



## **Mammoth Lakes Tourism Board**

### **Minutes of Regular Meeting**

**September 6, 2023, 1:00 p.m.**

**437 Old Mammoth Road, Suite Z, Mammoth Lakes**

Members Present: Chair Pat Foster, Vice Chair Eric Clark, Treasurer John Morris, Secretary John Mendel, Board Member Bill Sauser, Board Member Jess Karell

Members Absent: Board Member Darlene Magner

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#### **1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chair Pat Foster called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. in the Council Chambers located at 437 Old Mammoth Road.

#### **2. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

Board Member Jess Karell said that the Town had been busy over the weekend and the Village had a great event in spite of the weather.

Chair Pat Foster reported that summer service with Advanced Airlines (AA) ended on Monday. Chair Foster said that AA wanted to have a debrief on the summer service and to work on a plan to make this winter amazing. He said that the partnership with AA was great. He thanked the Mountain for their efforts with the Mammoth Motocross Event and reported that there was a great turnout and that the event was a success.

Executive Director John Urdi congratulated Chair Foster on his performance at the Motocross event.

Treasurer John Morris thanked all the event producers for continuing to provide great events, and said that the backcountry was incredible right now. Mr. Morris said that there would be a joint meeting between the Restaurant and Lodging Associations Monday at 3:30 p.m. at Black Velvet to discuss the Obstacle Course Race World Championships (OCR WC) and the Buoy Recycling program.

Secretary John Mendel reported that he had run into two difference groups of international visitors recently who spoke about a great drive package they had purchased in Europe inclusive of air travel and car rentals with preplanned destinations for them to visit including Mammoth.

Vice Chair Eric Clark reported that he and Executive Director John Urdi had attended yesterday's Inyo County Board of Supervisors meeting along with their air service planners to provide an update on air service and governance.

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

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no comments given at this time.

**4. CONSENT AGENDA**

This item was taken out of order.

Moved by Board Member Bill Sauser

Seconded by Secretary John Mendel

Approve the Consent Agenda.

For (6): Chair Pat Foster, Vice Chair Eric Clark, Treasurer John Morris, Secretary John Mendel, Board Member Bill Sauser, and Board Member Jess Karell

Absent (1): Board Member Darlene Magner

Carried (6 to 0)

**4.1 Approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 2, 2023.**

**4.2 Approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of August 24, 2023.**

## **5. POLICY MATTERS**

### **5.1 Obstacle Course Race World Championships (OCR WC) Update - Receive information from the OCR team on the upcoming October event.**

Executive Director John Urdi introduced Spartan Director of Business Development Cherie Bortnick. Ms. Bortnick provided background information on the Obstacle Course Race World Championships (OCR WC) event and outlined the information in the OCR WC Mammoth PowerPoint presentation.

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

### **5.2 Fall 2023 Marketing and Stewardship Campaign - Review of fall season messaging and communications efforts**

Marketing Manager Emily Bryant outlined the information in the MLT Fall Marketing Campaign PowerPoint presentation.

There was discussion between staff and members of the Board.

### **5.3 MLT Board Seat Nominations**

**Review recommendations from the Ad Hoc Nominating Committee to add Cristi Quesada-Costa (At-Large) and Kirk Wallace (Restaurant). Board to discuss and vote on Board seat nominations.**

Chair Pat Foster spoke about the process the Ad Hoc Nominating Committee went through in order to arrive at their recommendations to appoint Cristi Quesada-Costa and Kirk Wallace to the Board.

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

Moved by Treasurer John Morris  
Seconded by Secretary John Mendel

Appoint Cristi Quesada-Costa to the At-Large seat and Kirk Wallace to the Restaurant seat on the Board.

For (6): Chair Pat Foster, Vice Chair Eric Clark, Treasurer John Morris, Secretary John Mendel, Board Member Bill Sauser, and Board Member Jess Karell

Absent (1): Board Member Darlene Magner

Carried (6 to 0)

#### **5.4 MLT Board Bylaw Review**

**Recommendations for adjustments from the Ad Hoc Bylaw Review Committee. Board to discuss and vote on recommendations pending legal review and approval.**

Vice Chair Pat Foster and Executive Director John Urdi outlined the potential revisions that the Bylaws Review Ad Hoc Committee recommended be made to the Bylaws.

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

Staff was given direction to present the revisions discussed today to legal counsel for approval and to bring a final draft of the revised Bylaws back to the Board at a future meeting for review and approval.

