

Draft Until Approved
Avila Beach Tourism Alliance
Board Meeting Minutes

April 14, 2021 – Video Conference due to COVID-19 Pandemic

Board Members Present:

Ken Kelly, Coastal Vacation Rentals
Golda Escalante, Avila Lighthouse Suites

Others Present:

John Sorgenfrei, TJA Advertising
Rick Turton, TJA Advertising
Stephanie Rowe, ABTA administrator

Board Members Absent:

Dean Hutton, Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort & Spa (excused)

CBID: Cheryl Cuming

1. **Call to Order:** by Board member Ken Kelly at 10:02 am.

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 March 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. Web traffic: over 70,000 sessions in March; 191% increase Y/Y
 - b. Social media: almost 100,000 Facebook fans; working on curating assets for social media
 - c. Created a collection of new videos with the message “We welcome you with open arms” focused on beaches
 - d. TOT: San Simeon is down because of the closure of Hearst Castle. Hearst Castle will be working through more challenges as it was announced that they will continue to be closed due to repairs of the roads to the castle.
 - e. TOT Calendar Year 2020 was down overall but by all indications, 2021 will be rebounding
 - f. Will be working on messaging for the opening of Highway 1 and California on June 15
 - g. A print version of the Coastal Discovery Trail Hiking Map will be sent to most lodging properties through the mail. It has been a great lead generator and has collected around 2,000 new emails a month for folks to give their email so they can get this trail map.
 - h. COVID-19 vaccine appointments set up for lodging and tourism community
 - i. H1DR included in Reader’s Digest and syndicated to MSN Lifestyle
 - j. Next CBID Board meeting on April 28
 - k. Avila Beach’s assessment collections were 20.34% of total contributions.

6. **Budget Update:** Stephanie Rowe confirmed that collections in February totaled \$9,754.63. Available funds (including the 2019-2020 carry-forward) total \$226,343.47. Funds after approved applications and anticipated expenses removed are \$127,994.66.

7. Committee Reports:

a. TJA Activity Report/Website Analytics Update – John Sorgenfrei and Rick Turton:

John Sorgenfrei reported that social media director, Jamie Foxen has decided to pursue other opportunities. He has hired a new social media director who currently manages Visit Calistoga and Visit St. Helena social media. She will be attending the next meeting. He also showed the new photos from the recent photo shoot at the Avila Valley Barn, Sycamore Mineral Springs garden, wine tasting and the beach that will be used in our social media.

John reported on social media activity in the last month. We are running ads, so the numbers are very good. Facebook fans at 78,940 for increase of 829 fans. Impressions up 1,178% and engagements up 481%. Video views (not to completion) up 114,082%; video views (100%) up 15,486%. He noted the top posts. Instagram gained 544 new followers, with impressions up 242% but engagements down 44.6%. Facebook/ Instagram ads also doing very well with 1,507,094 reach, 16,953 reactions and 36,011 link clicks. Reddit ad did well with 225,168 impressions, 319 clicks, and 41,690 video views. YouTube has 457,712 lifetime video views, 249 monthly video views and 1.9 monthly hours watched. The E-newsletter was not sent in March. The travel blog was about Weekend Activities in Avila Beach.

Rick Turton reported on the website stats from the last month. The numbers were very good. The total visits for March were 43,562 compared to 10,368 visitors last March for a 320.16% increase. 7,384 of the top page views landed at Avila Beach hotels which was higher than February. 4,307 page views went to Bob Jones Trail and 3,858 views went to lodging specials. We had 82% visitors on mobile devices which is the highest ever. 4,930 mobile visitors went to our hotels and 1,746 went to vacation rentals. Search source increased 145% year over year. Lodging referrals 3,580 or 314% increase from 2020. Top download links: Loop map-337; Wine map-23; Hiking trail map-277.

8. Action/Discussion Items:

a. Review TJA Loop Map Update Proposal / Discuss TJA 2021-2022 Contract Proposal Ideas:

John Sorgenfrei presented the proposal to revamp the current Loop Map. The scope of the project is to provide new design, updates on attractions and other copy changes, account service, and produce final approved art files ready for printing. The cost of the project is a maximum amount of \$2,850. Stephanie Rowe noted that the cost would come out of the current TJA budget. **The Board agreed to move forward on the project.**

For the upcoming contract proposal, John suggested having two paid advertising campaigns instead of one and running paid ads all year round. He also asked the Board to consider a two year contract instead of one knowing that the Board can terminate it at any time. The Board agreed to include these changes in the proposal for consideration.

a. Review Board Seat Renewal Letter from Dean Hutton: Dean Hutton's board term is ending in May. Ken Kelly read his letter of interest to continue on the board for another 4-year term.

A motion was made by Ken Kelly, and seconded by Golda Escalante, to accept the letter of interest submitted by Dean Hutton to continue on the Avila Beach Tourism Alliance Board for another term. With no further discussion, the letter was accepted by unanimous voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

9. Future Agenda Items/New Business:

- a. Review Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Projected Budget (May)
- b. Review 2020-2021 TJA Marketing Recap / Review TJA 2021-2023 Contract Proposal (May)
- 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: **May 12, 2021**

Time: **10:00 am - 12:00 pm**

Location: **Video Conference**

12. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 10:41 am.