

**MEETING MINUTES  
SANTA MONICA TRAVEL & TOURISM (SMTT)  
MEETING OF THE TOURISM MARKETING DISTRICT (TMD) COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 2024  
THE HILTON SANTA MONICA – THE PACIFIC ROOM III**

**Call to Order:** Chairman Atallah called the meeting to order at 3:08 pm.

**Roll Call & Self Introductions:** Chairman Atallah called for self-introductions. TMD Committee Members and those present provided brief self-introductions. The following persons were recorded in attendance:

**Tourism Marketing District Committee (TMD) Present:** Chairman Younes Atallah, Secretary/Treasurer Aileen Carreon, Member Julien Labays, Member Diego Ruiz de Porras, Member Juan Viramontes, Member Cheri Perez. Member Cameron Haseli entered the meeting at 3:58 pm.

**Also Present:** Huntley Hotel General Manager Manju Raman, SMTT President/CEO Misti Kerns, SMTT Chief Operating Officer Evan Edwards, SMTT Senior Director of Marketing Mandy Eck, SMTT Senior Director of Communications Lauren Salisbury, SMTT Director of Sales Ozzie Otero, SMTT Executive Assistant Ellen Keegan.

**Absent:** Member Jessica Rincon, Member Karina Sedigh.

**Public Comment:** Chairman Atallah called for public comment; there was none.

**Purpose of the TMD Committee:** SMTT CEO Kerns reviewed the Brown Act with the 2024 TMD Committee members. Kerns advised all members to reach out with any questions or concerns and encouraged all TMD Committee members to complete Brown Act training. Kerns described the TMD Committee as a 12-month commitment with a total of 5 meetings to attend throughout the year. Member Viramontes explained the responsibilities of the Committee are primarily to ensure the Board of Directors that TMD funds are being properly allocated.

**TMD Committee Ballot Results:** Chairman Atallah thanked everyone who took the time to vote in the 2024 TMD Committee election and those members who served on the 2023 TMD Committee. He announced the 2024 TMD Committee members including, Younes Atallah Regent Santa Monica Beach, Julien Labays Fairmont Miramar Hotel & Bungalows, Aileen Carreon ETC Hotels (Shutters, Casa, Bayside), Cameron Haseli Ocean Park Inn, Cheri Perez Santa Monica Hotel, Jessica Rincon Le Merigot Santa Monica, Karina Sedigh The Pierside Hotel, Diego Ruiz de Porras Hotel Oceana, Juan Viramontes Gateway Hotel Santa Monica.

**EOC Roles Overview:** Chairman Atallah reviewed the Executive Officer Committee positions of Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary/Treasurer. Chairman Atallah emphasized the vacant position of Vice Chair, previously held by Sam Jagger who recently resigned. All three executive roles hold a one-year term. Chairman Atallah asked the Committee for questions. There were no questions.

**Open Nominations & Vote of Executive Committee Slate of Officers:** Chairman Atallah opened the nominations to TMD Committee Members for the Executive Committee. Chairman Atallah self-nominated himself for the Chairperson position, Member Julien Labays nominated himself for the Vice Chair position. Treasurer/Secretary Carreon self-nominated herself for the Treasurer/Secretary position. Atallah motioned the nomination to accept the slate of Executive Committee Officers. Member Viramontes moved to approve the motion. Member Perez seconded the motion. Each Committee Member then voted individually to approve the motion. The motion carried unanimously with Member Haseli, Member Rincon and Member Sedigh absent.

**Approval of the May 10, 2023 TMD Meeting Minutes:** Secretary/Treasurer Carreon presented the May 10, 2023 Meeting Minutes. Chairman Atallah moved to approve the minutes and Member Perez seconded

the motion. Each Committee Member then voted individually to approve the motion. The motion carried unanimously with Member Haseli, Member Rincon and Member Sedigh absent.

**Acceptance of the TMD Collections Memo:** Secretary/Treasurer Carreon presented the TMD Collections Memo. Chairman Atallah called for a motion to approve the Memo as presented. Member Perez made a motion to approve. Member Viramontes seconded the motion. Each Committee Member then voted individually to approve the motion. The motion carried unanimously with Member Haseli, Member Rincon and Member Sedigh absent.

