



**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 **August 21, 2018** at the Cavalier Cove Room, 250 San Simeon Avenue, San Simeon, CA 93452. It was called to order at 1:04 PM and was presided over by the President of the Board, Michael Hanchett, with Jeanne Hucek as secretary.

Board Members Present:

Mike Hanchett
Paul Panchal
Miguel Sandoval

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

Guests:

Tim Bridwell and Cam Arnold, Friends of the Elephant Seal (FES); Ryan Cooper, Piedras Blancas Light Station; Dennis Frahman, Cambria Center for the Arts and Cambria Film Festival; Mark Hucek, General Manager, Cavalier Oceanfront Resort; Stacie Jacob & Brad Rubin, Solterra Strategies; Paulla Ufferheide, Cambria Scarecrow Festival; Heather Woodward & Chris, Wampum Trading Post and Castle Warehouse

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

PUBLIC COMMENT(S)

Paulla Ufferheide shared that the Cambria Scarecrow Festival is in full bloom and she is in the process of scarecrow rentals.

CORRESPONDENCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous July 17, 2018 meeting was made by Paul and seconded by Miguel, all were in favor.

SLO CIBD MONTHLY REPORT – Cheryl Cuming

Cheryl reported that the CBID recently finalized the “BID Bunch” marketing contractor team. Eleven contractors will be included in the power house team. Some specialties she briefly mentioned include, Photo, Content, Media and Market Strategist, PR Specialists and more. The CBID is having a meeting on September 10, 2018 to share the details of the newly formed CBID strategy and marketing team with all of the agency and to integrate everyone. The goal is to bring more valuable things down the funnel.

Stacie asked a follow up question wondering if their marketing plans will include an emphasis on shoulder season business. Cheryl affirmed and indicated that this is part of the reason the CBID formed the team.

Cheryl shared that the Hearst Castle Theatre management are screening the final two candidate films for this year’s Coastal Discovery month.

Finances

She indicated that the year ended at 18% overall contribution. Michael remarked that there’s a total of \$380,000 available in the budget but when the contracts are serviced the net is \$131,000.

SOLTERRA CORE MARKETING MONTHLY REPORT – Stacie Jacob

Stacie reviewed their public relations efforts related to Hwy 1 re-opening.

- Partnered with Cambria – Stolo, Hearst Castle, Dinner at Cavalier.
- Press Release with Cambria announcing the road opening.
- Recent Articles
 - Conde Nast
 - Pacific Coast Business Times
 - LA Times
 - Tribune
- The re-filling of the Neptune pool at Hearst Castle has generated significant worldwide attention. Cheryl indicated that Jim Allen counted over 119 articles thus far.
- New Blogs
- Social Media
 - 5,030 Facebook, Instagram 1,176 Twitter 512
- The STR report – San Simeon was the only city in the county that reported growth. Since the road has opened San Simeon occupancy is up 20% and the hotels are running 92.7% full.

Brad was not able to attend so Stacie reported on the analytics.

- The site saw record traffic in July.
- July saw 12,000 website visitors with the traffic increase driven by new visitors.
- Year over year traffic continues to soar and YOY acquisitions were up across all channels.
- Organic search engine is making a strong push due to SEO efforts.
- Paid search for July was 29.4% of the traffic and organic traffic was 28.3. Direct search was 11% and all other channels were 31.3% of traffic.

- There were 1,315 reservation leads in July 947 were direct leads and 368 were spawned from the “Where-to-Stay” page.
- Reservation leads – The top four were Camping, Cavalier, Ragged Point and Quality Inn. Vacation rentals were last.
- Ad word spend – our cost per click was \$.31
- Paid search resulted in 426 of the reservation leads at a cost of \$3.93 per lead.
- Email marketing saw an open rate of 17.7% with no retargeting. Represented 14,000 opens, 520 clicking throughs and 100 addresses added to our email list.

