



## **Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

August 14, 2024

753 South Main St., Angels Camp, CA and  
Via Zoom Video Conference 8:30 am

The meeting was called to order at 8:37 AM by Susan Weatherby.

**Board Members Present:** Susan Weatherby, Amber Sprock, Jeff Stai, Kathy Collins

**Absent Members:** Morgan Gace, Katie Abresch, Betsy Stefani, Tom Hix, Mary Jane Genochio, Kathy Collins

**CVB Staff Present:** Martin Huberty, Jessica Johnson

**Advisors Present:** Jamie Andriola – Calaveras County Rep; Aaron James – USFS Rep

**Guests:** Michelle Plotnik, Ebbetts Pass Scenic Byway

**New Board Member Vote: Tabled to September meeting due to no quorum.**

**1. Approval of July Board Meeting Minutes – No quorum, no vote.**

**Approval of July P & L, Balance Sheet, Budget vs. Actual – No quorum, no vote.**

**Review of Domo Madden and Placer AI report –** Click-thru rate was great in July with more clicks than June and more impressions. Things to Do slipped as the number one thing people are looking at on the website, and the Calendar of Events replaced it. People are drawn to the area for our local events. Traffic to the website is still high. Big Behavior is the CVB's webmaster who works for lots of DMOs. Martin really enjoys working with Tom King of Big Behavior, and he would like to work with him to provide the CVB's SEM and SEO. The Madden Media contract is up in January 2025, and Martin will go with Big Behavior at that time.

**Marketing & Social Media –** The heat kept people away from some of the major attractions in Calaveras. However, according to Placer AI, Lake Alpine, Utica, Union, and Spicer along with Lake Camanche and Lake

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Hogan all were very busy. Martin would like to brainstorm with Gold Country Visitors Association on how to bring visitors going to the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles to visit Gold Country and the Highway 49 corridor. Martin will be looking into putting up a billboard for visiting Highway 49. He is working with a nationwide PBS filmmaker who did films for the AC Museum, Ironstone, PAWS recently, and Martin wants GCVA to hire him to do a Highway 49 video. Bear Valley Music Festival had some major sponsors, and it was a very well attended event. Susan W. and Terry W. want to be on a team for Grape Stomp, and the CVB Board said they would help man a table at the event in the park. Jessica will get a schedule out to everyone to sign up for a time to represent the CVB at Grape Stomp. The Black Travel Alliance is visiting next month – 9 travel writers coming to visit Gold Country, and Martin may need help touring them throughout the county. The Wild & Scenic Film Festival is September 14<sup>th</sup> the Bret Harte Theater.

**Numbers from July visitation.** – The CVB met face to face with 1,167 people and fielded 191 calls.

## 2. New Business:

**A) 2025 Visitors Guide – Jessica & Felicia:** Martin and Jessica have started contacting organizations for their participation in the 2025 Calaveras Dreaming Visitors Guide. Jessica sent the last of the invoices to previous guide participants this week. If any board members know of people who might be interested in being in the guide, please have them contact the office as soon as possible. The guide is paid for by its participants, not TOT. Ads are very important to continue paying for the guide. Felicia Winans is the graphic artist we used last year, and she will be working on the guide again this year.

**B) Social Media questions and updates:** Martin and Jessica now do social media in-house. They met with Morgan Gace and Kris Barnard to get some initial guidance and will be meeting with Amanda Holliday (referred to by Visit California) who will do some in-depth

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training with Martin and Jessica. Martin hopes to have a proper SM report next month.

- C) Honey Trek results:** The results from Honey Trek’s visit are fantastic, and they provided several reels and posts that have done incredibly well on social media with lots of engagement. Their presence is mainly on Instagram and Facebook, and the quality and stories that were told got lots of comments from new visitors who want to come to Calaveras. Honey Trek has 400K followers and speaks to a primarily traveling demographic. Bear Valley Bicycles gave the CVB a guide and free bike rental for Honey Trek’s visit, and the CVB is very grateful for their time and assistance with these travel writers.
  
- D) Film Commission Homestead Rescue – Scott Brothers:** The Scott Brothers came to film an episode in Calaveras, and it went well. Homestead Rescue is in Calaveras now and only needed a site medic. They are doing great on their own otherwise.
  
- E) Upcoming influencer trips:** The Black Travel Alliance is coming to Calaveras in September.
  
