



Mammoth Lakes Tourism Board

Minutes of Regular Meeting

October 6, 2021, 1:00 p.m.

437 Old Mammoth Road, Suite Z, Mammoth Lakes

Members Present: Chair Jeremy Goico, Vice Chair Pat Foster, Treasurer John Morris, Board Member Lynda Salcido, Board Member Eric Clark, Board Member John Mendel, Board Member Larry Crabb

Members Absent: Secretary Jess Karell

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Jeremy Goico called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. in the Council Chambers located at 437 Old Mammoth Road. Members of the Board attended the meeting via videoconference.

2. **ASSEMBLY BILL 361 (AB 361) FINDINGS**

2.1 **Discussion and approval of Resolution 2021-01 making findings to allow the Mammoth Lakes Tourism Board to continue to meet virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic declared emergency.**

Moved by Chair Jeremy Goico

Seconded by Board Member John Mendel

Approve Resolution 2021-01 making findings to allow the Mammoth Lakes Tourism Board to continue to meet virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic declared emergency.

For (7): Chair Jeremy Goico, Vice Chair Pat Foster, Treasurer John Morris, Board Member Lynda Salcido, Board Member Eric Clark, Board Member John Mendel, and Board Member Larry Crabb

Absent (1): Secretary Jess Karell

Carried (7 to 0)

3. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Chair Jeremy Goico spoke about workforce housing challenges and reported that many of his seasonal employees were unable to find housing due to landlords selling units or raising rents. Chair Goico reported that he attended a meeting with Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA) President and Chief Operating Officer Ron Cohen, Board Member Eric Clark, MMSA Vice President of Development Tom Hodges, Treasurer John Morris, and Executive Director John Urdi to discuss the Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID).

Treasurer John Morris announced that both golf courses in Town would close on Sunday and said that the Sierra Cup would be held tomorrow at the Sierra Star Golf Course. Mr. Morris reported that lodging was slow and that there was not a lot of interest in travel between now and Thanksgiving due to school, COVID concerns and the smoke.

Board Member Larry Crabb reported that September business was up for him but had slowed down recently due to the smoke.

Board Member John Mendel reported that business had doubled in September versus September two years ago and that it had continued to stay busy.

Board Member Lynda Salcido reported that there would be a lot going on at the Town Council meeting tonight including a discussion around the General Plan Housing Element.

Board Member Eric Clark said that he was grateful that the smoke didn't come in last Saturday because it allowed the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) to have a great picture day. He said that he was happy the kids were able to have a full season this year.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no comments given at this time.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Board Member Lynda Salcido

Seconded by Treasurer John Morris

Approve the Consent Agenda.

For (7): Chair Jeremy Goico, Vice Chair Pat Foster, Treasurer John Morris, Board Member Lynda Salcido, Board Member Eric Clark, Board Member John Mendel, and Board Member Larry Crabb

Absent (1): Secretary Jess Karell

Carried (7 to 0)

5.1 Approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 9, 2021.

6. POLICY MATTERS

6.1 Presentation on Summer 2021 Community Host Program

Executive Director John Urdi spoke about the Community Host Program and introduced Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access (MLTPA) Operations Manager Gretchen Haselbauer.

Ms. Haselbauer outlined the information in the Mammoth Lakes Trails System (MLTS) Host Program Summer 2021 PowerPoint Presentation.

Town of Mammoth Lakes (TOML) Trails Manager Joel Rathje discussed changes made to the Trail Host Program and Trails Days compared to past years. and spoke about community youth that had taken an interest in trail maintenance, and his desire to work with the school district to connect with young people who had a desire to be employed as trail crew. He thanked MLT, TOML and the community for their support with these programs. Mr. Rathje gave updates on the replacement of vault toilets in the Lakes Basin and the Shady Rest Inyo Craters (SRIC) Project.

There was discussion between Mr. Urdi, Ms. Haselbauer, Mr. Rathje and members of the Board.

6.2 Presentation on Fall Marketing Campaign

Director of Marketing Brian Wright outlined the information in the Fall Marketing Update PowerPoint Presentation.

There was discussion between Mr. Wright and members of the Board.

6.3 Restaurant Representative Board Seat Vacancy

Discussion of process and timeline to fill vacant Restaurant Representative Board Seat and formation of 3-member Ad hoc Nominating Committee. Candidate to fill remaining term left by Michael Ledesma through June 2023.

