



VISALIA CONVENTION AND VISITORS' BUREAU
 Wednesday, September 10, 2025 • 9:00 a.m.
 Meeting Minutes
 City of Visalia Administrative Offices -220 N. Santa Fe

Chair: Steve Nelsen		Staff: Sherrie Bakke, Suzanne Bianco		
Members Present: Anil Chagan Denise Taylor-Connor Sintia Kawaski-Yee: ex-officio John Oneto		Members Absent: Walter Deissler Cynthia Padilla-Nowakowski Brett Taylor	Present - 5 Absent -3 Quorum – Y	Others Present/Guests: David Ahern, The Darling Carrie Groover, Marriott John Lollis, Assistant City Manager Samantha Mathias, Visalia Convention Center Hector Ramos, Hilton Garden Inn
TOPIC	Discussion/Recommendations		ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
Call to Order	Steven Nelsen, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:01am.		Information only	Nelsen
Public Comment	No public Comment <hr/> <i>This time is allowed for comments on subject matters pertaining to items on the agenda. Each speaker will be allowed three minutes. No action can be taken, at this time, on items mentioned in public comments.</i>		No Public Comment	
1. Approval of Meeting Minutes	Chagan motioned to approve the August 13, 2025, regular meeting minutes. Oneto seconded the motion. Motion approved without discussion.		Approved Minutes August 13, 2025	Chagan/Oneto

2.	Financial Report	<p>Oneto did not submit the August financials due to needing additional clarification on how the CVB is tracking Board Designated Incentives. A meeting is scheduled with the CPA on Thursday, September 11 to review the Balance Sheet and profit and loss.</p> <p>Chagan motioned to delay the August 31, 2025, financials The motion was seconded by Connor. Motion approved.</p>	Delayed August Financials	Chagan/Connor
3	City of Visalia Contract/Payment Status	<p>Nelsen reported a meeting will be held with the City Manager to discuss the contract. Oneto and Nelsen will represent the CVB. The City representatives will include, Leslie Caviglia, John Lollis and Samantha Mathias.</p> <p>The Board discussed the value of including a hotelier. Connor motioned to include Chagan in the group representing the CVB, the motion was seconded by Oneto. Motion carried to have the CVB Executive Committee attend the contract meeting with the City leadership.</p>	City Contract subcommittee appointment	Connor/Oneto
4	Board of Director Membership Expansion	Nelsen opened the discussion to expand the VCVB Board of Directors from seven members to nine members. Nelsen suggested adding the Visalia Convention Center General Manage to the Board. Board members are encouraged to send nominations to Bakke for membership consideration during the October VCVB Board Meeting. The term of office would begin in January 2026.	Expand Board to 9 members	Consensus

		Informational Items		
1.	Tourism Marketing District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received and reviewed a proposal from Civitas, the consultant for special districts, to expand the VTMD to include Short Term Rentals. TMD will be requesting meeting with the City Leadership to discuss interest and process for expanding the district. TMD called a special meeting to provide feedback on the current convention incentive program. The discussion was held without a quorum. Follow up is needed prior to submitting the recommendation to the CVB Board. 	Information Only	Chagan
3.	SEKI Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thank you for Congressman Costa's Trek to the Trees. Discussion on workforce housing and in Park transportation conversion grant along with projects pending or underway. City discussed return of Kids in the Trees program with Sequoia Parks Conservancy. Dark Sky Festival is September 12-14, 2025. Campgrounds are in the process of closing for the season. Crystal Cave closed on 9/7 to work on repairing the road. Seasonal staffing are ending their season, leaving behind the permanent staff, which is down 45% due to hiring freeze, to keep visitor services going. No current workforce housing issues due to hiring freeze. Jim Henson Co. is producing a new Muppet show. Pilot episode features SEKI and will shoot in late October. Sequoia will be the first park featured, focused on Awe and Inspiration for Kids. Working with Visit Visalia for production team accommodations. Mineral King Road repairs are ahead of schedule. The first year work continues into December, with the team projecting a 2-year project versus a 3- year project. October 1, 2025 – soft launch of online public lands passes. While this may improve efficiency, gate entrance passes allow the park to keep 80% of the sales revenue. 	Information Only	Kawasaki-Yee

4. Staff Report	<p>Destination Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o SLT Replacement Project – 11 LOI and 5 proposals received o Also have a storage location for the SLT Logs – to be moved from the City yard in October. <p>Marketing: Convention and Leisure</p> <p>Convention Sales</p> <p>PROPOSALS Added “New” and “Returning” to the dashboard.</p> <p>CONTRACTED New: 2148 room nights Repeat: 6120 room nights</p> <p>Incentives: For the incentive program, based on actualized room nights, we have just under \$112,000 committed, \$82,000 and pending, \$30,000, for new group business – only two proposals are pending.</p> <p>Leisure Update Bianco reported on the following dashboard data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are seeing published content from our recent FAM Tours including, Visit California Japan FAM and paid collaboration with Flying Dawn Marie Japan FAM: \$65,000 in Media Value Flying Dawn – Moro to Morro (\$2500 fee) 70K blog visitors, 150,000 YT views/month • Featured in Visit USA UK Webinar • Hotel Beds Campaign September – November targeted 180,000 travel agents in UK, France, Germany, Japan, China, Aus. 	Information Only	Staff
Adjourn	Nelsen adjourned the regular meeting at 9:25am	Adjourn	Nelsen

The next regular meeting
Wednesday, October 8, 2025, 9:00 am – City of Visalia Administrative Conference Room