

South Lake Tahoe Tourism Improvement District (SLTTID)
Board of Directors Meeting, Hybrid In-Person and Zoom
Forest Suites Resort
1:00 pm, Thursday, June 15, 2023

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1 :00 pm by Board Chairman Jerry Bindel.

B. Roll Call

Board members present Jerry Bindel, Forest Suites Resort, Doug Williams, Cedar Pines Resort, and Rich Bodine, Hotel Azure, Lisa Underwood, Tahoe Keys Resort, and Bill Cottrill, Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel.

Board members not present Jodie Guttrich, Marriott Grand Residence and Timberlodge and Shachar Birendorf, Washoe Lodge.

C. Introduction of Guests & Staff present

Carol Chaplin, LTVA, Juraj Sojka, LTVA, and Anne Sutterfield, LTVA, Jennifer Cewinski, Stardust & Americana, Randall Lambach, Bluelake Inn, and Dan Evans, Beach Retreat & Lodge at Tahoe.

Introduction of Guests & Staff (on Zoom)

Sue Barton, LTVA

D. Approval of previous meeting minutes

A motion was made to approve the February 23, 2023 meeting minutes.

Moved: Doug Williams

Seconded: Kathleen Mason

Approved: Unanimously

E. Approval of Agenda

Jerry commented he made one addition to the agenda since sending it out. Under other items #3 open seat under arts and culture commission.

A motion was made to approve the agenda.

Moved: Kathleen Mason

Seconded: Rich Bodine

Approved: Unanimously

F. Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items, 5-Minute Limit)

AGENDA

A. Discussion/Possible Action

1. Treasurer's Report (Bill Cottrill)

- [PDF of SLTTID Budget with Actuals](#)
- All March received.
- March came in 31.7% down to budget.
- FY23 up just under 8% vs budget.
- Balance of about \$100k in account.
- Couple of payments, insurance, zoom, GoDaddy web hosting.
- Concerned about how April and May will come.
- March numbers skewed from overpayment from Marriott.
- Jerry asked how business was in April?
- Kathleen: April event to last year, May down.
- Randall: Up 20-25%, May & June down.
- Doug: Down
- Rich: Flat April, down may.
- Jerry: April up due to group. May flat to last year.
- Discussion about business and weather. July 4th on Tuesday.

2. Open Board Positions

- Secretary, Rich Bodine, stated we have a vacant seat to fill. (Racheal Thayer previous held the seat)
- Three candidates, [Dan Evans](#), [Jennifer](#) and [Randall](#).
- Dan talked a little about his background and why he would like to be on the board.
- Jennifer talked a little about her background and why she would like to be on the board.
- Randall talked a little bit about his background and why he would like to be on the board.
- Comment about another board seat coming up in the next cycle. Haven't seen one board member, Shachar, in a while. We may have to consider opening his seat up.
- Doug commented should probably start sending out email for nominations soon. Last time it took a while.
- Comment about eSports in the Event Center. Will they have enough bandwidth? Carol commented eSports was in consideration when choosing the internet provider for Event Center.
- Board members voted on a piece of paper and Rich collected and tallied.
- Dan Evans is the new SLTTID Board Member. Welcome.
- Comment next meeting we could have another open seat.
- Jerry commented there is an option for the Board to vote for a Vice Chair. Rachael Thayer was the Vice Chair. Jerry would like to nominate Rich. The Vice Chair takes the place of the Chair if not available and would eventually become Chair.
- Kathleen asked about when they drew years
 - Kathleen 2 years
 - Bill 2 years
 - Doug 2 years
 - Jerry 2 years
 - Lisa 1 year
- No other nominations for Vice Chair

A motion was made to nominate Rich Bodine for SLTTID Board Vice Chair.

Moved: Jerry Bindel

Seconded: Lisa Underwood

Approved: Unanimously

- Since Rich was the Secretary, the Secretary position will be open. We did not have it on the agenda, so it will be set at the next meeting.

