



Mammoth Lakes Tourism Monthly Board Meeting  
**Wednesday, August 1, 2016 – Please note change of date**  
Call in # (310) 372-7549 - Participant Code 934985 - Host Code 3838  
1:00 – 3:00pm MLT Conference Room

### Meeting Minutes

1. **Call Meeting to Order at 1:00pm** – John Morris, Board Chair
2. **Roll Call** – Present: Erik Forsell, Scott McGuire (phone), John Morris, Colin Fernie, Sean Turner, Brent Truax, Paul Rudder, Kirk Schaubmayer, Michael Ledesma
3. **Board Member Comments/Reports/Agenda Additions**
  - Brent Truax – VillageFest was a great event but need to work on parking for Village events
  - Sean Turner – Inyo National Forest doing surveys
    - Rich Boccia – they come every 5 years to collect visitor data, used to plan future activities, Rich has the report if anyone is interested
  - John Morris – Kids Fishing Festival very successful, mostly visitors rather than locals
4. **Public Comment** – Please limit to three minutes or less
  - Rich Boccia – MLR working on 6 priority phase projects, looking for customer relations management (CRM) system, Outside on the Eastside is evolving with help from MLT, MLR helping with Mammoth Track Club Thursday night race series this summer, MLR gathering surveys from visitors at events
    - Paul Rudder – where does MLR stand on the arts and culture center?
    - Rich – MLR fully supports, looking at designs and architects (6 month timeline), targeted opening date is December 2018; waiting on Bell Shaped Parcel update before looking at list of potential sites
5. **Minutes** – Approval of past meeting minutes
  - Motion to approve minutes from July 6 board meeting – Brent Truax motions, Paul Rudder seconds, passes unanimously (Colin abstains)
6. **MLT Team Presentation Schedule** – 30 minutes including Q&A time

#### International Update – Michael Vanderhurst

- Most efforts are in partnership with MMSA, Yosemite, Mono County or Lake Tahoe
- MLT enrolled in VisaVue through Visit California – shows how much money spent in our zip code by Visa cards – doesn't show cash transactions or lodging booked through OTAs (high for international)
- Relationships MLT maintains
  - UK – Black Diamond – one of MLT's oldest relationships; traditionally winter market but UK summer numbers are growing; US dollar is weak compared to pound (making ML a value destination); lots of air traffic through LA, Vegas and SD; rent cars
  - France – High Sierra Visitor Council – ML's best value market, HSVC markets Yosemite, Tahoe, Mono County, ML, west side of Yosemite, etc., all pitch in for France contract but MLT leverages the contract the most; traditionally summer/fall market; strong euro means ML is a value destination; lots of flights here
  - Germany/Austria/Switzerland – MSI – solo contract there; traditionally summer/fall market; annual spend is slightly less than France/UK

- Italy – travel trade and PR; same contract as Visit California; fall/summer market
- Australia – share contract with MMSA, they also have Visit CA and Brand USA contracts; traditionally winter market; CA message well-received in southern Australia; may evolve contract to 4 seasons; bad exchange rate means ML is not a value destination (Japan is ML’s main competitor there)
  - Erik Forsell – Vail is targeting Australia through Perisher; Vail not marketing Tahoe as much (Colorado/Utah instead) so might lessen promotion of ML
- Smaller partnerships – Belgium, Netherlands, Scandinavia; looking into Mexico, Brazil, Argentina
- China – requires significant investment; MLT is looking at hiring representation in China this fall; organic growth is astronomical – repeat visitors are getting off the beaten track (thanks to 10 year visa waiver); MLT sees China as a strong market for the future
- Korea – Chloe Kim success is driving force there
  - Erik Forsell – MMSA marketing in American Koreatowns, etc. to reach Asian market
- MLT has a one-page sales sheet in different languages (Visit CA also puts out multi-lingual materials)
- Winter messaging – add a world-class city to your ski vacation (Las Vegas, LA, etc.)
- Summer messaging – make ML your base in your itinerary, extend stay – Yosemite and Death Valley
- MLT attends consumer shows, hosts familiarization trips in ML (travel trade and media), does some traditional print co-ops and has a digital presence (partnership with Brand USA and Visit CA)
- MLT working on producing current videos in multiple languages
- Brand USA is promoting national parks – Yosemite and Yellowstone are at the top
- Visit CA has an increased international budget

**7. Department Updates** – A brief recap of past, current and future efforts of each department

1. Marketing – Whitney Lennon

- Handout for summer campaign wrap-up report; campaigns continue to beat previous campaign results
- Full update will be uploaded to DropBox folder for more information
- Next board meeting: Josh will take board member photos for website, Whitney needs 150 word bios

2. Communications – Lara Kaylor

- Olympics begin this week, crib athletes going to Rio (Alexi Pappas for Greece, Sarah Attar for Saudi Arabia)
- Hosting media visits weekly through mid-September
- John Poimiroo visiting ML in August to talk about fall marketing, speaking at Chamber Power Lunch Aug. 16
- Sent press release out last week about new board members; working on next MLT column for Mammoth Times; connecting town accomplishments with MLT’s work
- Going forward – play up crib and not just Mammoth Track Club to increase chance of Olympic coverage if no MTC athletes go to Olympics