- **Applications accepted until Friday, October 15th**
- **Ad hoc Committee interviews to occur the week of October 18th**
- **Nominating Committee recommendation at the November 3rd Board meeting**
- **New Board Member to be seated at the December 1st Board meeting**

Chair Jeremy Goico spoke about the process required and projected timeline to fill the open Restaurant Representative Seat on the Board.

Executive Director John Urdi clarified that this position was usually a three year term, however, the person appointed to the current open seat would complete the remainder of Michael Ledesma's three year term.

Board Member John Mendel, Treasurer John Morris and Vice Chair Pat Foster volunteered to participate on the Ad hoc Nominating Committee

There was discussion between Mr. Urdi and members of the Board.

6.4 Formation of Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) Renewal Ad Hoc Steering Committee

Appoint a four-member group to begin discussions of TBID goals and strategies for September 2023 renewal prior to formation of larger advisory committee of TBID community stakeholders (Spring 2022).

- **Board to appoint four members to serve on Ad hoc TBID Steering Committee**

Chair Jeremy Goico requested four Board Members to serve on a Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) Renewal Ad hoc Steering Committee to begin discussions regarding TBID goals and strategies for the September 2023 renewal prior to the formation of the larger Advisory Committee of TBID community stakeholders which would happen in the spring of 2022.

Executive Director John Urdi spoke about the purpose of the Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) Renewal Ad hoc Steering Committee getting started in advance of the formation of the advisory group.

Chair Jeremy Goico, Treasurer John Morris, Board Member John Mendel, and Board Member Eric Clark volunteered to serve on the Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) Renewal Ad hoc Steering Committee.

There was discussion between Mr. Urdi and members of the Board.

6.5 Air Service Update

Update on air service at Mammoth Yosemite Airport (MMH) and the Eastern Sierra Regional Airport (BIH).

Executive Director John Urdi gave an update on air service and announced that the Part 139 Airport Certification had been issued to the Eastern Sierra Regional Airport (BIH). Mr. Urdi reported service at BIH would start on December 19th with flights seven days a week from Denver, Los Angeles and San Francisco through United Airlines and service at Mammoth Yosemite Airport (MMH) would start on November 24th with service provided by Advanced Airlines from Carlsbad, Hawthorne, Los Angeles and Burbank and said that he was working with businesses to try to procure discounts for locals flying to those destinations. Mr. Urdi gave an update and gave an update on shuttle service from BIH to Mammoth.

There was discussion between Mr. Urdi and members of the Board.

6.6 Shuttle Transportation Request for Qualification (RFQ)

Request for qualifications to provide shuttle services to bring commercial airline passengers from Eastern Sierra Regional Airport (BIH) to Mammoth Lakes was sent to transit companies on Friday, September 24 with a deadline for response of October 15.

MLT will provide a minimum revenue guarantee (MRG) of up to \$200,000 for this service based on operating revenues, less expenses. Requesting Board approval to use up to \$200,000 from TBID reserves (if needed) to provide service.

- **Board discussion and VOTE to approve MRG funding allocation.**

Executive Director John Urdi outlined the information in Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for door to door shuttle transportation from the Eastern Sierra Regional Airport (BIH) to Mammoth Lakes and discussed a proposed Minimum Revenue Guarantee (MRG) in the amount of up to \$200,000.

There was discussion between Mr. Urdi and members of the Board.

Moved by Treasurer John Morris
Seconded by Vice Chair Pat Foster

Approve use of up to \$200,000 from Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) surplus and/or reserves to provide a Minimum Revenue Guarantee (MRG) for shuttle service from the Eastern Sierra Regional Airport (BIH) to Mammoth utilizing available excess TBID funds prior to pulling any funds from reserves, pending receipt of all required documentation from the company that is selected.

For (7): Chair Jeremy Goico, Vice Chair Pat Foster, Treasurer John Morris, Board Member Lynda Salcido, Board Member Eric Clark, Board Member John Mendel, and Board Member Larry Crabb

Absent (1): Secretary Jess Karell

Carried (7 to 0)

6.7 Financial Reports

Executive Director John Urdi outlined the information in the Financial Reports.

There was discussion between Mr. Urdi and members of the Board.

7. DEPARTMENT UPDATES

7.1 International Sales

Director Of Sales and International Marketing Michael Vanderhurst gave an update on international sales activities.