- F) Sactown Magazine:** Still doing print ads with them for fall. Martin is looking for another magazine like Sactown Magazine to advertise in.
  
- G) CWA marketing:** Martin and Jessica met with Jody from CWA who has extra marketing money in the CWA budget. She wanted to discuss ideas for marketing wineries in Calaveras. Martin suggested the BJ Hansen podcast, local photographer to get winery and vineyard content. CWA is willing to share content with CVB for social media marketing.
  
- H) Visit California playground:** Visit California’s 2024 theme is focused on the art of “playing” and places to play in California. CVB is focusing on ways to play in Calaveras such as hiking, biking, skiing, boating, fishing, etc.

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### 3. Old Business

- A) Ebbetts Pass Scenic Byway – Hermitfest West update:** Hermitfest is coming up on September 7<sup>th</sup> at the ball field in Bear Valley. This event is organized by the EPSB committee. The planning is going well with some sponsorships, but they need a few more. Solid Gold Stranger is the headlining band. Hoping Alpine County will waive permit fees. It's a small music festival, free entry, kids' activities, guided bicycle rides on Sunday, vendors, stargazing event as weather permits. This is the sole fundraiser to support and continue the Ebbetts Pass Scenic Byway designation and help with signs, cleaning, and maintenance. The CVB can carry the EPSB merchandise in the gift shop. Michelle, Martin and Jessica to meet to discuss the EPSB/CVB partnership going forward.
- B) 2025 Calendar – Change up:** The CVB is going to make the 2025 Calendar a "Then and Now" around Calaveras theme rather than the Pet Calendar which will be postponed to 2026. The centralized fiscal agent to receive funds is not yet established.
- C) Museum update – Foundry and Ward house move:** The City of Angels Camp plans to move the 1880s Ward House to the Museum. It will be like the house in Bodie where visitors can investigate windows and see an 1880s household and way of life. The Albert Michelson exhibit is getting more traction. There is a group of teachers coming on the 22<sup>nd</sup> for a tour of the new exhibit. The Mark Twain Wild West Festival is happening at the museum on October 12<sup>th</sup> from 10-3, organized by the Angels Camp Museum Foundation. The event used to be on Highway 49, but it's too expensive to close the highway, so it's being done at the museum. Debbie Ponte is coordinating the event. She is looking for people who can run carpentry, blacksmithing, printing press exhibits for the event and dress in period costumes.

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**D) Lodging Association:** Lodging Association meeting next month, and they did not meet in July.

#### **4. Board Member Updates:**

**Kathy Collins:** No report.

**Amber Sprock:** Calaveras big Trees – Amber encouraged everyone to come visit the food truck and help support it so they can keep having food available for purchase in the park. The park is wrapping up summer programs, and today is the last day of daily programs. After that, they are going to weekend programs until Labor Day.

**Tom Hix:** Not present

**Morgan Gace:** Not Present

**Aaron James:** It's still high fire season, so they are educating campers to be safe with campfires. There are lots of issues with Utica and Union with trash being left. Staff is limited, so campgrounds may close earlier this year. People are leaving campfires going, and staff needs to regulate making sure fires are completely extinguished. There was a small fire on the Tuolumne side, but the road opening again today.

**Mary Jane Genochio:** Not present

**Susan Weatherby:** Moke Hill is planning for Halloween to close the main street to have crafts for kids and trick or treat downtown. Turkey in the Barrel is in the planning stages for fall. Hotel Leger is open Thursday – Sunday for dinner now. Rooms are just about finished and signed off. Moke Hill has pickleball courts with lights open to the public on Maretta Lane. Go to [playtimescheduler.com](http://playtimescheduler.com) to let everyone know you're going to be there.

**Jeff Stai:** Not much for updates. Running a 50% sale for wine this month.

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**Jamie Andriola:** She is working on the Parks and Rec master plan to go to board for approval. Final budget going to board in September for final approval.

**Michelle Plotnik:** Ebbetts Pass Scenic Byway funding only comes through Hermitfest, no TOT from Alpine County. A fiscal agent like COG or USFS is needed to accept Federal Scenic Byway Grant Funds.

**Katie Asbresch:** Not Present

**Betsy Uttley:** Not Present

Meeting adjourned at 9:12 AM. Next meeting is September 11, 2024, at 8:30 AM at 753 South Main Street, Angels Camp, CA 95222 or via Zoom Video Conference.

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