



## **EXECUTIVE MEETING**

Friday, June 27, 2025

1:00 PM to 2:00 PM

<https://zoom.us/j/91097478769>

## **MINUTES**

### **1. Chair opening remarks.**

The Chair, Brett Walker, welcomed the members of the executive committee, and a special welcome and thank you to Peter Lacy, who accepted to join the Executive Board, and quickly presented the heavy agenda, for a straight 1-hour meeting. He focused on the importance of finalizing the budget for the ETC event on November 4<sup>th</sup>.

### **2. Agenda approval.**

Approved unanimously, without change.

### **3. Minutes from previous meeting approval. N/A**

The last meeting, held on February 10, was a more informative discussion, with no decision made about the same topics that will be addressed today. The only pending question was about the new CATO branding that could include the drivers "trusted and endorsed. It has been put on pause until further reconsideration.

### **4. Financial Report.**

Brett made initial comment about our coming expenses related with the ETC event, the EIAT, and that we have the buying from membership that is concerning considering a low commitment so far. The Treasurer, Rick Edwards, tabled three financial report documents as of June 26: Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Activity, and the A/R Aging Summary Report. They all are part of those Minutes. He mentioned that we have enough cash to cover our budgeted expenses.

Peter mentioned that as long as we have the safety to cover all expenses, he is not concerned. The Treasurer reassured, saying we should be over by \$20K overall. In short, the financial report was reviewed, showing a positive outlook, and enough cash to cover upcoming expenses, including the ETC event.

Financial Report well received without any concerns.

## **5. ETC event on Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025.**

Brett questioned the list of members that have signed up. Jean reported that we have 8 TO confirmed as of today and listed them. He's waiting a confirmation from EF Educational Tours who just recently joined our Association. He also mentioned those with a hard no, and questions received about the value for the fee that maybe a factor. Rick added that some of the eight have already paid.

Brett is surprised about reaction regarding the fee for the participants. We need to try achieving our goal of ten. He emphasized the need for a hard deadline for event participation by the end of next week, expressing concern about the cost and venue considerations. The group discussed the importance of securing final commitments from member companies, and Brett suggesting follow-up calls to those who haven't confirmed their attendance. Jean suggested the companies that might be worth a call: Travel Brand, West Jet Vacations, Tours Chanteclerc, West World Tours and Worldstrides. David suggested that Jean email them.

Jean mentioned that we have \$43 K secured so far: 30 K from ETC, 8 K from TO, and 5 K from Allianz. He asked if a contribution from CATO can be considered to set a final budget today, in order to move on with the organization planning and finalize the venue arrangements. Richard expressed comfort if costs for CATO stay at \$7,000. In the meantime, more contacts will be made to reduce this amount from CATO. Brett's worry is cash flow, but again reassured by Rick. It will be important to receive advance payment from ETC as soon as possible as well.

Richard put a motion forward to set the budget event at \$50 K, seconded by David. The motion was passed unanimously.

## **6. Exoticca: TICO's response - Update**

Jean reported on the status with the response from TICO, which, once again, doesn't provide a clear response to our concerns and the complaint we sent them back in February. He spoke with TICO's CEO at the Baxter Gala, along with Brett, and he was told we might see some changes in advertising practices from Exotica in a couple of weeks.

The group discussed concerns about Exotica's pricing practices and TICO's response. David expressed frustration that TICO hasn't addressed the issue despite previous complaints, while Richard suggested forwarding the file to the Competition Bureau to put pressure on TICO. Peter proposed getting more clarification from TICO about their rules and examples of what constitutes acceptable pricing, noting inconsistencies and potential violations of advertising guidelines, such as the clause "a previous price may not be advertised." TICO is creating confusion. Jean has been asked to get clarifications from TICO keeping Exoticca out of it and only for the benefit of our members, and the CEO if changes occurred, and then to consider forwarding the file to the Competition Bureau.

David suggested calling Richard to update him on the Cato Board meeting and to gauge his expectations for the next week. The group discussed the importance of presenting travel agents with information that passes their "sniff test". Brett suggested putting something in writing to Tico.

## **7. The OOC meeting in Switzerland**

Jean reported on his conversation with Oliver, saying everything is on track and we should get more details soon about the agreement Tourism Switzerland they are discussing with Air Canada for flights. Registration process is open with a deadline of July 01.

## **8. Economic Impact Analysis: 2025 update**

Jean reported on his meetings with BDO in preparation of their proposal that has been sent all. The pricing is reasonable at \$15K, considering a couple more questions about US tariffs and AI.

The group discussed updating industry data projections, agreeing to base the next update on 2025 numbers and to move the timeline to the end of the year for more accurate results. The group also discussed the importance of data collection and agreed to vet questions for the upcoming survey. It was decided to replicate the previous process, keeping the same questions to simplify work for finance teams. The group also noted the importance of using the data for lobbying efforts, particularly regarding tariffs and border issues. Finally, they briefly touched on getting a fixed-price quote from BDO for the data analysis work. The Ex. Dir. Is asked to follow up with BDO and report back asap, and based on a timeframe that needs to be delayed closer to the end of the year to get more accurate 2025 numbers, so completion by January 2026.

A motion to move forward with the proposal is approved unanimously.

**The meeting adjourned at 1 pm.** The other topics will be addressed with the Chair, and the information will follow thereafter.

## **9. Beyond Borders Coalition**

### **10.Minister meeting request**

### **11.Social Event on Aug. 14**

### **12.Brazil interest for OOC meeting in 2026**

### **13.Other matters: Open for discussion**

### **14.Adjournment.**