



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

Chair:		Staff: Sherrie Bakke		
Members Present: Denise Taylor-Connor Walter Deissler Sintia Kawaski-Yee: ex-officio John Oneto Cynthia Padilla-Nowakowski Brett Taylor		Members Absent: Anil Chagan Samantha Mathias Steve Nelsen	Present - 5 Absent -2 Quorum – Y	Others Present/Guests: Carrie Groover, Marriott Hector Ramos, Hilton Garden Inn
TOPIC	Discussion/Recommendations		ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
Call to Order	John Oneto, Treasurer, called the meeting to order at 9:02am.		Information only	Oneto
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	Deissler motioned to approve the November regular meeting minutes. Oneto requested a correction to the treasurer's report from "recommends" to "recommended". Taylor seconded the motion to approve the minutes as amended. Motion approved without discussion.		Approved Minutes November 12, 2025	Deissler/Taylor

2.	Treasurer's Report	<p>Oneto presented the November financials, explained the CVB is "beyond broke". There is not enough money to pay all the bills. The Valley Strong Money Market was closed and the funds deposited into the primary checking account. With \$96,353 cash on hand, we are prioritizing payments to cover payroll through January 16, 2026.</p> <p>Conner motioned to approve the November financials as presented. Deissler seconded the motion. Motion Approved.</p>	Approved November 2025 Financials	Conner/Deissler
3	City of Visalia (COV) Contract	<p>Oneto updated the board with the following information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chagan and Oneto believed they had confirmed the CVB's acceptance of the conditions to continue receiving City funding. They were notified this was not true and a meeting is to be scheduled next week to confirm the acceptance. • City conditions include: Hiring a full-time convention salesperson, reduced "new" room nights to 3500, CVB Meeting will focus on convention sales no leisure tourism, CVB budget needs to clearly separates COV funding from TMD Funding • A proposed budget has been constructed to include a full-time convention salesperson. • VTMD has paid VCVB all 12 payments for the year – no additional revenue is expected to pay 2025 contracted expenses • Regarding 2025 Funding: The intention is to request the portion of funding for the work accomplished based on the City Manger's funding allocation of convention sales and leisure travel; 60/40 or 70/30. With 100% of leisure goals met or exceed and 20% of sales goals met the concept is to receive that portion of the funding. 		Oneto

4	Bylaw Modification	<p>The nomination of Carrie Groover to the CVB Board, if elected, would place two TMD Board members on the CVB Board. The CVB Bylaws only specify representation from one TMD Board member. The suggestion is to modify the Bylaws to reflect two TMD Board Members.</p> <p>The CV Bylaws define the Board member composition as follows: "Board of Directors will represent: 1 City of Visalia Representative, 1 Visalia Tourism Marketing District Board of Director, 1 Hotel Representative, not serving as a TMD Board Member, 6 at-large representatives, and Ex-Officio/Non-voting member representing Sequoia National Park."</p> <p>Board discussion resulted in consensus – the by laws require one TMD representative but does not limit the number of TMD board members. If elected, Carrie would serve as an "at-large" member of the CVB Board, not as a TMD representative on the CVB Board.</p> <p>No action taken</p>	No Action	
5.	Director Appointment	<p>Taylor nominated Carrie Groover, General Manager of the Visalia Marriott to an at-large position on the Convention and Visitors Bureau Board of Directors, Deissler seconded the motion. Motion carried without discussion.</p>	Groover Board appointment	Taylor/Deissler

6.	2026 Officer Nominations	<p>Oneto announced, Steve Nelsen resigned from the CVB Board on Monday, December 8, 2025 , effective immediately. The resignation also leaves the 2026 board chairmanship open for nomination.</p> <p>Deissler nominated the following directors to serve as officers and the CVB Executive Committee in 2026: Chairperson: Carrie Groover Vice Chair: Denise Connor Treasurer: Anil Chagan Secretary: Samantha Mathias The motion was seconded by Taylor, Motion Carried.</p> <p>Additional discussion ensued regarding the need to fill the two vacant board positions resulting from the resignations of John Oneto and Steve Nelsen.</p>	2026 Officer Election	Deissler/Taylor
7.	2026 Marketing/Business Development Plan	<p>This item was agendized based on securing a 2026 contract from the City of Visalia.</p> <p>The 2026 Marketing/Business Development plan was presented to the VTMD during their October board meeting. The VTMD Board approved the leisure travel portion of the plan. Without confirmed 2026 funding from the City of Visalia, there can be no marketing for convention sales. No plan was presented.</p>	No Action	Staff Report
8.	2026 Budget	<p>This item was agendized based on securing a 2026 contract from the City of Visalia. Without confirmed funding from the City, no budget was presented.</p>	No Action	Staff Report
		Discussion/Informational Items		

3. SEKI Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Hensen productions wrapped filming of the pilot episode of Wowsabout during the government shutdown • Trek to the Tress is Sunday, December 14. This is also the last NPS free entry day for the year. • Changes in the park entry fees in 2026 is creating confusion. The fee changes have been approved without a procedure for implementation. The increased entry for international visitation is anticipated to reduce the visitor experience due to the need for all entrants to show identification as proof of citizenship. More information to follow. 	Information Only	Kawasaki-Yee
4. Staff Report	Bakke reviewed the sales tracking log for 2025 in detail and provided a snapshot of conventions, pending, won and lost according to the source. Room nights contracted falls short of the City of Visalia's 2024 goal of 7300 new room nights. Current new room nights: 2203 with an additional 3446 pending. Staff does not anticipate any of the pending proposals for new room nights to be secured before the end of 2025.	Information Only	Staff
Good of the order	The board tentatively scheduled a Special Meeting on Friday, December 19 at 9am at the Tourism Office, to review the outcome of the anticipated meeting with the City Manager.	Special Meeting	Oneto
Adjourn	Oneto adjourned the regular meeting at 10:47 am	Adjourn	Oneto

The next regular meeting

Wednesday, January 14, 2026, 9:00 am – City of Visalia Administrative Conference Room