3. Quarterly Newsletter Update - Juraj Sojka

- [Link to May's SLTTID Quarterly Newsletter](#)
- [PDF of Performance Report](#)
- 375 total opens
- Forwarded multiple times
- Great open rate of 44.5%
- Let us know if you want any specific information covered. We try to keep it informational, not overwhelming.
- Question about traffic to VisitLakeTahoe.com. Anne: We are coming back from the URL change. We are back to ranking number one for Lake Tahoe on Google search.
- Jerry commented thank you Juraj for your support on this newsletter.

4. Update on Lake Link)n-Demand Shuttle Services

- [PDF of letter to Jerry from Lake Link](#)
- Yearly \$25,000 Request (approved by previous board) also gave an additional \$75k contribution.
- Service is still in need of funding until the Event Center comes on line with revenues that will go to the Lake Link service.
- 101,000 people carried in the first eight months. Started July 2022. Expecting to exceed 120,000 passengers in the first full year.
- Locals and visitors using the service. Employees use it to get to work.
- Biggest challenge is the wait times.
- Sue commented TID contribution was additional \$50k, making a total of \$75k with the \$25k annual commitment.
- Asking \$25k yearly contribution to continue. Board already voted to give \$25k yearly.
- We have an additional funding opportunity.
- \$97k in Special Projects Fund now and will grow.
- Anything over \$100k in the bank account goes into this Special Projects Fund.
- Doug commented \$100k in bank account now. HV Holidays, Valhalla and other things will come out of the Special Projects Fund.
- Sue, can you help to clarify? Sue: \$5k Valhalla will not come out of the special project fund. They have an additional ask. We can take HV Holidays out of regular contributions to LTVA (95%) and not the special projects fund.
- Bill asked, is there anything already committed to come out of the \$97k? Sue: No, just for anything unusual.
- So we have \$97k in the special projects fund and \$100k in the regular bank account.
- Kathleen: If we give \$25k each year to Lake Link. When is the next payment? Sue: \$25k comes from TID directly. Will come out prior to FY24. Will come out of the \$97k.
- This ask is for the \$25k yearly that was already approved previously by this board.

- Lisa commented believes 100% in this service. If they want more they will come and ask for more.
- Comment - The LTVA Board voted to increase their contribution from \$25k to \$50k beginning in July 2023.
- This Board is in agreement that the initial \$25k per year is good for now. No additional funding at this time.

5. LTVA Marketing Updates

a. Summer 2003 Campaign Update - Carol Chaplin

- [PDF of July through December Media Plan](#)
- Carol went over the Media Plan. It is a 95 page deck!
- LTVA has adopted an always on approach. No real seasonal campaigns. We have year-round spend.
- Summer 2023 and FY24 July through December spend is about \$900k. We are talking about summer today.
- Noble Studios is our integrated agency. They did a competitive audit of how other destinations are spending their money.
- Competitors are spending between an estimated \$2-\$10k on display per month. Using landing pages for different markets and visitor profiles.
- Travel sentiment. Booking windows have dropped to 61 days and lower.
- 31% of American travelers say recent inflation in consumer prices has led them to cancel an upcoming trip.
- Travel spending has dropped.
- Even with economic challenges people still want to travel.
- Interesting statistic: 90% of consumers are looking for sustainable options when traveling, 49% will choose a less crowded destination to reduce the effects of overtourism.
- 42% of Americans plan to take a road trip in 2023.
- Comment, Airline prices are insane. Cuts in flights. And flights are changing constantly.
- International travel is coming back. COVID restrictions have been lifted as of May 11, 2023. India is beating all the other countries. Juraj traveled to India in March with US Travel. Receptive Tour Operators out of San Francisco.
- Canada, Mexico and the UK are spending the most. Australia is creeping back. China is in the top ten spending. All markets are coming back. Not up to 2019 levels yet. We are getting quality, not so much quantity.
- We have itineraries from San Francisco and Los Angeles that are very popular. At IPW (international pow wow) promoted Seattle to Phoenix, Yosemite. Always make sure to include Lake Tahoe for at least two nights. International trips are 14-21 day trips.
- We introduced a strategic mix of established and emerging markets.
- We saw both online awareness and in-market visitation impact from our chosen markets this past year compared to last year.
- We saw a 59% increase in website session duration and a 280% increase in partner referrals
- This year, we have seen a 3% growth in overnight visitors from these markets and a 15% growth in overall visitation
- Our visitor spend from these markets has grown 2%
- Core audiences are:
 1. Outdoor Enthusiast
 2. Entertainment Seeker
 3. Affluent Adventurer
 4. Families
 5. Sustainable Traveler (tested in the N West) Spend more money and stay more days.
- Markets to target
 1. Los Angeles
 2. Las Vegas
 3. San Diego
 4. Phoenix/Switch to Dallas in December
 5. San Francisco - Select Channels

