



Mammoth Lakes Tourism Board

Minutes of Regular Meeting

**November 6, 2024, 1:00 p.m.
437 Old Mammoth Road, Suite Z, Mammoth Lakes**

Members Present: Chair Pat Foster, Vice Chair Eric Clark, Secretary John Mendel, Board Member John Wentworth, Board Member Tom Parker, Board Member Kirk Wallace, Board Member Cristi Quesada-Costa, Board Member Mary Beth Ericson

Members Absent: Treasurer John Morris

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.

Board Member Tom Parker announced that he would participate in the meeting under the "just cause" provision of Assembly Bill (AB) 2449 due to a contagious illness.

Board Member Kirk Wallace requested permission from the Board to participate in the meeting under the "emergency circumstances" provision of AB 2449 due to recovery from surgery.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

Moved by Secretary John Mendel

Seconded by Vice Chair Eric Clark

Approve Board Member Kirk Wallace's participation in today's meeting under the "emergency circumstances" provision of AB 2449 due to recovery from surgery.

For (7): Chair Pat Foster, Vice Chair Eric Clark, Secretary John Mendel, Board Member John Wentworth, Board Member Tom Parker, Board Member Cristi Quesada-Costa, and Board Member Mary Beth Ericson

Absent (2): Treasurer John Morris, and Board Member Kirk Wallace

Carried (7 to 0)

2. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Chair Pat Foster invited everyone to attend a Chamber mixer co-hosted by the Town of Mammoth Lakes and Hot Creek Aviation at the Mammoth Yosemite Airport on November 19th at 5:00 p.m. in the terminal building.

Board Member Mary Beth Ericson reported that lodging occupancy was lagging although they were still seeing higher average daily rates (ADRs). Ms. Ericson said that she was involved in the Mammoth High School (MHS) Booster Club and said the Husky Fest fundraiser brought in \$80k and the 50th Anniversary Celebration raised \$20k. She announced that the next fundraiser would be the Christmas tree sales which would take place in the Outbound parking lot from November 30th through December 24th, and said that this year it would have more of a festival atmosphere, including photos with Santa, and beverages for purchase. She said that the MHS Girls Volleyball Team lost their game last night, however, the Varsity Football Team made the playoffs and had a home game next week.

Board Member Cristi Quesada-Costa said her restaurant held a successful Halloween event and that they were closed for the shoulder season until November 13th. Ms. Quesada-Costa announced that she would host a sold out murder mystery night at her restaurant on November 14th.

Board Member John Wentworth reported that Measure M, the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District Special Tax for Emergency Response and Fire Protection Services was on track to pass, Measure L, the Town of Mammoth Lakes General Tax which would raise Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) by 2% was on track to pass, and Measure K, Mono County's General Tax which would raise Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) from 12% on 15% was also on track to pass, and Measure J, Mammoth Unified School District's School Safety and Improvement bonds was lagging, however, there were still about fourteen hundred votes left to count. Mr.

Wentworth said that overall he felt voters were willing to trust new leadership. He congratulated the Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce for their public support of Measure L.

Board Member Tom Parker reported that the hospital was finishing up the south parking lot project and planned to break ground for the north wing in May. Mr. Parker discussed past challenges staffing the Physical Therapy Department and announced that they had recently hired two new Physical Therapists and should be fully staffed by December.

Board Member Kirk Wallace said that restaurants in the area had been slow recently compared to this time last year.

There was discussion between President and CEO John Urdi and members of the Board.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no comments given at this time.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Vice Chair Eric Clark
Seconded by Secretary John Mendel

Approve the Consent Agenda.

For (8): Chair Pat Foster, Vice Chair Eric Clark, Secretary John Mendel, Board Member John Wentworth, Board Member Tom Parker, Board Member Kirk Wallace, Board Member Cristi Quesada-Costa, and Board Member Mary Beth Ericson

Absent (1): Treasurer John Morris

Carried (8 to 0)

4.1 Approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 4, 2024

5. POLICY MATTERS

5.1 MLT Fiscal Year 2024-25 Media Plan - Presentation on 2024-25 media planning

Vice President and CEO John Urdi outlined the information in the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Media Plan.

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

5.2 Winter Air Service Update - Overview of winter 2024-25 service for both MMH and BIH

Vice President and CEO John Urdi outlined the information in the Air Service Update.

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

5.3 Spartan Race 2025 - Announcement of Spartan Super World Championships coming October 2025

President and CEO John Urdi provided an update on the Obstacle Course Race World Championship (OCRWC) events this year and last year and announced that the Spartan Super World Championships would come to Mammoth Lakes in October 2025, rather than the OCRWC event.

