

South Lake Tahoe Tourism Improvement District (SLTTID)
Board of Directors Meeting
Tahoe Lakeshore Lodge, 1:00 pm, Thursday, June 25, 2026

A. Call to Order

Board Chairman Rich Bodine called the meeting to order at 1:04 pm.

B. Board members present: Rich Bodine, Hotel Azure; Doug Williams, Cedar Pines Resort; Jennifer Cewinski, Stardust and Americana; Nicolas Carta, Fireside Lodge, and Playpark Lodge; Deepak Sharma, Tahoe Hospitality; Brandon Crudup, Playpark Hospitality; and Drew Phillips, The Landing Resort & Spa and Lisa Gallup, Tahoe Lakeshore Lodge & Spa .

Board members absent: Melissa Fritsche, Marriott Grand Residence and Timberlodge.

C. Introduction of Guests: Jessica Grimes and Mike Peron, Tahoe Chamber, Carol Chaplin, Ryn Muat, and Anne Sutterfield, LTVA, Dreu Murin,

D. Approval of previous meeting minutes

A motion was made to approve the previous meeting minutes.

Moved: Doug Williams

Seconded: Jennifer Cewinski

Approved: Unanimously

E. Approval of agenda

A motion was made to approve the agenda.

Moved: Doug Williams

Seconded: Nick Carta

Approved: Unanimously

F. Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items, 5-Minute Limit). No Public Comment.

- Drew Phillips commented that Meg from Valhalla reached out regarding funding for their Summer Concert Series.
- Meg was unable to attend this meeting and will return with a formal request at a future meeting.
- The organization has historically received approximately \$5,000 in support.
- Members requested that Valhalla provide:
 - A recap of last year's results
 - Current marketing materials
 - Concert schedules/flyers for lodging properties
- Discussion noted that the concerts are viewed primarily as a community benefit rather than a significant room night generator.

AGENDA

A. Discussion/Possible Action

1. Treasurers Report

- Nick updated the board.
- [PDF of Budget](#)
- Special Projects Fund (held with LTVA): approximately \$177,000
- Operating account: approximately \$31,000
- Combined available funds: approximately \$208,900
- Outstanding Fourth of July commitments total approximately \$87,400
- Remaining Special Projects balance after obligations is approximately \$121,000
- Additional April TID revenue is expected shortly.
- Funds are being transitioned in-house rather than remaining with LTVA.
- Staff continue researching a nonprofit-compatible high-yield savings account.
- Revenue remains relatively flat year over year despite concerns about a slower winter and spring.

2. Tahoe Chamber Chili Cook-Off Proposal

- Jessica and Mike presented a proposal for a new shoulder-season event.
- Date: October 17
- Location: Golden Nugget
- Local restaurants will partner with first responder agencies in a chili cook-off.
- Charities selected by participating teams will receive proceeds.
- Includes a Toys for Tots donation drive.
- The goal is to attract visitors during the shoulder season.
- Requested \$4,000 to support out-of-market advertising.
- Board discussion: The proposal generated considerable discussion regarding whether California TID funds should support an event held on the Nevada side. Expected room night generation. Community benefit versus direct tourism impact.
- Whether Tahoe Douglas Visitors Authority should also contribute.
- Doug commented that he thinks if TDVA does not contribute \$2,000, we shouldn't give the other half.

A motion was made to contribute \$2,000 toward the Tahoe Chamber Chili Cook-Off.

Moved: Brandon Crudup

Seconded: Drew Philips

Approved: Everyone except Doug Williams

Opposed: Doug Williams

3. Heavenly Holidays, Dreu Murin

- The event has operated for approximately 15 years.
- Funding has steadily declined.
- Have gone through the LTVA funding process.
- Current requests include:
 - \$60,000 from TID
 - \$60,000 from TDVA
- Possible additional funds from Harrah/Caesars Republic if events are added on the Nevada side outside of the Heavenly Village.
- Drew said he wanted to "take the pulse" of the board on whether the event was even worth moving forward with. He described the year as a lot of work and struggle because of the limited budget and difficulty securing additional funding.
- When asked directly whether he wanted to continue producing Heavenly Holidays, Drew said he loves doing the event but needs the funding to do it. He described it as becoming "really, really hard" as budgets continue to decline and compared it to being asked to work twice as hard for half as much.
- Without additional funding, the event may need to be significantly reduced.
- Potential reductions include eliminating:
 - New Year's Eve concert
 - Fireworks programming
- While preserving:
 - Tree lighting
 - Breakfast with Santa
 - Build-A-Bear
 - Family holiday programming.
- Board members generally agreed:
 - Heavenly Holidays significantly enhances the guest experience.
 - Families expect holiday programming when visiting Tahoe.
 - Even if it is difficult to directly measure room nights, the event contributes to destination appeal and repeat visitation.
 - Front desk staff routinely direct holiday visitors to Heavenly Village because it is one of the only organized family activities during Christmas and New Year's.
 - Eliminating the event could negatively affect visitor perception of South Lake Tahoe over time, even if the impact isn't immediately measurable.
- A recurring concern was the lack of measurable data:
- Because most activities are free or unticketed, it is difficult to quantify:
 - attendance
 - visitor origin

- room nights generated
- Members acknowledged that requesting detailed metrics is reasonable but challenging for this type of community event.
- One of the strongest themes was frustration over Heavenly's reduced participation.
- Several members questioned:
 - Why does the event continue to carry the "Heavenly Holidays" name.
 - Why Heavenly Mountain Resort contributes only about \$5,000 after previously contributing significantly more.
 - Whether Heavenly Village businesses, which are viewed as major beneficiaries, should provide greater financial support.
- Carol clarified:
 - She did not believe there were "strings attached" to the base funding. Rather, the discussion had been that there could be an opportunity for additional funding if there were activations outside Heavenly Village and on the Nevada side.
 - TDVA did not require New Year's Eve programming on the Nevada side.
 - The board requested additional activation ideas and stronger supporting data.
 - Both organizations continue to view Heavenly Holidays as a valuable guest experience, even if room-night attribution remains difficult.
- Discussion about contributing to a non-profit organization. Maybe that has to change to cover costs.
- One of the central disagreements was whether Heavenly Holidays actually drives visitation and room nights.
- One board member said that after 15 years of contributing to the event, they could not attribute a single room night to someone specifically saying they came to Tahoe because Heavenly Holidays was happening. The argument was that guests may attend once they are here, but the event may not be the reason they booked the trip.
- Others pushed back strongly on that framing. Lisa commented, during the Christmas and New Year's period, families regularly ask front desk staff what there is to do, particularly on New Year's Eve. Heavenly Village and Heavenly Holidays are often the primary organized family activity staff recommend. The concern was that removing the programming might not hurt visitation immediately, but could affect the guest experience and repeat visitation in future years.
- The broader argument was that Heavenly Holidays has inherent destination and guest-experience value that is difficult to capture through traditional room-night data.

- The board expressed strong support for keeping Heavenly Holidays alive but acknowledged that the current funding model is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain. Future discussions will likely focus on:
 - Increasing contributions from Heavenly and Heavenly Village partners.
 - Better measuring event impacts.
 - Determining the appropriate balance between guest experience, community value, and tourism return on investment.
- Dreu was unclear that the LTVA and TDVA were different organizations.
- This was a “robust” discussion.
- The Board was clear that they want the full event with fireworks and the bands.
- Carol commented that the LTVA budget is usually set by May for a July start. In the last couple of years we have had to cut event funding 50%. We have to scrutinize to be fair.
- There was an Initial motion and a second, which was for \$45,000 then was changed.

A motion was made to contribute \$60,000 toward Heavenly Holidays.

Moved: Doug Williams

Seconded: Nick Carta

Approved: Unanimous

- Discussion about Labor Day Art & Music Festival
- Members confirmed that the Labor Day event has traditionally been funded by the TID, with private sponsorships supplementing the budget.
- Several board members expressed frustration that past funding presentation included:
 - 2024 dates
 - Incorrect Labor Day dates
 - Limited supporting metrics
- The discussion emphasized that future funding requests should include updated materials and clearer information.
- The board discussed what the TID funding pays for:
 - Live music and stage production
 - Labor Day fireworks
 - Overall event production costs
- Dreu Murin explained that the event could continue with a reduced budget if necessary, but it would be scaled back. The Heavenly Village Shops host roughly 42 events annually, with Labor Day serving as the major end-of-summer celebration.
- Several board members questioned whether Labor Day should receive the same level of funding as Heavenly Holidays because:

- Labor Day occurs during an already busy tourism period.
- Heavenly Holidays provides one of the few organized family experiences during Christmas and New Year's, when visitors are actively looking for activities.
- Others noted that Labor Day fireworks and entertainment have become an expected tradition and contribute to the visitor experience, even if they are not the primary reason guests travel to Tahoe.
- Discussion about how the carnival pays for itself and Dreu will backfill with private sponsorships. The headlining act will be smaller, most likely a local band.

A motion was made to contribute \$30,000 toward Labor Day Art & Music Festival

Moved: Rich Bodine
Seconded: Drew Phillips
Approved: Unanimous

- Discussion on strategy for funding events.
- The board questioned whether TID should continue funding events at historical levels without stronger performance metrics.
- Members discussed developing a more consistent process for evaluating event funding requests, including expectations for room-night impact, visitor origin, attendance, and ROI.
- There was support for helping event organizers develop better measurement tools rather than simply denying funding because data is difficult to collect.

