



## **Mammoth Lakes Tourism Board**

### **Minutes of Regular Meeting**

**March 19, 2025, 1:00 p.m.**

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

Members Present: Chair Pat Foster, Treasurer John Morris, 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: Vice Chair Eric Clark

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

Chair Pat Foster called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. in the Council Chambers located at 437 Old Mammoth Road.

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

Treasurer John Morris said that the recent higher snow levels had helped with lodging numbers, and that bookings looked decent through Easter. He announced that the Snowcreek Golf Course would be open this summer and would be run by Sierra Star and that he hoped the course would be open by Memorial Day.

Chair Pat Foster reported that he and Vice President, Community Engagement Betsy Truax had been attending the Town Council meetings to provide updates and would continue to do so. Chair Foster said that he and President and CEO John Urdi had recently attended an Inyo County Board of Supervisors meeting to assist with any questions during an Air Service presentation given by Public

Works Deputy Director, Airports Ashley Helms and Chief Administrative Office Nate Greenberg. He said that he joined the MLT team for the Visit California Outlook Forum. He thanked the team for letting him attend with them, spoke about some of the topics that were discussed, and said that everyone had been experiencing the same tourism related challenges as we were in Mammoth.

Board Member John Wentworth reported that Visit California had published their regional strategies and that they were open for public comment through the end of March.

Board Member Cristi Quesada Costa joined the meeting at 1:14 p.m.

Ms. Quesada Costa reported that Sundays had been busier than usual over the past month and asked if there had been any changes in lodging reservations.

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

### **3. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Town of Mammoth Lakes (TOML) Town Manager Rob Patterson provided an update on the items that were on tonight's Town Council agenda including a detailed look at the Town's budget.

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

### **4. CONSENT AGENDA**

Moved by Treasurer John Morris

Seconded by Secretary John Mendel

Approve the Consent Agenda.

For (8): Chair Pat Foster, Treasurer John Morris, 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): Vice Chair Eric Clark

Carried (8 to 0)

**4.1 Approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of February 18, 2025.**

**4.2 Approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of February 19, 2025.**

## **5. POLICY MATTERS**

### **5.1 Presentation from Mammoth Hospital CEO Tom Parker - Brief update on Mammoth Hospital North Wing project**

Mammoth Hospital CEO Tom Parker outlined the information in the Mammoth Hospital Presentation.

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

### **5.2 MLT Strategy Documents - Review and discussion on MLT's 2025-2027 strategic direction and planning calendar. Board to provide feedback and vote to approve strategic direction.**

President and CEO John Urdi outlined the information in the MLT Draft Strategic Plan.

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

Moved by Secretary John Mendel  
Seconded by Treasurer John Morris

Approve Strategic Direction.

For (8): Chair Pat Foster, Treasurer John Morris, 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): Vice Chair Eric Clark

Carried (8 to 0)

### **5.3 Bluesapalooza Funding Discussion - Board discussion, consideration, and possible vote on additional funding for Bluesapalooza**

Board Member John Wentworth announced that there would be a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at 3:00 p.m. today at the Innsbruck Apartments.

President and CEO John Urdi spoke about the request MLT had received for additional funding for the Bluesapalooza event.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Omega Events Inc. President Rich Sherman provided additional information about Bluesapalooza.

Assistant Clerk Angela Plaisted summarized a written comment received via email from Bluesapalooza Nonprofit Organization Coordinator Rich Boccia which discussed the history of event venues in Town and suggested creation of a committee to explore the option of having the Bluesapalooza Festival hosted in partnership with the Town and MLT in 2026 at the Bell Shaped Parcel and that it moved toward the concept of being named Mammoth's Central Park.

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

Moved by Treasurer John Morris  
Seconded by Secretary John Mendel

Approve one-time additional funding in the amount of \$25k with the understanding that Bluesapalooza would provide MLT a detailed report of how the \$25k was spent and also provide a post event report on the Return on Investment (ROI) to the best of their ability figured only Bluesapalooza's ROI.