Mr. Vanderhurst reported that the Biden Administration had announced that our borders would open to fully vaccinated citizens from thirty-three countries including the United Kingdom (UK), European Union (EU), India and China and spoke about the rapid increase in flight bookings to California upon the announcement. He said that he had attended Visit California's International Committee meeting today and said that they were able to reopen some of their international offices. He said that Australia would allow long haul visitation in December and reported that he and Director of Marketing Brian Wright represented MLT at the U.S. Travel Association's International Pow Wow (IPW) Conference in Las Vegas last month and that he would start traveling internationally again for travel trade training and appointments.

There was discussion between Mr. Vanderhurst and members of the Board.

7.2 Communications

Director of Communications Lara Kaylor gave an update on recent public relations activities. Ms. Kaylor outlined the information in the Peloton Magazine online piece about Mammoth Lakes and said that it was the first of a three part series on Mammoth Lakes. She announced that the air service marketing campaign had kicked off.

There was discussion between Ms. Kaylor, Executive Director John Urdi and members of the Board.

7.3 Marketing

Director of Marketing Brian Wright gave an update on Marketing.

There was discussion between Mr. Wright and members of the Board.

7.4 Digital Marketing

Senior Content Marketing Manager Meghan Miranda gave an update on recent website activity.

There was discussion between Ms. Miranda and members of the Board.

7.5 Special Events

No Special Events report was given.

7.6 Local Marketing

Local Marketing Manager Rebecca Davison gave an update on recent local marketing activities. Ms. Davison reported that an air service mailer would go out from Lee Vining to Big Pine with information regarding charter air service and introducing a locals discount code on those flights.

Brian Wright spoke about the Yiftee eGift Card program and discussed efforts by staff to encourage more local businesses to participate in the program

There was discussion between staff and members of the Board.

7.7 Social Media

Social Media Coordinator Sarah Wallock gave an update on recent social media activity.

There was discussion between Ms. Wallock and members of the Board.

8. OTHER STANDING UPDATES

8.1 Mammoth Resorts Update - Eric Clark

Board Member Eric Clark reported that October bookings for Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA) would be down by about 5% to their budget and a little slower mid-week due to the lack of international travelers. Mr. Clark spoke about challenges staff had faced when processing Yiftee eGift Card purchases but would continue to work with it. He reported that MMSA realized an approximate 45% decline versus projections in September due to the forest closures but said that they were still up overall compared to last year. He discussed housing challenges for MMSA employees and reported that they currently had one hundred twenty winter employees on their employee housing wait list and said he had seen a shirt being worn in Town branded as IKON that reads "IKON not find a place to live". Mr. Clark announced that opening day for the Mountain was scheduled for November 13th. He said that the Part 139 Airport Certification announcement was a big deal that had taken seven years to accomplish and that he was thrilled to see the progress and expected to see more flights over the next five years.

Mr. Clark reported that the MMSA's COVID regulations would move along with federal, state and local guidelines and that they would not impose any additional requirements above our local requirements, and that their philosophy was to protect their employees first while offering as much freedom on the guest side as possible.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

8.2 Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce Update - Jeremy Goico

Chair Jeremy Goico announced that nominations for the Chamber's Business Excellence awards would close tomorrow and that the Business Excellence Award Gala was scheduled to be held on November 10th at Jimmy's Taverna. Chair Goico reported that there would be a Power Lunch on October 19th featuring Malcolm North, Research Ecologist for the Forest Service's Pacific Southwest Research Station, a Women in Business event on October 14th featuring Brene' Brown who would present Part 2 of The Power of Vulnerability, and a Restaurant Association Meeting on October 18th. He said that the November Customer Service training presented by Workshop Facilitator Jo Zulaica would take place on November 16th at noon for management employees and at 4:00 p.m. for Frontline staff, and a second presentation for frontline staff would be held on November 17th at 9:00 a.m.

8.3 Town Council Update - Lynda Salcido

Board Member Lynda Salcido gave updates on The Parcel, the Community Recreation Center (CRC), temporary road closures due to weather, improvements on the Multi-Use Paths (MUPs), and bathrooms being installed at some of the trailheads. She reported that the Town was working on improving community outreach and would be providing a Bear update twice a month. Ms. Salcido said that Town Council would discuss housing at tonight's meeting.

Executive Director John Urdi reported that Red's Meadow would close on October 31st for scheduled road construction, but could close earlier if necessary due to snow.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:06 p.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled to be held on November 3, 2021.

Angela Plaisted, Assistant Clerk