REPORTS/UPDATES:

1. Visitor Center Report – Jeanne Hucek

Visitors already seen in August 823 average number of visitors per day is up to 50

August 2017 - 673

August 2016 – 854

August 2015 - 1530

August 2014 – 1229

August 2013 – 540

August 2012 – 347

The Chamber launched a new speaker series in August called Coastal Connections. Every Friday night at 8:00 PM there’s a different speaker. Despite our efforts to advertise the offering locally, we have not seen a very good turnout. Unfortunately, thus far the largest of visitors was (6) people.

Jeanne extended her thanks to Aramark on behalf of Hearst Castle, Friends of the Elephant Seal, Harmony and Hearst Winery for their generous donations to the VCA DREAM DRIVE FAM.

Jeanne reported that the Visitor Center welcomed a new volunteer, Jill Williams. Chamber Membership drive, mailed solicitations to 121 businesses in our area, so far, we have seen the following new members:

Piedras Blancas Light Station Association, Inc.

Moonstone Beach Bar & Grill

San Simeon Community Cable

Currently working on upcoming UK SuperFAM that takes place October 6-7, 2018

Jeanne also mentioned the Media landing page that has been added to the Visit San Simeon website.

2. Alliance Partners Reports/Updates

PIEDRAS BLANCAS LIGHT STATION:

Ryan indicated that this is the last week of 5 day a week tours and the last Hike In tour will be on August 29th. They are preparing for the Sunset Soiree on September 22, 2018 and the Hops for Tops on October 13, 2018.

CAMBRIA FILM FESTIVAL:

Dennis said that they have received 1600 films from around the world for consideration in this year's festival. They are in the process of printing Rack cards which will be available very soon. His team is working on a work box for their partner hotels. Included will be tools for marketing packages, social media and more. Tickets go on sale the last week of October. It will run on the same weekend as Blend Fest. Dennis shared that they will be running the 1991 version of Beauty and the Beast at the Veterans hall during the last Saturday of the Coastal Discovery month to take pressure off of that film at the Castle.

CAMBRIA SCARECROW FESTIVAL:

Paula recalled the time that the Cambria Scarecrow Festival folks spent with the Dream Drive journalist in Tin City. She shared that they have received word from one of the UK journalists who is writing an article for an in-flight magazine that they may be included. American Media General, who operates radio stations throughout our area and as far east as Bakersfield, will be an in-kind contributor of this year's festival.

FES:

Tim shared that it is as if someone opened the faucet when Hwy1 re-opened. The rack cards they recently printed, and thought would last well over a year only lasted six months. Certified told them that they are the most taken rack card in their portfolio. They have noticed that a lot of signage was removed during road construction. The result is that some visitors traveling from the north are mistakenly stopping at the Arroyo Del Corral Beach and getting too close to the elephant seals. FES has a vacant position, Docent Coordinator. They are in the process of moving the docent schedule to an electronic platform. We can look forward to seeing FES in the Pinedorado parade and they are working on more Visitor Center enhancements.

3. Highway 1 Dream Drive Report – covered above.

DISCUSSION:

1. Trade Shows 2019

Michael asked the other board members what their interested is in entertaining renewal of the Millie Matz trade show representation for 2019. Miguel indicated that he would like to see the production numbers for 2018 prior to making a decision on next year. Cheryl offered to find out which shows SLO CAL and Jim Allen intend to attend to inform the conversation. She also suggested that she may be able to vet the list to prioritize. Paul suggested that we consider staggering the shows we attend, hitting each show every other year. Michael followed up by saying that he would coordinate a plan to be discussed at the September meeting.

2. IPW 2019 Support for Hearst Castle – The group decided that this is tied to the Trade Show 2019 funding and should be considered as part of that topic. Cheryl indicated that it won't make sense for Jim to attend if there isn't support for Millie's services.

Beach Cleanup Bag Reproduction

In July a motion was made to approve up to \$5,500 for the re-order of Beach Cleanup Bags. Michael indicated that the re-order is currently out for bid.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

Meeting adjourned: 2:05 pm

Next Regular Advisory Board Meeting:

Date and Time: September 18, 2018 @ 1:00pm

Location: Cove meeting Room