For (5): Treasurer John Morris, Secretary John Mendel, Board Member Tom Parker, Board Member Kirk Wallace, and Board Member Cristi Quesada-Costa

Against (3): Chair Pat Foster, Board Member John Wentworth, and Board Member Mary Beth Ericson

Absent (1): Vice Chair Eric Clark

Carried (5 to 3)

**5.4 Winter Air Service Update - Overview of Winter 2024-25 service for both MMH and BIH**

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

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

## **5.5 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), 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 Community Engagement**

Vice President, Community Engagement Betsy Truax gave an update on recent community engagement activities. Ms. Truax said that she had received a report of the comments from the Resident Sentiment Survey and would present it at the next meeting and possibly at the March 27th Town Council meeting. She announced that this month's Community Coffee speaker would be State Assemblyman David Tangipa and that the last free Community Skate Night would take place on April 2nd. She said that she had been in discussions with Board Member and Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA) Chief Operating Officer Eric Clark regarding special events venues.

There was discussion between staff and members of the Board.

### **6.2 International**

Vice President, Global Tourism Michael Vanderhurst gave an update on international sales activities. Mr. Vanderhurst reported that MLT had hosted influencers from China and Brazil as well as Familiarization (Fam) groups from Australia and New Zealand and acknowledged Outbound Mammoth for their lodging support for the Fam visit. He said they would host a German Fam visit starting tonight in partnership with Alterra and Mammoth Resorts, and said that MLT would be joining the State of California for a large Pan-Euro sales mission.

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

### **6.3 Marketing**

Vice President Marketing, Sarah Winters gave an update on marketing events and activities. Ms. Winters said that air surveys were continuing at the Bishop and MMH Airports and reported that paid media for special events would push out in April.

### **6.4 Digital Marketing**

Digital Marketing Manager Samantha Lindberg provided an update on digital marketing efforts and social media activity. Ms. Lindberg reported that MLT would create an online Summer Ready Guide this year and that the next video in the "It's a Mammoth Thing" series *Mammoth Tap*, featuring LA Kings Captain Anže Kopitar would launch this week.

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

### **6.5 Local Marketing**

Marketing Manager Emily Bryant gave an update on recent local marketing activities. Ms. Bryant reported that the event funding discussions had been finalized and that twenty-seven events had been funded. She said that more information could be found on MLT's Community Page and thanked the Special Events Committee for their efforts. She also reported that MLT was working with Visit California on a Tourism Exchange program and said details were available on MLT's Community Page.

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

### **6.6 Content Marketing**

Board Member John Wentworth left the meeting at 2:56 p.m.

Content Marketing Manager Laura Wattles provided an update on content marketing efforts including the release of the season's first Fishing newsletter in anticipation of the upcoming fishing opener. Ms. Wattles reported that she had worked with the Town to create graphics for the LA Kings Road Trip event partnership and also to create a stewardship program for Dog Ambassadors including dog bandanas for their Host Hounds.

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

## **6.7 Communications and PR**

Public Relations Manager Ally Watson provided an update on communications and public relations efforts. Ms. Watson reported that MLT had recently hosted four media visits with journalists from the SF Gate and the Boston Globe with a focus on Mammoth Lakes as a versatile travel designation and said that MLT staff and journalists from SF Gate had toured Housing Now projects with TOML Director of Community and Economic Development Nolan Bobroff.

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

## **7. OTHER STANDING UPDATES**

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

There was no Mammoth Resorts update given.

### **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 announced the following upcoming events: Women in Business Speed Mentoring at the Library on March 24th, free sessions for local businesses with Joseph Bogorad providing advice on how to promote their business through social media at the Library on March 26th, Power Lunch discussing smart financial strategies with Colin Fernie and Eric Wasserman, and Business After Hours with Mammoth Hospital CEO Tom Parker providing a presentation on the Hospital's North Wing Project on March 15th at Elevate at Cerro Coso College. He announced that a press release went out yesterday announcing that Chris Benchetler and Kimmy Fasani would be the Grand Marshals of this year's 4th of July Parade, and recognized President and CEO Brianna Goico and staff for their work putting the parade together. He said this year's parade theme would be Art and Nature to celebrate how art, beauty, and creativity all come together in Mammoth.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

### **7.3 Town Council Update - John Wentworth**

There was no Town Council report given.

President and CEO John Urdi directed members of the Board to page 2 of the Air Service update to show new graphics that were not pointed out during the Item 5.4 discussion.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

President and CEO John Urdi reported that he would be out of town for the Cal Travels Advocacy Day on May 21st and said that he would like to move the May meeting from the 21st to the 28th.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 3:06 p.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled to be held on April 16, 2025.

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Angela Plaisted, Assistant Clerk