



**Board of  
Directors**

Michael Hanchett  
Paul Panchal  
Miguel Sandoval

Jeanne Hucek  
*Admin Coordinator*

## San Simeon Tourism Alliance

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED**

A board meeting of the San Simeon Tourism Alliance was held on **October 16, 2018** at the Cavalier Cove Room, 250 San Simeon Avenue, San Simeon, CA 93452. It was called to order at 1:06 PM and was presided over by the President of the Board, Michael Hanchett, with Jeanne Hucek as secretary.

**Board Members Present:**

Mike Hanchett  
Miguel Sandoval

**Board Members Apologies:**

Paul Panchal (excused absence).

**Quorum Present (simple majority):** Yes

**Staff:** Cheryl Cuming, SLO CBID CAO;  
Jeanne Hucek, Visitor Center Coordinator and SSTA Recording Secretary.

**Guests:**

Tim Bridwell, Lynette Harris, and Cam Arnold, Friends of the Elephant Seal (FES); Mary Ann Carson, Cambria Chamber of Commerce; Dennis Frahman, Cambria Scarecrow Festival, Cambria Center for the Arts and Cambria Film Festival; Mark Hucek, Cavalier Oceanfront Resort; Stacie Jacob & Brad Rubin, Solterra Strategies; Jodie Nelson, Piedras Blancas Light Station;

### **WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS**

### **PUBLIC COMMENT(S)**

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous September 18, 2018 meeting was made by Miguel and seconded by Michael, all were in favor.

## **SLO CBID MONTHLY REPORT** – Cheryl Cuming

### 1. Review of the CBID Evaluation – Laila Kollmann

Cheryl made apologies for Laila Kollmann, the CBID immediate past chair, who was scheduled to share a review of the recent CBID evaluation but was not able to attend at the last minute.

Cheryl highlighted the 12 Beautification & Infrastructure Grant (BIG) projects that were confirmed with \$100,000 in funding. Proposals submissions for FY 2018-19 will be due in the middle of January.

Cheryl showed off the newest edition of the H1DR map sharing that the map goes out to a quarter of a million visitors each year and is distributed to 1600 lodging properties, Visitor and Welcome Centers and Certified Folder locations throughout California. They also re-launched their website.

Cheryl reported on the results from the Highway 1 Discovery U economic impact report. The highlights: 1.5M visitors (up 4%), spending was up 4.8% with 39% in lodging, 22% retail and 17% food and beverage. Total economic impact exceeds \$375 million with \$51 million in tax revenue. Employing almost 3,900 workers.

Mark asked for clarification on the reporting basis for the transient occupancy tax. She shared that what is seen on the report is from the paid assessments as of the date and time that the report is pulled. Cheryl indicated that she is aware that respondents of the recent survey shared that they would like to see more timely information for tax collection and they are hopeful that the new application they are implementing will provide better reporting.

## **Finances**

Cheryl reported that San Simeon's contribution for August was 18 percent of the total. Michael remarked that there's a total of \$160,000 available in the budget including the commitment to Solterra Strategies.

## **SOLTERRA CORE MARKETING MONTHLY REPORT** – Stacie Jacob

Stacie reviewed their public relations efforts in conjunction with Visit SLO CAL and H1DR.

- 10-4 to 10-5 Mary Charlebois
- 10-6 to 10-7 VCA SuperFAM
- 10-14 to 10-18 Suzanne Koch
- 10-15 to 10-17 Ronnie Greenberg
- 10-20 to 10-21 Joanna Fortnam
- 10-26 to 10-27 Carlotta Rubaltelli and Frederico Avanzini
  
- Blog Post Efforts
  - Can You Guess
  - Hwy 1 Dream Drive
  - Hiking in San Simeon
- Social Media

- 5,685 Facebook, Instagram 1,300, Twitter 514

Brad reported on the analytics.