3. Air Service – John Urdi

- Summer numbers fairly flat, overall summer numbers down slightly because of 4-day service in the spring
- June was up, July will probably end positive; not clear why summer flight traffic isn’t increasing
- Jet Suite X may start a Thur/Fri/Sun/Mon service with 30 passengers per plane, goes through general aviation instead of TSA, flies from Burbank to MMH; visiting ML in August for an airport tour
  - Hot Creek Aviation concerned about capacity and being able to turn plane around
  - Jet Suite (same company but different division) currently flies to ML often
  - In summer, having a morning flight to pair with current afternoon flight could help with cancellations, minimal risk involved in working with charter companies
- Waiting to hear confirmation on whether Alaska Airlines flights can start using RNP visibility procedure – could reduce cancellations by 30-40% in the winter

**8. Financial Reports** – An update regarding the financial health of the organization – John Urdi

1. TOT & TBID – review previous months results
  - TOT likely to break \$1 million in June, currently \$975k; YTD \$15,579,000 – more than \$4.2 million ahead
  - Colin Fernie – Why breaking records in visitation but not in flights?
  - John Urdi – MLT’s experts are trying to figure out an answer
  - Michael Ledesma – Which month is the primary focus to create a 10<sup>th</sup> month of viability?
  - John Urdi – October and April have strong potential, but April is very much snow dependent
2. Cash Flow – discussion of current bank balances
  - \$343,000 in Measure A Checking, \$5,000 in Measure A Savings
  - \$564,000 in TBID Checking, \$5,003 in TBID Savings
3. P&L Reports
  - Sent out, close to year-end actual
4. FDIC insured program CDARS – protection for MLT bank balances
  - MLT now has \$3 million reserve protected, previously only \$250k was protected
  - Working with Eastern Sierra Community Bank on CDARS – money gets farmed out, not as much return as a normal CD, but much more liquid – 4 week, 13 week, 26 week and 52 week auto-renewal CDs, far less paperwork than if MLT used an outside source for CD accounts
  - Plan to keep \$750k to \$1 million in bank, money over that goes into CDARS
  - Colin Fernie – \$3 million in reserve is high, is that at board direction?
    - John Urdi – Board direction was \$1.2 million, current reserve is large until board determines what to spend it on

## 9. MMSA Update – Erik Forsell

- Mountain Collective pass doing well, good exposure for town and the mountain, exposure increases every time a resort is added – 2 newest resorts on it are Revelstoke and Telluride

## 10. New Business

1. MLT funding discussion – John Urdi
  - MLT’s 3 project reserve accounts (event venue, convention center, airport reserve) have been closed and all money is in CDARS now
  - MLT board did not support giving TOT revenue over \$2 million to town without a specific purpose
  - New proposal: MLT board decides what town should do with the first \$500,000 over \$2 million in TOT – anything over that \$2 million and the next \$500,000 goes unrestricted back to the town – a lot in a good year, not much in a normal year
  - Brent Truax – no funding should go back to town’s general fund
  - Scott McGuire – MLT board should have discretion over funds, do something with money to encourage tourism
  - Colin Fernie – no single entity has the resources to get something done, MLT funds could push a community-wide project over the edge to completion
  - Paul Rudder – best way to justify TBID to the town is to create things people can see – tangible benefits and improvements
  - John Morris – table this discussion for next meeting
2. Event management Discussion – John Morris
  - Met recently to determine who pays for event management, how it’s funded & where it lives
  - Issues with it living within MLT – fragments MLT’s focus, limited time
  - MLT board needs to tell events group if it should live within MLT or not
  - Colin Fernie – Dan Holler suggested position lives within town through a tangential relationship via contract (similar to Joel Rathje with trails); events can no longer live within MLR
  - John Urdi – events piece would be a distraction for MLT team, lose ground in marketing and brand

- Colin Fernie – two types of events in town: visitor-driving events and animation (Pops in the Park, etc.); adds to town culture of there's always something happening; events role should be through town instead of MLT to include both visitor-driving and animation events
- Scott McGuire – events culture of something always happening in town creates the allure of ML and grows tourism – loss of control if events position is through the town
- Brent Truax – events in town need a champion and administrative person
- Motion for events strategy to be housed outside of MLT
  - Brent Truax motions, Michael Ledesma seconds, 5 in favor (John Morris, Kirk Schaubmayer, Paul Rudder), 2 oppose (Sean Turner, Scott McGuire), Colin Fernie abstains, Erik Forsell absent (motion passes)

3. TBID renewal process

**11. Key Takeaways**

1. YTD TOT at \$15,579,406 million – TOT will finish the fiscal year above \$15.5 million
2. YTD TOT is over budget by \$4.2 million which is 38%
3. To achieve \$4.2m in additional TOT, that means more than \$32 million in direct lodging spending in town

**12. Executive Session**

**Future Meeting Dates** Next scheduled Meeting is Wednesday, September 7<sup>th</sup> 12:30-3pm @ MLT Conference Room