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

5.4 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), the Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) and current account balances

President and CEO 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

Vice President, Global Tourism Michael Vanderhurst gave an update on international sales activities. Mr. Vanderhurst reported that MLT had hosted a domestic writer from San Diego Beer News recently who experienced the John Beer Trail which included all the craft breweries from Bishop up through Bridgeport and also the June Lake Autumn Beer Festival. He said they partnered with Visit California to host an Australian influencer as well as a Canadian influencer who was a TV personality in British Columbia, both were here for our fall colors. He also provided an

update on The Crib, and said that they had partnered with Brand USA on two sales missions last month, and had joined Brand USA at a travel trade show in the UK, and partnered with Alterra at the London Ski Show.

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

6.2 Community Engagement

Vice President, Community Engagement Betsy Truax gave an update on recent community engagement activities. Ms. Truax reported that the Special Events Funding application period would open on November 15th at 8:00 a.m. and would close at 5:00 p.m. on December 13th, and thanked Board Member Mary Beth Ericson for joining the Special Events Committee. She said that MLT's Annual Report was at the printer now and that a PDF version would also be available. She announced that a new resident sentiment survey was in the works and discussed changes to the monthly Community Coffee event and said that the next event would be held on November 21st and would include updates from Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA). She said that she was working with the Town to set up some free community skate nights, the first of which would take place tonight. She announced that MLT would be involved with the Tree Lighting event at the Community Recreation Center on December 6th, and said that she was gathering input for MLT's Community Engagement Plan.

There was discussion between staff and members of the Board.

6.3 Digital Marketing

Digital Marketing Manager Samantha Lindberg provided an update on digital marketing efforts and social media activity. Ms. Lindberg spoke about the transition of MLT's Obstacle Course Race World Championship webpage event to Spartan Super World Championships and gave an update on influencer activity at The Crib.

6.4 Content Marketing

Content Marketing Manager Laura Wattles provided an update on content marketing efforts. Ms. Wattles reported that she was working with the team on updating the Visitor Guide and said that it would be at the printer by the end of the week and available to the public by Thanksgiving. She said that after a longer than usual season, MLT's Fall Color marketing campaign had wrapped up.

President and CEO John Urdi discussed the locals' discount programs for air service at both Mammoth Yosemite Airport and Bishop Airport.

There was discussion between staff and members of the Board.

7. OTHER STANDING UPDATES

7.1 Mammoth Resorts Update - Eric Clark

Vice Chair Eric Clark gave an update on Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA) news, activities and operations. Mr. Clark announced that Opening Day was scheduled for November 15th with Chairs 3, 6, and Gondola 1 running and possibly Chairs 11 and 2. He said that the Coaster would open next weekend, just for the weekends, and tubing was expected to open on the 22nd or 23rd, with the lodge tentatively receiving its certificate of occupancy on December 20th. He reported that Chairs 3 and 6 had been refurbished, and that Chair 1 should be in service by the 20th. He provided an update on the lodging booking pace, spoke about the Mountain's promotional offers, and said that the ski school was booking well.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

7.2 Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce Update - Tom Parker

Board Member Tom Parker gave an update on recent Chamber events and activities. Mr. Parker thanked Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce Communications Manager Gina VanNest for providing him with Chamber information to share with the Board. He announced that the Business Excellence Gala would take place on Thursday at Canyon Lodge, the Business After Hours event hosted by the Town and Hot Creek Aviation would take place on the 19th at the Airport, two free frontline customer service workshops were coming up, one would take place on December 22nd from 4:00 p.m.- 6:00 p.m. and the other on December 3rd from 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. at The Village, and a customer service Power Lunch for business managers and owners would take place on December 2nd from noon - 2:00 p.m. in the Mountainside Conference Room at Main Lodge. Mr. Parker said that he was proud of the team at the Hospital for the work they had done over the past several years with regard to how they had managed their funds which enabled them to have reserves to fund two thirds of their current project. He said that they would issue revenue bonds for the other third of the costs.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

7.3 Town Council Update - John Wentworth

Board Member John Wentworth gave an update on Town Council news, activities and operations. Mr. Wentworth provided a National election update and said that some of the changes may affect our community, such as the threat of mass deportations, and said that he would look to the Board for advice on how to navigate some of the potential challenges that could come up.

8. ADJOURNMENT

President and CEO John Urdi and members of the Board had a discussion around rescheduling the December 4th meeting due to Mr. Urdi being at a conference out of the area at that time. The meeting was tentatively rescheduled to December 9th, with additional options to be sent out by Mr. Urdi.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Angela Plaisted, Assistant Clerk