- The STR report – San Simeon has lead the STR report from May forward. September continued the trend of increased occupancy and RevPar.
- Average traffic year over year continues to be extremely high even though the raw numbers are down as we move into the shoulder season.
- Organic search continues to improve as the site matures and is now on par with paid search, out pacing it by three users.
- 11% of all traffic is clicking on the “Where to Stay” link.
- Reservation leads –There were 895 leads, which is just 100 below the peak month of July. Of those, 615 were direct leads and 280 went to the where to stay page. Brad encouraged the lodging partners to consider refreshing photo content as often as possible to improve SEO.
- Ad word spend –We spent \$1000 for ad words in September. The cost per click has normalized to around .30 cents. We had a 6.19% conversion rate and there were 247 paid search reservation leads. We are starting to cannibalize our own paid search, in the future we need to reorganize some of the funds to take better advantage of our new position. We added an ad word campaign in conjunction with the updated Hearst Castle content.
- Expanded content – We are in the top search results for San Simeon. The goal is to refine content to make primary attractions reach top 5 listings on the search engine rankings

### **REPORTS/UPDATES:**

1. Visitor Center Report – Jeanne Hucek  
Visitor Center is closed due to repairs on the decking outside the front door. Jeanne is taking advantage of the opportunity to take a field trip with the volunteers to tour Stepladder Ranch and Creamery.
2. Alliance Partners Reports/Updates  
FES:  
Lynette shared their excitement to have 14 docents graduating at the close of the advanced training this Saturday. The Among Friends newsletter will mail out on November 12 and includes a new Business Sponsorship solicitation. The Speakers Bureau spoke to 19 organizations, 538 people since their inception in March. FES will be hosting a Holiday Open House November 23-25 serving Apple Cider and Cookies. The new eSeal socks are due to arrive in January.

Cheryl would like to coordinate a docent photo shoot, possibly in January.

PIEDRAS BLANCAS LIGHT STATION:

Jodie indicated that Hops for the Top was a success, 60 people enjoyed the food and beer which was hosted by Figueroa Mountain and Firestone this year. The fog signal building is done, and they have seen steady visitor traffic in recent months. They are working to get their Beacon newsletter mailed shortly.

#### **CAMBRIA SCARECROW FESTIVAL:**

Dennis is excited that October is here, and the Festival has begun. They are conducting on the street interviews on the weekends in addition to offering two drop off locations for festival goers to provide data in exchange for a chance for an overnight stay in San Simeon. This weekend, Oktoberfest, is the peak of the festival at the Pinedorado grounds. Scarecrow winners will be announced at that event.

New this year, the festival is partnering with the Cambria Youth Alliance to put on a 5K run in conjunction with the festival. They have also joined forces with Volksmarching Club Scarecrow for Two-Days of Walking Events hosted by Central Coast Beach Boardwalkers and Cambria Scarecrows.

#### **CAMBRIA FILM FESTIVAL:**

Dennis said that passes will go on sale October 25. They are running previews of the movies on October 26 followed by a special screening of North by Northwest. They are very excited to have learned that Westways magazine will be featuring the Film Festival in their January issue.

#### **3. Eroica California Bike Ride**

Michael asked if there were any updates from the folks at Eroica. There was some discussion and Cheryl asked Mary Ann if Cambria would take the lead on keeping Cayucos and San Simeon in the loop. Mary Ann agreed to talk with Archer and Hound to see that this gets done.

#### **4. IPW 2019 Support for Hearst Castle**

Michael shared that he and Jim have had some conversation about IPW and Jim assumes that he will be going. Cheryl reminded the board that funding has not yet been approved for this venture.

### **DISCUSSION:**

Marketing Direction for 2019

The board has committed to the Go-West trade show for 2019 via our relationship with Mille Matz but does not plan to support any future trade shows at this time.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Trade Shows and FAMS 2019

A motion to approve the Go-West Trade show funding for \$8,397 as well as to approve Fam Tour funding for expense reimbursement in the amount of \$10,000 for the remainder of fiscal year 2018/19 subject to mutual approval of the Chamber and SSTA was made by Michael and seconded by Michael, all were in favor.

2. Cambria 2019 Art & Wine Festival

Mary Ann reported that the festival is in its seventeenth year and draws 600-700 attendees. She highlighted the benefits of sponsorship. They have wine, art and events in the Veterans Center, Center for the Arts. There are opportunities for Saturday night events. The cutoff date to be included in the program is by the end of the year. Promotional rack cards and banners will be included in the advertising efforts.

A motion to approve the \$2000 grant request was made by Miguel and seconded by Michael, all were in favor.

Mark suggested that the San Simeon Chamber consider offering their Friday Night Speaker series during the event.

Cheryl reported that she is working to confirm the Blendfest dates.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**

*Meeting adjourned: 2:02 pm*

**Next Regular Advisory Board Meeting:**

**Date and Time: December 18, 2018 @ 1:00pm**

**Location: Cove meeting Room**