#### **5.5 Financial Reports**

**Receive an update regarding the financial health of the Mammoth Lakes Tourism and the results of the previous month for Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT), Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) and current account balances.**

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

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

### **6. DEPARTMENT UPDATES**

A brief recap of past, current, and future efforts of each department.

#### **6.1 International Sales**

There was no International Sales report given.

## **6.2 Communications**

Executive Director John Urdi gave an update on recent communications activities, and media placements. Mr. Urdi gave an update on the Clean Up the Lake (CUTL) program and reported that there would be a CUTL clean up at Lake George during the last two weeks of September. Mr. Urdi said that MLT had committed \$100,000 to the upcoming Lakes Basin cleanup events over the next four years and would start a matching fund program to assist with the rest to raise the necessary funding to complete the work. He reported that Sierra Nevada Resort would change its name to Outbound Mammoth and that Harmony Brazilian Grill and Bar would move into the old Bleu Restaurant location.

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

## **6.3 Marketing**

Director of Marketing Sarah Winters introduced herself and gave an update on marketing events and activities.

Executive Director John Urdi spoke about issues MLT was having with their Geo-tracking provider.

There was discussion between staff and members of the Board.

## **6.4 Local Marketing and Social Media**

Marketing Manager Emily Bryant gave an update on recent local marketing activities. Ms. Bryant said that she had spent time with Colin West from CUTL while at the Bart Hall Fishing Show in Long Beach recently and encouraged the Board to tune into the September Community Coffee to hear from Mr. West. She said that the new occupancy report was up and running and requested that members of the lodging community sign up for that email which also included information about other important happenings for the business community. She said that booking for winter service through Advanced Airlines (AA) and United Airlines (UA) was now available and said that the MMHLOCAL discount code would still work for AA and that they were still working on getting PINS for UA local discounts. Ms. Bryant reported that Bishop Airport Researchers would be out again this winter and said that they would work with the Bishop Chamber of Commerce to utilize some of their employees. She thanked Mono County and Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA) for their assistance which would enable MLT to get their Visitor Profile Study

out soon. She announced the following upcoming events: Gran Fondo, Mammoth Tuff, the Yoga Festival, the Outbound Concert with Andrew Bird, Trail Fest, and lastly said that Trashy Thursdays would end with Mammoth Facelift on October 1st.

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

## **6.5 Digital Marketing**

Samantha Lindbergh gave an update on digital marketing and social media activities.

Marketing Manager Emily Bryant provided information regarding the Reds Meadow Road closure schedule and mentioned that the Starkweather Trail to Reds Meadow would also be closed.

There was discussion between staff and members of the Board.

## **7. OTHER STANDING UPDATES**

### **7.1 Mammoth Resorts Update - Eric Clark**

Board Member Eric Clark gave an update on Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA) news, activities and operations. Mr. Clark announced that the last day for the Bike Park and the Gondola to be open would be September 17th, and provided an update on capital projects. He said that the lodging booking pace for September was 18% ahead of last year and 92% ahead of 2021, and October and November were 17% ahead of last year, with December trending downward at this point. He thanked MLT for marketing and pushing September and October visits.

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

### **7.2 Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce Update - Jess Karell**

Board Member Jess Karell gave an update on recent Chamber events and activities. Ms. Karell reported that the Chamber hosted Congressman Kevin Kiley on Saturday for a roundtable with members of the community, followed by a tour of Mammoth lead by Michael Vanderhurst. She said the Chamber was working on supplemental funding for snow removal and damages throughout Town from the past winter which the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was unable to pay for at this time. She announced that the Business Gala Awards Event would take place on November 1st, and said that the Chamber had two open seats on

their Board due to a recent amendment to their bylaws increasing the number of seats on the Board from nine to eleven.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

Ms. Karell left the meeting at 3:04 p.m.

### **7.3 Town Council Update - Bill Sauser**

Board Member Bill Sauser gave an update on Town Council news, activities and operations. Mr. Sauser reported that he had attended the Chamber's event with Congressman Kevin Kiley followed by a trolley tour and invited Congressman Kiley to a snowmobile tour in the winter. He spoke about the importance of the Eastern Sierra Climate & Communities Resilience Project (ESCCRP) a.k.a. The Donut Project, and said that there would be an item on tonight's Town Council meeting agenda with regard to an increase in parking ticket fines from \$45 to \$110, as well as a presentation to consider updating the Town logo.

Executive Director John Urdi asked how MLT could help with the Donut Project.

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

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:09 p.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled to be held on October 4, 2023.

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Angela Plaisted, Assistant Clerk