6. Sacramento - Select Channels
 7. Seattle/Portland, Fresno - Sustainability
- Testing Fresno this year.
 - Jerry commented he is seeing an increase in North West visitors this year.
 - Zartico information shows Fresno popping up.
 - We tend to spend less in the summer. July has 4th of July holiday and Celebrity Golf as well as the Harveys concerts. A lot of other stuff going on.
 - LTVA is supporting the Lake Tahoe Is For Lovers Music Festival, June 24th selling well. Jerry commented this is an additional concert that was added due to LTVA contribution of \$300k.
 - Media mix split lots of buckets
 1. Paid Social
 2. Video
 3. Display
 4. Connected TV
 5. Email
 6. OOH (billboards) Arizona, LA, NV and California.
 7. Print
 8. Sustainability
 9. Native
 10. TripAdvisor (sponsored Lake Tahoe page)
 - Also doing Travel & Leisure, Social, and PR going on all the time
 - June - September is the time frame for the summer campaign.
 - Doug commented on the article in Yahoo news about bad roads. What are we doing to combat that? Carol, most of the time Weidinger PR will reach out to the journalist directly to try and influence their point of view and if enough lead time will send out other stories.
 - Weidinger PR do the best they can.

b. Event Center Update - Carol Chaplin

- www.tahooblueeventcenter.com
- Good news! Switch gear has arrived and they are working on it. They have to test everything. Hoping for a late August opening.
- We have 67 events booked with 80 event days through June 2024.
- Comic Con, Sat & Sun, September 23rd & 24th and Billy Strings, Sunday, October 8th. And some others that have not been announced yet.
- Mainly meetings and conventions September through November and April and May 2024.
- They are starting to hire food & beverage personnel. Very sensitive about people working other places.
- Jennifer asked about any sporting events booked yet? Carol, Not yet confirmed. We have purchased a sports court. We have interest from basketball, wrestling, cheer and hockey tournaments.
- Hockey will be able to also use the new Rec Center.
- Also, met with a few passionate artists in town who are forming a council for Art in Public Places. Valhalla resident artist is also advising.
- Will have a naming rights wall and a sustainability wall. Interpretive corner talking about history, culture and environment. Washoe is involved.

c. Other Updates

- TDVA (Tahoe Douglas Visitors Authority) is shooting July 4th fireworks. \$400k spend. 20 min show. 50% of the cost goes to water support. Buoy, boat, divers, cleanup.
- Discussion about drones and all the restrictions they bring.

6. Other Items

a. Rec Center Update - Jerry

- southlaketahoerecenter.konveio.com
- In the bidding process. 63k sq foot, six lane indoor pool, two full high school basketball courts, divided into 4 volleyball courts, pickleball, running track, event space up on second floor looking over lake. Fitness room. funded by 2% TOT increase back in 2016. Bidding process will be completed by Friday, June 29, 2023. If it hits a magic number - bonded money. Will be awarded to the lowest bid. Above ground construction starts May 2024. All below ground work/utilities done. Jerry is concerned about the price of construction. Original price \$30 mil. Now hoping for \$65 mil. Whole goal is for sports tournaments.

