

# BURBANK HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION BOARD MEETING

Minutes for the Meeting of November 15, 2023, at 2:00PM

Location: Hotel Amarano I Great Room

322 N. Pass Ave., Burbank, CA 91505

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|----------------------------|---|
| Members Present:           | Nerissa Sugars, Hollywood Burbank Airport, <b>Chair</b><br>Peter Kolla, Hotel Amarano, <b>Vice-Chair</b><br>Jamie Keyser, Burbank Chamber of Commerce, <b>Secretary</b><br>Fatima Achhal, SpringHill Suites by Marriott<br>Aly Bubbins, Hotel Burbank<br>Stacey Meyer, Residence Inn by Marriott<br>Alan Tate, Burbank Airport Marriott<br>Ali Schmidt, Universal Studios Hollywood<br>Edgar Rivera, Hilton Garden Inn Burbank Downtown<br>Tony Garibian, Coast Anabelle Hotel and Safari Inn |
| Members Absent:            | Danny Kahn, Warner Bros. Studio Tours, <b>Treasurer</b><br>Patrick Prescott, Community Development Director (ex-officio)  |
| Members of the Public:     | None  |
| Admin/Marketing Key Staff: | Mary Hamzoian, Economic Development Manager<br>Odette Zakarian, Economic Development Analyst<br>Robin Faulk, Marketing Consultant   |
| Bookkeeping Staff:         | Teresa Mackey, Bookkeeping  |
| Legal Counsel:             | Aleks R. Giragosian, Colantuono, Highsmith & Whatley, PC  |

The Burbank Hospitality Association (BHA) Board Meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. on Wednesday, November 15, 2023.

## A. Roll Call

There was a quorum with ten (10) members present, one (1) member absent.

## B. Announcements

Staff announced the following items:

### **Upcoming Events:**

- Holiday In the Park is scheduled for November 17th
- Winter Wine Walk is coming back to Downtown Burbank November 18th
- CTN Animation Expo is scheduled for November 16-19th
- Cambria Hotel Burbank Airport is opening by the end of the year 150 rooms with a full-service restaurant and bar.
- TBID Annual Report going to City Council December 12th

**C. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**D. Board Member Comments**

Ali Schmidt announced Universal Studios Hollywood closed out its best Halloween Horror Nights in the history of the park. The Wednesday debut was a success. This year, tickets went on sale the first week of June which was earlier than prior years. This strategy grew the out-of-town tourist segment. Universal Destinations and Experiences is planning on opening a year-round Halloween activation in Las Vegas and hopes to drive more destination travelers with this event.

Nerissa Sugars shared that starting June 4, 2024, Southwest Airlines will have five new destinations out of Hollywood Burbank Airport. Ms. Sugars recently attended the Airport Council International Conference where Hollywood Burbank Airport received two marketing awards.

Tony Garibian shared he had a meeting with Burbank City Council Member Zizette Mullins. Councilwoman Mullins asked if interactive wayfinding signage is still being considered. Mary Hamzoian explained that the City recently met with wayfinding company IKE Smart City at a conference. There is no cost to the City for installation and the signage generates substantial revenue. A contract is currently being generated for a pilot program in Downtown Burbank. This is not something that would come from Visit Burbank because there is no cost associated with it.

**E. Legal Counsel Update**

There was no Legal Counsel update.

**F. Approval of Minutes**

**ACTION ITEM**

The minutes for the BHA Board meeting of October 18, 2023, were presented for approval. Peter Kolla and Ali Schmidt abstained from voting due to absence. Tony Garibian requested the following modification:

1. Under the California STAR Program agenda item, “Marriott travel agents” is inaccurate and needs to be changed to “Marriott properties.”

Jamie Keyser made a motion for approval of the minutes with the modification. The motion was seconded by Alan Tate; motion carried 8-0.

**G. Treasurer’s Report**

BHA Bookkeeper, Teresa Mackey, presented the profit and loss report for September 2023, the BHA currently collected \$113,826.01 in income with expenses totaling \$111,626.83. The Board’s total assets equal \$1,294,659.25 as of September 30, 2023.

**H. Universal Parks & Resorts Vacations (UPRV) 2023 Update and Renewal for 2024**  
**ACTION ITEM**

Serena Whitecotton, Manager of UPRV Product, provided an update on the 2023 program and presented the roadmap for 2024. The presentation was kicked off by a welcome message from UPRV's Marketing and Revenue Management Sr. Director, Chris Martin. Mr. Martin thanked everyone for their partnership and briefly discussed what they are looking forward to next year, including increased investments in marketing and a preferred travel agency loyalty program.

