

Regular Meeting

Moab Tourism Advisory Board (MTAB)

Held at Grand County, Utah Commission Chambers
125 E. Center
Moab, Utah 84532

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xzBjwXvj-pl>

MINUTES

September 9, 2025 | 3:00 p.m.

**** Time stamps (HH:MM:SS) correspond to the video****

Regular Meeting

Members in attendance: Wendell Williams, Howard Trenholme, Cora Phillips, Sharon Kienzle, Alex Borichevsky, Jason Taylor, Rebecca Monceaux

Members in attendance remotely: Lori McFarland, Brian Martinez

Non-members in attendance: Mick Soleta, Alison Harford, Angie Brooks, Melisa Jeffers, Gabe Woytek, Chantel Lindsay

Non-members in attendance remotely: Campbell Levy, Courtney Housam, Katelyn Greene, Lesley Rowbal

Opening Items

Call to Order (00:02:26)

Conflicts of Interest, Disclosures, Ex-Parte Communication (00:04:16)

- Alex said he was planning to meet with Governor Cox during the governor's visit to Moab
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Citizens to be Heard (00:04:46)

1. Board Member Reports (00:05:02)

- Howard said the airport is doing well and the board is excited to develop the airport as an economic development driver. Red Rock Bakery has been hit hard by inflation, he said; but Rocky Mountaineer (Canyon Spirit) is showing an uptick in ticket sales for next year.

- Rebecca said renovations are still ongoing at the Red Cliffs Lodge, the main lodge is set to open November 1.
- Cora said the Chamber is hosting a luncheon, City Council debate, and is working on holiday festivities.
- Sharon said visits to the national parks are up over last year; she also mentioned a Public Lands Day celebration at the MIC.
- Alex said his restaurants, 98 Center and Sabaku Sushi, are back open after a summer break. Business has been strong and moderate.
- Jason said the City of Moab is still working on infrastructure improvements, including sidewalks, roads, and lighting. His businesses are “pretty flat” for the year.
- Lori said High Point Hummer & ATV has been working “really hard” to be flat for the year. She also praised MOT staff and the commissioners for their work in increasing tourism.
- Brian said the Sand Flats Recreation Area is working on a new video and said the commission passed the MTAB’s new bylaws, allowing it to add more voting members.

Discussion and Action Items

11. New MTAB Member Action Item (00:17:30)

- Moved to the top of the agenda
- Jason Taylor is officially a voting member of the board
- The board will also need to elect another voting member to bring the total number of voting numbers up to 9. Howard clarified that the new board member needs to be a member of a tax collecting entity. Wendell said he would follow up with the county to understand the interview process for next month’s meeting.

2. Consideration of future agenda items (00:00:00)

- Removed from agenda

3. Mud Springs Mountain Bike Trail Update, Marketing Request (00:19:11)

- Melisa Jeffers, the county’s public information officer and economic development director, said the county sees the opening of the new Mud Springs Trail System south of Moab as an economic and visitation opportunity. The trail system could be used as a NICA mountain biking course and can be used to re-establish Moab as a mountain biking destination, Melisa said.
- She asked that the board support a ribbon cutting for the trail system, a volunteer celebration, and a content capture of people recreating on the new trails. The content capture could be used to promote a grand opening in spring 2026.
- Campbell said CampStories is using the Mud Springs system in their “what’s new” and “where to go in 2026” travel pitches.
- Alex asked if San Juan County was also doing any promotion of the trail system, since it technically falls within that county. Melisa said she’s working closely with San Juan County to promote the trail.

- Wendell asked if Melisa needs funds to be able to promote the trail system. She asked for \$12,000 to \$14,000 for the content capture piece. Brian asked if the Moab Office of Tourism could help find content creators.
- Jason asked if the bylaws mentioned spending dollars to promote places in other counties. Ali pointed out that Moab works with San Juan County a lot; Brian and Sharon pointed out that the Island in the Sky District of Canyonlands and Dead Horse Point State Park are both technically in San Juan County.
- Sharon motioned to allocate \$13,000 for content creation for the Mud Springs trail opening, pending legality. Alex seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Special Events Grant Subcommittee Update (00:39:47)

Approval of budget:

- Howard said the goal of the grant is to return to its original purpose, which was to match marketing dollars for special events. He asked the board to consider a budget of up to \$200,000 per year to offer for this grant.
- Brian said the subcommittee discussed creating three “pots” of dollars, for local events, event series, and larger events. He also said the subcommittee’s goals for the grant include promoting events in the slower seasons, events that want to grow, and supporting existing events.
- Campbell said CampStories will work on spreading the word about the event once the application opens.
- Howard said the subcommittee wants to open applications for events planned in January 2026 to June 2027.
- Jason made a motion to approve a budget of \$250,000 for the grant with a 24 month window for events. Alex seconded the motion. Motion passes 7-1, with Lori dissenting.