B. LTVA Update

- Ryn brought postcards and posters with the QR code for the online music for the fireworks show. Music will also be on the radio, KRLT.
- Carol talked about the barges and how they cost more than expected. Thank you to SLTTID for your contribution. Next year we will hopefully be able to rent barges from Tahoe Keys Marina.
- There will be a \$20 discount for the Heavenly Gondola for all American Century Championship ticket holders. And Gondola will extend their hours on Friday and Saturday, July 10 & 11th, 10am - 6pm.
- Thank you for your responses to the bulletin survey asking for feedback on the bulletin.
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C. Board Member Comments

- Rich read the updates that Jerry sent over
- Updates from Jerry as the TID representative on the LTVA Board of Directors (along with Jennifer Cewinski).

- Event Funding Request/Heavenly Holidays \$60,000
 - The Board is in support of hearing a future presentation from Mr. Murin regarding expanding the Heavenly Holidays 2026 event to include additional partners and sponsorship opportunities (i.e. Casinos, other business areas). This expansion proposal would not sacrifice the current Heavenly Holidays event and would improve the event in terms of quality, breadth of events, and other details. Mr. Murin will come back at a future meeting with additional information as requested.
 - Mr. Murin will also provide post-event detail numbers on attendance and costs for the Heavenly Holidays event weeks.
- Event Funding Request/ECHL All-Star Classic 2028 \$100,000
 - The Board approved the Event Funding Request for the ECHL All-Star Classic 2028 in the amount of \$100,000 for the event. The All-Star Classic 2028 location will be reviewed and evaluated for granting by ECHL at a later date.
- 2027-2030 American Century Championship Agreement
 - Details are being finalized for the extension of the American Century Championship on the South Shore of Lake Tahoe. Select board members are involved in the review process.
- FY2027 Integrated Marketing Media Plan and the Summer 2026 Creative
 - The FY2027 Integrated Marketing Media Plan and Summer 2026 Creative were presented by Noble Studios, and both were approved by the Board.
- FY2027 Public Relations Scope of Work
 - The FY2027 Public Relations Scope of Work was presented to and approved by the Board
- Doug commented on the Tahoe Keys Marina redevelopment plan that went before the Planning Commission.
- Suntex Marinas, the owner of Tahoe Keys Marina, has proposed a major redevelopment of the marina property. The project is intended to modernize aging facilities while improving water quality and aquatic invasive species management.
- Demolition of several aging marina buildings.
- Construction of a new 52,600-square-foot indoor boat storage building.
- New waterfront commercial space for:
 - Restaurants
 - Retail
 - Boat sales and marine services
 - A public waterfront plaza and gathering areas.
- Relocation of the boat launch and gantry crane.

- Three replacement workforce housing units.
- New parking configuration and utilities.
- Replacement of deteriorating docks with upgraded fire suppression, electrical service (including electric boat charging), and improved lighting.
- The project requires multiple approvals, including:
 - City of South Lake Tahoe land use review.
 - Environmental review under CEQA.
 - Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) approval.
- The City approved an expansion of Lake Link to citywide service beginning July 1. The expansion is being funded because the City has paid off the parking garage debt and redirected approximately \$800,000 toward transportation.
- Discussion on whether the Tahoe Keys redevelopment would have enough parking and how restaurants and year-round events would help activate the marina beyond the summer season.
- Deepak commented that the last couple of weeks have felt like July with the CUFA event and the Bike Race. Why do we not support them?
- Carol commented that the LTVA supports CUFA.
- Doug commented that the bike race pays for itself, people pay to participate.
- Discussion about the process to get funding for an event.
- Discussion about the large Encore Dance National in the Tahoe Blue Event Center this last week. 1,00 kids and family attended.
- A board member asked whether additional concerts would be announced for the outdoor venue.
 - The goal is to host 15 outdoor concerts this year.
 - Some shows cannot yet be announced because of promoter holdbacks.
 - There was discussion about the success of Thursday concerts, with members noting they often sell out.
 - It was suggested that attracting more midweek concerts could help drive visitation.
 - Members also discussed the challenge of competing for Friday and Saturday acts against larger venues within about 150 miles.
 - One member commented that Lake Tahoe could benefit from another multi-day music festival in the future.
- A board member brought up an article regarding the annual Wagon Train.
 - California Highway Patrol fees reportedly increased to approximately \$20,000.
 - El Dorado County eliminated a \$15,000 grant, creating a funding gap.
 - LTVA is contributing \$2,500 toward an America 250 commemorative wagon.

- Members discussed encouraging organizers to work with county officials to replace the lost funding.
 - There was also interest in exploring stronger ties between the Wagon Train and South Lake Tahoe tourism activities.
 - Discussion about future event opportunities and The need for destination-driving events that bring visitors from outside the region.
- D. Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items, 5-Minute Limit). No public comment.
- E. Next Meeting: Thursday, August 27, 2026. Location TBD
- F. Adjournment. Thank you, Lisa/Lakeshore Lodge, for having us!
- The meeting was adjourned at 2:42 pm.