Burbank hotels had a record year with UPRV, with room night volume increasing more than 130%. The Visit Burbank ad campaign had a total of 940,998 impressions in FY 22-23. Hotel Burbank was added to the program in 2023, but the property is not yet on sale due to technical issues. The Tangerine and Cambria Hotel will be added to the 2024 program.

Because Hotel Burbank was not connected this year, BHA will have a \$10,000 credit that will go to the 2024 program. The total investment for 2024 will be \$110,000.

Tony Garibian asked if we are still being diligent on the hotels and providing availability on the hotels we're paying for. Ms. Whitecotton explained that for the upcoming fiscal year, almost every hotel has given UPRV availability, and they are on track to match FY22-23. They also have a much bigger booking window for 2024 at 60 days versus 49.

Peter Kolla asked who BHA will be working with regarding the new law for no additional fees added at the end of the booking. Ms. Whitecotton answered it would be her colleague Kylie and herself. This law goes into effect July 1, 2024, and ensures that anything that is booked needs to show all fees beyond taxes.

Ms. Whitecotton went over the 2024 marketing plan which includes: a \$200K budget increase, media campaigns targeting residents outside of Southern California, new product development, ticketing and system updates, increased presence on USH.com, and redesigning overall UX/UI to be more focused on overall LA Area Vacation.

There was a discussion about the timeframe of park attendance by locals during the openings of The Wizarding World of Harry Potter and Super Nintendo World. Ali Schmidt mentioned next year is the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Studio Tour and there will be new content for that milestone.

Nerissa Sugars recommended the UPRV team step out so that the hotel groups could have an open discussion. The overall feedback from the group was that the experience has been positive and they are happy with the program.

Ali recused herself from voting. Tony Garibian made a motion to approve renewal for UPRV, seconded by Peter Kolla; motion carried 9-0.

**I. U.S.Travel Association’s International Pow Wow (IPW) Familiarization Tours (FAMs) ACTION ITEM**

The 2024 IPW will take place in Los Angeles. Staff presented opportunities to participate in several BrandUSA and Visit California pre-and post-IPW media and travel trade FAM tours for a cost of \$25,000. Costs will be used to cover hotel stays, attractions tickets and dining experiences for FAM attendees. The \$10,000 already set aside for FAMs is separate from this request. The following FAMs are in the works:

- Visit California: The Ultimate Playground Post-IPW FAM  
-20 FAM participants with a mix of trade (buyers) and media staying 1 or 2 nights. Not to exceed \$10,000.
- Brand USA Canada Mega-FAM  
-10 highly qualified Canadian travel agents with two hosts (Brand USA and Air Canada). Not to exceed \$10,000.
- Warner Bros. Studio Tour Hollywood (WBSTH) Buyer Event  
-Partner with WBSTH on a studio-hosted buyer event during IPW. Not to exceed \$5,000.

Ali Schmidt clarified that for Visit California’s Post-IPW FAM, Universal Studios Hollywood is most likely unable to contribute because they are already hosting an afterhours private event on the final night of IPW for all the delegates and buyers. With regards to the Warner Bros. FAM event, Ms. Schmidt feels that it is important to bring the agents out into the community, and staff confirmed that they are working on doing that.

Peter Kolla recommended that BHA should set aside more for FAMs when looking at future budgets, as these opportunities were not presented when planning the current budget.

Tony Garibian made a motion to approve up to \$25,000 for FAM tours, seconded by Peter Kolla; motion carried 10-0.

**J. Board Approved Expenditures ACTION ITEM**

Staff requested transferring \$208,000 from the holding account to cover:

- The following pre-approved expenses from the last two months: consultant expenses of \$17,000, legal fees of \$10,000, marketing fees of \$28,000, and ongoing administrative expenses in the amount of \$18,000.
- Up to \$25,000 for participation in IPW FAM tours.
- UPRV Program cost of \$110,000 for 2024.

Aly Bubbins made a motion to approve the Board Expenditures as presented, seconded by Jamie Keyser; motion carried 10-0.

**K. Future Agenda Items**

- Strausberg 6-month update and budgets discussion in February.
- Rebrand discussion.
- Sponsorship Subcommittee meeting updates.
- Bike Program – Bikes & Hikes LA was not the right fit for Burbank given liability issues. Determine if we want to pursue a different option.
- Airline incentive program needs to be revisited – Destination Development Subcommittee meeting.

**L. ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 3:43 p.m. The next tentative meeting will take place on Wednesday, January 24, 2024.