Approval of application:

- Brian said there will be work involved with getting event coordinators who apply for the grant to work with Grand County regarding event permits.
- Cora made a motion to approve the grant application; Sharon seconded. The board then discussed finer details of the application, noting that the grant is for marketing purposes only.
- Cora then motioned to amend the original motion to clarify that the grant application need to ask for a marketing plan from applicants, since the grant is a marketing grant. Sharon seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Working with CampStories and Madden Media:

- Lesley and Campbell clarified that both of the agencies they work for would need to draft a separate Scope of Work to allocate resources toward marketing this grant.
- Sharon made a motion to have Madden Media and CampStories put together Scopes of Work to promote the grant application. Alex seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

5. Expansion of Moab Chamber of Commerce Electric Lights Parade/Tree Lighting (01:14:28)

Lion's Park and Bike Path holiday lights

- Brian presented an idea to light the bridge over the Colorado River near Lion's Park, as well as the bike path from the bridge to a cottonwood tree, to enhance holiday visitation. He asked for the board to allocate \$49,000 to purchase lights.
- Howard made a motion to approve \$49,000 to fund holiday lights to be displayed on the bike path and bridge off of Lion's Park. Jason seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Activation with CampStories

- Ali and Campbell explained budget breakdown for the "Festive Tree" activation; most of the presented budget is going toward a Satellite Media Tour with the goal to promote winter travel to Moab.
- Sharon made a motion to approve the Scope of Work with CampStories for the "Festive Tree" activation and public relations efforts; Alex seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Review 2026 Opportunities (01:23:51)

- Wendell brought up three events in 2026 that the Moab Office of Tourism could leverage for marketing: the World Cup, Jeep Safari, and America 250.
- Howard made a motion to assign Madden Media to include the three events in its 2026 media plan. Cora seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

7. Madden Update on Audience Profiles (01:26:44)

- Lesley presented Madden Media's updated audience profiles.

8. MTAB Goals Revisions With New Timelines and 12. 2026 TRT Mitigation Application Update (01:29:58)

- Combined item 8 with item 12
- Wendell said the board is still sticking with the goals it created earlier in the year, but will revise the dates.
- Wendell also said the board is still collecting TRT applications from department heads.
- Brian asked if the board was still planning to write its budget advisory letter in October, Wendell assured that they were.

9. 'Who Is Moab' reelCreative Video Project Update (01:32:40)

- Ali provided updates on the 'Who is Moab' video project; the creative agency chose four locals to highlight and will film videos in the first two weeks of October.
- Howard asked how individuals were selected; Ali said reelCreative chose the four locals based on initial guidance from staff (one offroading person, one art person, one cycling person, one rafting person) and their own research and interviews.

10. Gravel Adventure Field Guide Review and Potential Approval (01:36:24)

- Moved to the bottom of the agenda

13. Discuss and Approve Budget for November In-Person Visits/Events With the Utah Office of Tourism And Moab's Creative Agencies (01:36:43)

- All of the Moab Office of Tourism's agencies - Madden Media, CampStories, and Camp4 + Tourist - plan to visit Moab in mid-November, along with staff from the Utah Office of Tourism.
- Mick presented a loose schedule for the mid-November week, including a board meeting and community open house. Brian emphasized that the community open house would be a great opportunity for the branding agency to meet stakeholders in the community; Lori also expressed that the open house would be an important opportunity for the branding agency to hear community voices.

14. Airport Billboard Update (01:42:43)

- Wendell asked the airport marketing subcommittee to review the creative assets put forth by Madden Media regarding the airport billboard.

15. Camp4+Tourist Scope of Work Document Review (01:43:22)

- Wendell thanked Mick for his work to design the Camp4 + Tourist branding project.
- Mick ran through the Scope of Work, and encouraged the board to speak up if they wanted to see anything else included in the project.

16. MOT and Moab To Monument Valley Film Commission 2026 Budget Review (01:48:57)

- Brian invited Gabe Woytek and Chantel Lindsay to present where TRT revenues are at currently in 2025 and forecasts for 2026.
- Mick and Ali then presented the Moab Office of Tourism budget; the draft reflected known and contracted expenses through 2026. Mick asked the board what the total budget number should be for 2026 considering contracted expenses and the TRT forecast. Brian encouraged board members to reach out to Mark Tyner with their questions.
- The board decided to have a workshop to go through the MOT and MMVFC budgets on September 23.
- Bega emphasized that the board also needs to decide a total budget for the film commission. She went through her budget requests, highlighting the need for an assistant.
- Brian said the hiring firm overseeing the hiring process for the Executive Director position would be looking at candidates in the next few weeks; the Director could provide more insight into how much to allocate to hiring more staff.
- Howard asked that the film commission encourage films to come in the winter.

10. Gravel Adventure Field Guide Review and Potential Approval (02:11:21)

- Revisited. Ali presented a project to create a Moab Gravel Adventure Field Guide to capture local and national mountain and gravel biking momentum.

- Wendell encouraged the project, saying that Moab needs to continue to build its reputation as a mountain biking destination.
- Brian said this is a future forward buy and also encouraged the project. He emphasized that the BLM and the county trail teams needed to be on board as well to ensure that Moab has the trails to support the project.
- Howard asked why the Moab Office of Tourism would do its first niche recreation project with gravel biking. Ali responded that the office needs to start small and there's massive momentum for this market currently. Howard emphasized that the MOT need to have a pledge that other user groups will see projects highlighting their niche soon.
- Lori made a motion to support the project with a budget of \$69,000 to print 10,000 copies of the field guide.
- Alex made a substitute motion to support the project with a budget of \$87,000 to print 25,000 copies of the field guide, which was seconded by Howard. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn