



**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 **January 15, 2019** 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
Paul Panchal

Quorum Present (simple majority): Yes

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); Daniel Brown, Zebra Radio; Laila Kollmann, SLO County Business Improvement District (CBID); Dennis Frahman, Cambria Scarecrow Festival, Cambria Center for the Arts and Cambria Film Festival; Mark Hucek, and Jeanne Haegele, Cavalier Oceanfront Resort; Stacie Jacob & Brad Rubin, Solterra Strategies; Paulla Ufferheide, Cambria Scarecrow Festival.

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

PUBLIC COMMENT(S)

CORRESPONDENCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Miguel moved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on October 16, 2018. Michael seconded the motion. The motion was adopted by a vote of 2-0, with Paul abstaining.

SLO CIBD MONTHLY REPORT – Cheryl Cuming & Laila Kollmann

Review of the CBID Evaluation – Laila Kollmann

Laila Kollmann, the CBID immediate past chair, attended to share a review of the recent CBID evaluation. She thanked everyone for volunteering in their communities. She talked about the current make-up of the advisory board and named Matt Masia as the new Chair. Laila encouraged folks to visit the new website and consider attending a meeting. She challenged the audience asking if they were aware of what activity ranks number one in things to do in SLO CAL on Trip Advisor then she shared that Hwy 1 has that distinction with Farmers Markets coming in second.

LFA News & Info

Cheryl highlighted the plans for the Coastal Discovery Celebration (January 12 – February 28, 2019). This year's event will offer over 30 celebration activities and events ranging from Shark Feeding, Trail Restoration, Butterfly Migration to Kayaking Back in Time. The theatre at Hearst Castle will be reshowing the Disney nature movie Ocean at no charge. Cheryl thanked Dennis for promoting the film through his channels as well as the Castle. A full-fledged digital campaign just launched as well as a Coastal Discovery Blog.

New to the celebration this year is the History & Heritage pages that have been designed to bring visitors closer to the roots of coastal San Luis Obispo County by sharing 21 sites along Hwy 1 that will bring visitors back in time. Cheryl shared that this endeavor was inspired by Michael's ideas in this area.

Presentations & Info

Beautification and Infrastructure Grant (BIG) has been released and funding applications are due January 18, 2019.

Key Milestones and Partner Info

Hilary and Katie have added some significant PR wins in the last 30 days with 11 articles and over 48 million people reached.

Finances

Cheryl reported that the finances are on hold. She hopes to have November/December in a couple of days. She anticipates that the carry forward amounts could be resolved in time for their meeting next Wednesday. They are computing the contribution percentage averages to determine the amounts that will go back to each community. The goal is to start reporting with the January financials.

SOLTERRA CORE MARKETING MONTHLY REPORT – Stacie Jacob

Refresh and re-print of San Simeon/Ragged Point Loop Map

The supply of San Simeon/Ragged Point Loop maps is nearly exhausted and need to be replenished and the piece hasn't been updated since 2015 so first it needs to be updated. The Solterra team has received several quotes for printing as well as a quote from the designer for the work to add Sanctuary Boundaries, the Whale Trail, the National Coastal Monument, and

Davidson Seamount, Solterra anticipates the project costs to total approximately \$ 2000 for design work and copies. Stacie anticipates that there's enough money left in the 2018 budget to approach the project, but we should plan to add an agenda item for next meeting to consider an Additional Contingency Budget for Solterra in 2019.

Quarterly Website Themes - 2019

Q1 Beautiful Scenic Hwy 1

Q2 Outdoor Active Adventurer

Q3 Family Travel

Q4 Fall Holiday Travel

FAM's and review of collabs

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

Media Clips and Results

The Solterra team is working to update the news page with more media clips. Going forward Stacie and Brad plan to report on the website analytics quarterly rather than monthly.

2018 Website Review

Brad reported on the analytics.

