid Vons being the only meal option for visitors. He mentioned Wednesday is the trickiest day of the week in the winter months. The hope is for a few restaurants to commit to be open each day of every week.

Stevenson was informed JazzTrax may downsize to one-weekend only. The two-weekend October event currently generates eight days of overnight stays but this would decrease if the event shrinks. He would like to work with Art Good and help get JazzTrax to a place that allows it to remain two weekends.

Stevenson reminded Board members of the Mixer tonight and hopes to see all there.

CONSENT ITEMS

Stevenson presented the October minutes included in the packet. Stevenson asked for questions and hearing no discussion he requested approval of the Minutes from October 31, 2024.

Motion for approval Say, second Bergman; passed with abstentions by Bombard, Paret, and Wright

BOARD PROCESS

Luttjohann stated the September 30, 2024 Quarterly Financials with Charney are similar to previous financial reports and asked for any questions. Stevenson had discussed the ad spend with Luttjohann which included the 2023-24 TOT true-up from the City of Avalon (COA); received and spent this fiscal year.

3.3 Financial Condition and Activities

After presentation and discussion of the financials, a motion to approve the Quarterly Financials was requested.

Approval of September 30, 2024 Quarterly Report on Financials

Motion for approval Beach, second Say; passed unanimously

PRESENTATION

Guests Dan Wilson and Gary Jones with The Perfect Event (TPE) presented a shared screen presentation on the Summer Concert Series. They provided clips of the three concerts, discussed social media impressions on TPE page, the raffles, and varying crowd sizes. ABBA continues to be a favorite with larger crowds that tend to sing and dance to the music. ABBA also generated 1K in social media impressions, much higher than the other two concerts. Their take-aways are to change the dates around the availability of more popular bands instead of choosing dates and then finding who is available. They also suggest local businesses promote and help with ads on social media. They recommend a budget increase 10-20% next summer with a possible additional buffer of funds to explore acts with a larger following. They thanked the concert and raffle sponsors. Luttjohann feels raffle sales could have been better. He mentioned Mary Boyd had travel plans and was not able to sell tickets as much this year. She volunteers to sell tickets prior to the events and generates good numbers. Bombard asked if it would be possible to make the concert budget \$35K. McKewon reminded that only 35-40% of the budget goes to talent. Bergman asked about the crowd size and was told it is fluid but ABBA saw about 1500-2000 people. Say knows the logistics of an island performance makes it more expensive but said these events need to continue. Hohenstein did not like the one-hour break Tiamane took to sell merchandise and said to keep the crowd engaged, music should not have breaks. McKewon agreed that 90-120 minutes of non-stop music is more likely to hold the crowd. Luttjohann met with Maddy Scanlon of TPE and she feels if people know the sound and the words there is more engagement. Say said at her hotel, guests were there to see ABBA. Bombard said the weather was good so weekend traffic was up. Wilson believes a tribute band that plays a broader spectrum or recognizable sing-along tunes is important. He also said to find groups that are up and coming to keep the cost down. Bombard requested prices of several bands to present to the Board for discussion and decisions. Paret suggests 70s music as young people know those tunes because of the popular movies in the Guardians of the Galaxy series. Wilson warned that a longer wait to book bands means some will be booked; he will put together info on bands, costs, labor, etc.

Bombard made a motion to increase the Summer Concert Series budget to \$40K, second Garcia; passed unanimously

McKewon, Wilson and Jones left the meeting at 2:01pm

1.1 Tourism Growth

Luttjohann said overnight visits are a struggle. He will continue to update the Board and is still looking at Placer for data.

Motion to approve the CEOs monitoring report on Policy 1.1 by Say, second Bombard; passed unanimously

CEO/ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

Visitor and Member Services Report—Luttjohann stated a new membership application from Catalina Horseback Adventures is seeking approval.

Approval of New Member Catalina Horseback Adventures. Motion for approval Paret, second Garcia; passed unanimously.

Events Report—Luttjohann reported for DeMyer reading her written report. Mixer tonight from 6pm-8pm is hosted by Topside by NDMK. There will be raffle prizes, networking, delicious food, and a no-host bar. So far 35 people have signed up to attend. The next Mixer is Thursday, January 16, 2025 hosted by AVX Networks at The Yacht Club.

Small Business Saturday, November 30, 2024 is dedicated to supporting small businesses and communities across the country and is part of the larger Shop Small movement. Founded by American Express in 2010, this day is celebrated each year on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. As a neighborhood champion, CITA has free Shop Small resources available for businesses to pick up at the Visitor Center on the Green Pier.

31st Annual Shop Catalina is scheduled for Saturday, December 7, 2024, 12pm-8pm. The deadline for businesses to sign-up for participation is Friday, November 22, 2024. Please return sign-up forms to Janet@lovecatalina.com or drop them off at the Visitor Center on the Green Pier. A variety of activities will take place on that day on and around Wrigley Stage: ornament decorating for kids, popcorn and hot chocolate sales, a winter wonderland of fun from South Beach to Step Beach, Catalina Kid Ventures singing Christmas carols, Humane Society pet photos in the US Bank lobby, Avalon

Community Theatre Players, The Jingle Singers on stage and strolling around Avalon, and pictures with Santa. Activities culminate with the lighting of the Christmas tree and Santa's arrival. To date 17 businesses are signed up to participate with more expected.

51st Annual New Year's Eve Gala, Tuesday, December 31, 2024. To date there are 152 reservations and 491 guests. If any Board member is available to help decorate the Casino ballroom on Monday, December 30 or assist with the photographers and seating guests, please contact Janet@lovecatalina.com.

VP OF MARKETING AND SALES UPDATE

Miller stated it has been a busy week with media and a photo shoot. Alkibay left the meeting at 2:08. Miller announced that Ryan Longnecker was on the island Friday-Monday, November 15-18 shooting still photography and video around town. This content was shared with NBC but it is not known if it will be included in that segment. She showed a few images he captured out of the 100s CITA will have access to and shared some horseback riding video clips. Alkibay returned to the meeting at 2:11. She said NBC's California Live filmed a segment emphasizing overnight stays that will air on December 4. The weather could not have been better. She thanked Maistros for being on camera as well as COA staff and team who got some of the Christmas decor up in time for the shoot. Miller thanked the businesses that decorated early and CICO for getting Christmas-color lights on the Casino, which was featured Tuesday night on NBC.

A Visit California eBlast distributed on October 29 to 204K focused on overnight stays promoting the island and the Best of Winter packages. The open rate was very strong at 47% -- well above the 30% industry average.

Warner reported she has been proofing a digital version of the 2025 Visitor Guide. She still needs a few ads to drop in and printing is scheduled for January 7, 2025. Immediately after Thanksgiving a digital proof copy will be made available. She reminded businesses to sign up for Shop Catalina as the deadline is tomorrow.

BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Alkibay announced Catalina Beverage is growing beyond Catalina Island and now serving Mammoth and Bishop. Their trucks travel Hwy 395 and are wrapped with a large image of Catalina Island.

Maistros shared that Harbor Master Oren Carstarphen will retire on December 24; he plans to remain on the island.

Luttjohann reminded that the CEO review will be in January. He also is working on the Placer missing data.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chair Stevenson adjourned the meeting at 2:19pm.