b. SLTTID Special Projects Fund Update

- Fund is at \$97k. Open conversation about potential use for this money. Encourage board members to bring ideas. We talked about investing in a mobile stage.
- Doug commented about approaching Spartan Games. Doug will reach out to them.
- Bring ideas with cost, details. Start with seed money then events are on their own. Vet through board and LTVA.
- Kathleen has stage information will send over and present at the next meeting.
- Dan asked what the stage was for? It can be rented, and placed anywhere big enough space. North Shore is looking for a stage and someone to bring it in and set up, etc. Also as in-kind like for Meyers Mountain market.

c. Valhalla Tahoe Events Contribution Request

- [PDF Valhalla letter](#)
- Asking for an additional \$2,500k donation on top of annual \$5k for poster printing so they can reach a larger number of visitors. Also asking for half of \$20k cost to move power and install new lights for the stage. Total ask is \$17,500 including annual \$5k for marketing and to complete the Boathouse Theatre Lighting project.
- Previously a board member had asked for Valhalla to come back with any ask they have.
- They will be bringing around collateral for this summer if they haven't already.
- Doug doesn't feel comfortable. At most \$5k. It will take awhile to build the fund back up. \$25k will come out of the \$97k for Lake Link.
- Rich commented this is a big ask.
- Fund will grow quickly in the summer months.
- Kathleen asked does Valhalla volunteer? 501c3. They have an exec director and maintenance people.
- Sue commented LTVA does have some unspent funds in our Marketing Opportunity fund. We have to spend it before the end of June. This does not have to come out of the special project fund.
- The additional \$12,500 ask can be accommodated if the board wants.
- Rich asked, is there anything else that we have been approached on? Sue, We have been utilizing it for any and all relevant ways to put our brand in front of people.
- \$10k to move power - not really a marketing opportunity. \$2,500 is the ask for marketing.
- Doug commented, Can we donate the \$12,500 money for marketing and they can reallocate their budget to spend money differently in the budget.
- Will need an invoice from Valhalla showing contribution to their marketing fund. Has to be for marketing. \$5k of the \$17,500 can go to other purposes.

A motion was made to give Valhalla a total of \$17,500 with \$12,500 to go towards marketing.

Moved: Bill Cottrill
Seconded: Doug Williams
Approved: Unanimously

- Jerry will reach out to Michelle about the invoice.
- d. [South Lake Tahoe Arts & Culture Commission](#) - Sue
 - Non-voting position open
 - Specifically designed for a person from the Lodging/TID community
 - Tony Lyle held position previously
 - Currently Amy Xistra Rich with the Boys and Girls Club holds the position.
 - If someone would like to apply for the seat, they are taking nominations until July 25th.
 - Doug commented if not voting, not interested.
 - Current Board:
 - Chair-Bryan Yerian
 - Vice Chair-David Hamilton
 - Commissioner-Stacey Ballard
 - Commissioner-Eleanor Brennan
 - Commissioner-Scott Forrest
 - Non-voting Rep, Aimi Xistra-Rich
 - City Council appointment

Board Member Comments

- Bill's property is in the throes of construction.
- Jennifer commented they are pacing slow to start the summer. Normally sold out by now.
- Jerry, it is only just starting to heat up in sacramento. Wait to panic!
- Kathleen commented booking window 7 days
- Rich commented that it had a 25-30% pickup in one night. Usually don't have to discount.
- Dan commented Beach retreat is pacing behind
- Doug commented room nights much less than 2019, ADR higher. Also, Ted Kennedy gross numbers down, even with increases in charging.
- Dan asked, is the homeless situation always this bad? Discussion about homelessness.
- Jerry commented it seems it is a little easier to get staff than last year. Discussion about J1s.
- Next election in December. By the next meeting we need to send out an email. Voting September and October. 60 day period.
- Rachel's seat that Dan just took over is up this year. Dan will have to run again.

Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items, 5-Minute Limit) None.

Next meeting - the last Thursday in August.
The meeting was adjourned at 2:49 pm.