**Vote on Increase Start Date from 07/01/24 to 01/01/25:** Chairman Atallah presented the current SMTMD plan and called for a vote to change the Increase Start Date from 07/01/24 to 01/01/25. Chairman Atallah expressed the 6-month change would be for the benefit of hotels and asked for a motion to approve. Member Viramontes made a motion to approve. Member Perez seconded the motion. Each Committee Member then voted individually to approve the motion. The motion carried unanimously with Member Haseli, Member Rincon and Member Sedigh absent.

**Vote on Tier Collection Increase for 01/01/2025:** Chairman Atallah called for a vote to increase the 2025 rates to be presented at the same time. Reviewing the 2025 rates – Tier 3, + \$.10 from 2024 at \$2.20; Tier 2, + \$.25 from 2024 at \$6.00; Tier 1, +\$.25 from 2024 at \$7.00.

Chairman Atallah formally requested a motion for either:

- A. Motion to approve the increase of \$.10 for Tier 3 and \$.25 for Tiers 1 & 2 and to officially move the start of 2025 collections from July 1, 2024 to January 1, 2025.

Or

- B. Motion to decline an increase but continue at the current rates and officially move the start of 2025 collections from July 1, 2024 to January 1, 2025.

Member Perez made a motion to approve Option A as presented. Member Labays seconded the motion. Each Committee Member then voted individually to approve the motion. The motion carried unanimously with Member Haseli, Member Rincon and Member Sedigh absent.

**SMTT Staff Updates:** SMTT Senior Director of Marketing Mandy Eck shared an update on a vibrant Q3 media plan crafted in partnership with Noble Studios. Additionally, Eck provided a sneak peek into the upcoming SMTT Brand Refresh, slated for our Q4 launch.

Next, SMTT Senior Director of Communications Lauren Salisbury highlighted recent earned media coverage in The Weekend Australian as well as Body + Soul Magazine. Salisbury also shared an update on upcoming FAMs with esteemed writers such as Toby Saltzman from Zoomer Magazine (Canada), Linda Barnard from Best Side Magazine (Canada), Katie Bridges from Escapism Magazine (Canada) and James Wilkinson from Wayfarer (Australia).

Lastly, SMTT Director of Sales Ozzie Otero shared comprehensive updates on Travel Trade and Group Sales initiatives. Otero shared an update on ILTM Cannes in France, where SMTT France Representative Murielle Nouchy recently engaged with 34 luxury travel advisors. Other highlights included Travel Trade events such as the VCA x JATA FAM and the Visit USA Workshop. Group Sales events included the SITE SoCal Holiday Charity & Gala in addition to American Express INTERaction. Future Group Sales events include the NorCal MICE Sales Mission and SITE SoCal Board Installation, and the Go West Summit and UK Sales and Media Mission for Travel Trade.

**CEO Update:** SMTT CEO Kerns encouraged the Committee to look through the provided Lanes of Work within the packet on their own time. Kerns also shared updates on the 2024 IPW Tradeshow hosted in Los Angeles in addition to the SMTT produced events that will take place concurrently in Santa Monica such as the Carousel Client Event and Party on the Pier.

Additionally, Kerns informed the Committee of the Route 66 Centennial which will take place throughout 2026. In preparation of the centennial, Kerns described the potential of creating a "Road Trip Experience" Package. Additionally, SMTT will be working toward livening up Santa Monica Blvd by working with dealerships on that street who appreciate the historical significance of Route 66. Kerns encouraged all Committee Members to participate.

Lastly, Kerns shared a sneak peek of Santa Monica activations to be featured at the CA Plaza during IPW 2024.

**For the Good of the Order:** Chairman Atallah thanked SMTT for their continuous efforts. Chairman Atallah informed the Committee of the Women in Tech Luncheon hosted by the Chamber of Commerce in celebration of International Women's Day on Friday, March 8<sup>th</sup>. Kerns invited the Committee to the SMTT Spring Mixer on Thursday, March 7<sup>th</sup> and encouraged members to extend the invitation to their respective teams.

**Adjournment:** Chairman Atallah called to adjourn the meeting; the meeting was adjourned at 4:24 pm.