



Mammoth Lakes Tourism Board Special Meeting

Minutes of Special Meeting

May 30, 2025, 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 John Wentworth, Board Member Kirk Wallace, Board Member Cristi Quesada-Costa, Board Member Mary Beth Ericson

Members Absent: Board Member Tom Parker

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 Kirk Wallace announced that he would participate in the meeting under the "Just Cause" provisions of Government Code Section 54953 due to childcare needs.

2. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

There were no Board Member reports given.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce (MLCC) Interim Director David Eichman provided an update on Chamber activities. Mr. Eichman announced the following events: June 3rd, Non-profit Coalition Mixer at the Mono Arts Council (MAC) Center at 5:00 p.m., June 19th, Appliances of Mammoth Ribbon Cutting

Ceremony at 4:00 p.m., and June 24th, Business After Hours partnership with MLT and Visit California at the Welcome Center at 5:00 p.m. He also provided an update on the 4th of July Parade and announced that High Country Lumber (HCL) would be the Lead Sponsor and that Chris Benchetler and Kimmy Fasani would serve as the Grand Marshals. He said float registration had launched and that they hoped to have fifty-five floats this year.

Mark Deeds spoke about MLT's special event funding and voiced concerns about the disproportionate amount of funding provided to the Obstacle Course Race (OCR), now Spartan, event and cautioned the Board to revisit the funding.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Treasurer John Morris

Seconded by Secretary John Mendel

Approve the Consent Agenda.

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

Absent (1): Board Member Tom Parker

Carried (8 to 0)

4.1 Approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 16, 2025

5. POLICY MATTERS

5.1 Presentation of Fiscal Year 2025-26 Strategic Plan and Budget - Staff presentations by department of 2025-26 plans and high-level budgets, Board to Approve Strategic Plan and Budgets

President and CEO John Urdi, Vice President, Community Engagement Betsy Truax, Vice President, Marketing Sarah Winters, Digital Marketing Manager Samantha Lindberg, Content Marketing Manager Laura Wattles, Public Relations Manager Ally Watson, and Vice President, Global Tourism Michael Vanderhurst outlined the information in the Draft MLT Fiscal Year 2025/26 Strategic Plan and Budgets.

There was discussion between staff and members of the Board.

Moved by Treasurer John Morris
Seconded by Secretary John Mendel

Approve the Fiscal Year 2025/26 Strategic Plan and Budgets.

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

Absent (1): Board Member Tom Parker

Carried (8 to 0)

5.2 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. OTHER STANDING UPDATES

6.1 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 the Mountain would close on June 15th and said that the Gondola would be up and running for the last run celebration. He said that the Bike Park would increase its number of open trails soon and said that Woolly's was still under construction building a new activity that should be completed next weekend which would include a ropes course attached to a tree track. He also said they were building a net experience and a zipline that would pass over tubing lanes. He noted that he was surprised to learn that over 50% of the guests at Woolly's during the winter did not have a lift ticket or IKON pass.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

6.2 Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce Update – Tom Parker

MLCC Interim Director David Eichman provided an update on Chamber activities during public comment.

6.3 Town Council Update – John Wentworth

Board Member John Wentworth gave an update on Town Council news, activities and operations. Mr. Wentworth spoke about Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the importance of MLT considering an AI policy. He discussed items that would be presented at the next Town Council meeting and spoke about Federal budget cuts and how they trickled down to the local level. He discussed the recent Inn Fire and the mutual aid the County had received to help extinguish it. Mr. Wentworth said he had attended a meeting with State Assemblyman David Tangipa recently and reported that there had been an article in the SF Gate about Mammoth Lakes and said that it was helpful in getting information out to state and federal representatives about what a destination community had to do to get through tough times. He recognized Whitebark Institute for their fuels reduction work, said that the Visit California public comment response data had not been shared back with the public, and provided an update on the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership (ESSRP) activities and said that they were tracking legislation on land management and the recreation environment in great detail.

Chair Pat Foster said that Town of Mammoth Lakes (TOML) Town Manager Rob Patterson gave a presentation on the Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) at the recent Restaurant Association meeting and said that some members of the Association had requested more tourism promotion now that business was softening, rather than adding bathrooms and kiosks, which had previously been requested when business was booming. Chair Foster said they also asked how they could participate in the process and interact with members of the Town Council. He reported that he and Vice President, Community Engagement Betsy Truax planned to do outreach related to TBID with local restaurant owners.

Secretary John Mendel left the meeting at 2:48 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

MLCC Interim Director David Eichman said that some of the concerns Chair Foster spoke about had also come from retail businesses, not just restaurants, and said that the decrease in visitation had the potential to affect Chamber membership renewals. He also addressed AI comments made by Board Member Wentworth and said that the Chamber had received an email today from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce requesting that they sign onto a letter for a ten year moratorium preventing any local or state municipality from regulating AI.

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

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:53 p.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled to be held on June 18, 2025.

Angela Plaisted
Administrative Coordinator