- For 2018 the site served 95K users as compared to 26K in 2017.
- Engagement was higher.
- Page Sessions and Bounce Rate dropped slightly, 0.73% and 1.50% respectively but Brad can explain that.
- There was a notable spike in traffic on the date that we sent out the email announcing that Hwy1 was open.
- Organic search doubled, with 2018 at 32,000.
- Paid Search - big coin brought 4900 people to the site.
- Growth and generation of reservation leads
- Traffic increased two-fold in every major channel, referrals is the exception.
- Reservation leads –There were 9,682 leads generated via “Book Now” links on the site. With 7,000 unique leads direct to properties.
- Solterra would be interested in knowing if hotels see referrals on their analytics coming from VisitSanSimeonCA.com

REPORTS/UPDATES:

1. Visitor Center Report – Jeanne Hucek
 - a. Aggregate of 2018 visitor traffic data and plans to enhance current data collection.
 - b. New Community Calendar.
 - c. Promotional Items for FAMs & PR
Jeanne shared a Power Point with the board to solicit their feedback on the direction she is taking to secure high quality promotional items at a good price.

The board has given their approval to move forward with her suggestion to have Lantern Press work up a line drawing of San Simeon.

- d. Jeanne and Jim Allen will be Hosting Chinese FAM for Visit California and Visit SLO CAL on January 16, 2019.
- e. Recapped Christmas Party for Chamber Volunteers
- f. Recapped Holiday Party for families in need in San Simeon.

2. Alliance Partners Reports/Updates

FES:

The Rookery saw record number of visitors on December 25, 26 and 28, 2018. The queue line had 12+ cars in line with 40-60 vehicles parked along the highway. The beach is very crowded with Elephant Seals now.

They have had some changes to their board; Lynette Harrison stepped down to handle family matters. They have a new vice president, Kathy Curtis, Secretary Stephen Beck, as well as Max Fowl.

They are preparing for the Spring Docent class, anyone who is interested is encouraged to join.

CAMBRIA FILM FESTIVAL:

Dennis indicated that passes are sold out and shared a program while mentioning that there's some availability for individual screenings.

3. Eroica California Bike Ride

The Eroica group has not been responsive, not to any one of the three LFA's or to Cheryl.

4. Cambria Scarecrow Festival 2018 Report

The tenth annual display of scarecrows was a major success. The festival estimates more than 16,000 viewers toured the area during their prime weekend hours. They conducted on the street interviews on the weekends in addition to offering two drop off locations for attendees to provide data exchange. Their research suggests that 1,100 people were polled and at least 380 hotel rooms were booked by visitors here to see the festival. Indications are that two-thirds of folks visiting the festival come from outside the county.

Social Media and Facebook likes grew. They enjoy a strong presence year-round with some months having 100 impressions. The organization has stepped up their fund-raising efforts. 2018 saw 50% of their funding coming through their efforts rather than grants from the San Simeon Alliance and the Cambria Tourism Board. They are going into 2019 with strong reserves. They hope to raise the professionalism of their marketing. Dennis made the board aware of how much they value the integration to the community by partnering such as their Octoberfest event with the Lyons as well as their support to donate a portion of their proceeds with Beautify Cambria.

Paula would like to see the festival offer more unique things for visitors to do. She encountered many returning visitors. She invited everyone to attend the Volunteer thank you event on February 19, 2019 at 5:00 PM.

DISCUSSION:

1. Highway 1 Update
The trucks hauling rock to the slide area are now holding 25-ton boulders as the breakwater wall was washing away.
2. Hearst Castle Bus Situation
The interim company, LAZ j, has a six-month emergency contract for their services. They have supplied their own vehicles and hired the Hearst drivers.
3. Highway 1 Fencing
The Services District missed the deadline for the BIG grant. The Chamber paid for the environmental study to get things going. Michael has asked Pierre Raddemaker to draw a sketch of the proposed fence.

ACTION ITEMS:

4. FES Printing and Distribution 2018/2019
The Friends of the Elephant Seal is seeking \$9,793 in funding to support their printing and distribution of printed materials.

A motion to approve the \$9,793 grant request was made by Miguel and seconded by Paul, all were in favor.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Marketing Contingency Funds
2. Chamber 2019 Contract

Meeting adjourned: 2:43 pm

**Next Regular Advisory Board Meeting:
Date and Time: February 20, 2018 @ 1:00pm**

Location: Cove meeting Room