

Draft Until Approved
Avila Beach Tourism Alliance
Board Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2021 – Video Conference due to COVID-19 Pandemic

Board Members Present:

Dean Hutton, Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort & Spa
Golda Escalante, Avila Lighthouse Suites
Ken Kelly, Coastal Vacation Rentals

Others Present:

John Sorgenfrei, TJA Advertising
Jamie Foxen, TJA Advertising
Rick Turton, TJA Advertising
Stephanie Rowe, ABTA administrator
Kathleen Naughton, SLO Coast Wine

Board Members Absent: None

CBID: Cheryl Cuming

1. **Call to Order:** by Board Chair Dean Hutton at 10:02 am.
 - a. Dean introduced Kathleen Naughton, new Executive Director of SLO Coast Wine Collective
2. **Roll Call:** by Stephanie Rowe
3. **Public Comment:** None
4. **Consent Items:** A motion was made by Golda Escalante and seconded by Ken Kelly to approve the February 10, 2021 minutes. With no further discussion, the minutes were approved by a voice vote of the local Advisory Board.
5. **CBID and Financials Update:** Cheryl Cuming gave an update for the past month.
 - a. Concluded Season of Coastal Discovery at end of February—Katie will be coming to present at a future meeting
 - b. Launching spring campaign ads to focus on beaches, wide open spaces, and welcoming travelers with open arms; encouraging folks to plan a trip.
 - c. New content coming for each community including fishing, biking, surfing, sea life, best places to eat, shopping and best parks.
 - d. Launched paid ads test with Cambria and Cayucos
 - e. January was soft; CBID missed reforecast by \$3,000 but in strong position next fiscal year
 - f. January 2020 TOT – Avila Beach +20.8% and CBID -26.9% year-over year
 - g. Avila Beach’s assessment collections were 20.90% of total contributions.
6. **Budget Update:** Stephanie Rowe confirmed that collections in January totaled \$14,158.79. Available funds (including the 2019-2020 carry-forward) total \$226,471.63.11. Funds after approved applications and anticipated expenses removed are \$118,255.02.
7. **Committee Reports:**
 - a. **TJA Activity Report/Website Analytics Update – John Sorgenfrei, Jamie Foxen and Rick Turton:**

John Sorgenfrei noted that we need more content so he would like to propose a photo shoot as well as other new ideas at the next meeting.

Jamie Foxen reported on social media activity in the last month. Facebook fans at 78,111 for increase of 32 fans. Impressions down 10.5% but engagements up 268%. Video views (not to completion) down 23%; video views (100%) up 1.9%. She noted the top posts. Instagram gained 432 new followers, with impressions up 26% and engagements up 24%. Facebook/Instagram ads also doing very well with 216,070 reach, 30,900 reactions and 2,392 link clicks. Reddit ad did well with 293,122 impressions, 1,105 clicks, and 55,307 video views. YouTube has 457,463 lifetime video views, 164 monthly video views and 1.3 monthly hours watched. E-newsletter was not sent in February. The travel blog was about Avila Beach wine tasting.

Rick Turton reported on the website stats from the last month. The numbers were very good. The total visits for February were 15,922 compared to 14,815 visitors last February for a 7.47% increase. 20.22% Other and 15.29% Display Traffic Sources came in through Facebook/Instagram and Reddit ads. 4,803 of the top page views landed at Avila Beach hotels which was higher than January. We had 71.22% visitors on mobile devices which is higher than January. 2,900 mobile visitors went to our hotels and 1,224 went to vacation rentals. February had 595 paid search visits with 5.27 paid search pages/visit vs 3.72 for January. Search source increased 87% year over year. Lodging referrals 2,283 or 138% increase from 2020.

8. Action/Discussion Items:

a. Discussion of SLO Coast Wine Passport Program and Ideas for Sponsorship Opportunities:

Kathleen Naughton led the discussion on the Passport Program. She noted that it has not always been successful. The program was part of the Harvest on the Coast weekend where ticket holders could visit 4-6 wineries for wine tastings. These ticket holders were not necessarily purchasing wine, so the wineries did not always benefit. She recommended rebranding the program with a new name. The Board discussed various ideas for Kathleen to go back to her board to present. In general, the Board would consider sponsoring a promotion where visitors who stayed in Avila Beach would get a VIP Card for access to a collection of special experiences. Kathleen noted that visitors value accessibility and convenience. The Board agreed that including a transportation option would be important. They also agreed a good time to offer the program would be end of October through Thanksgiving weekend. Kathleen and the Board agreed on the following next steps: She would present to her Board to see who is willing to participate then they could customize the experiences. Once she knew who wanted to participate, she could solidify our partnership by early June then submit a fund application in July.

9. Future Agenda Items/New Business:

- a. Board Seat Renewal from Dean Hutton (April)
- b. Review TJA Proposal of New Ideas (April)
- c. Review of SLO Coast Wine VIP Program Sponsorship (June)
- d. Consideration of SLO Coast Wine VIP Program Fund Application (July)

10. Closing Comments: None

11. Next ABTA Local Fund Advisory Board Meeting:

Dates: **April 14, 2021**
Time: **10:00 am - 12:00 pm**
Location: **Video Conference**

12. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 11:13 am.