

Draft Until Approved
Avila Beach Tourism Alliance
Board Meeting Minutes

May 12, 2021 – Video Conference due to COVID-19 Pandemic

Board Members Present:

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

Others Present:

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

Board Members Absent: None

CBID: Cheryl Cuming

1. **Call to Order:** by Chair Dean Hutton at 10:02 am.
2. **Roll Call:** by Stephanie Rowe
3. **Public Comment:** None
4. **Consent Items:** A motion was made by Ken Kelly and seconded by Golda Escalante to approve the April 14, 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: almost 70,000 sessions in April; 539% increase Y/Y; almost 55,000 users
 - b. Social media: almost 100,266 Facebook fans; 30,610 Instagram followers
 - c. Had All Agency/LFA meeting where LFA Imperatives were reviewed; continuing to invest in SEM program with Google Discovery Ads doing extremely well. Will continue to add photo and video assets for social media.
 - d. CBID Board approved marketing budget for new fiscal year; will be presenting new marketing plan to Board this month.
 - e. TOT March Y/Y: Avila +329%; CBID +55%
 - f. Google My Business co-op program with SLO CAL has been a huge success.
 - g. Next CBID meeting on May 26th, local fund board members invited
 - h. New videos available around beaches and “Welcome you with open arms” campaign
 - i. Will be working on messaging for the opening of California on June 15
 - j. Great PR coverage in Forbes, Fodor’s and LA Times; have 13 journalists coming in next couple of months to visit.
 - k. Avila Beach’s assessment collections were 20.11% of total contributions.
6. **Budget Update:** Stephanie Rowe confirmed that collections in March totaled \$15,992.55. Available funds (including the 2019-2020 carry-forward) total \$231,847. Funds after approved applications and anticipated expenses removed are \$144,472.22.

7. Committee Reports:

- a. **TJA Activity Report/Website Analytics Update – John Sorgenfrei, Claudia Torkelson and Rick Turton:** John Sorgenfrei introduced TJA's new social media manager, Claudia Torkelson who started late last month.

Claudia Torkelson reported on social media activity in the last month. We did not run ads last month, so the numbers are down. Facebook fans at 78,904. Impressions up 46,432 and engagements up 2,693. Video views (not to completion) at 1,569 and video views (100%) at 210. She noted the top posts. Instagram gained 324 new followers, with impressions down 87% due to saturation but engagements up 83%. Showed top posts for Instagram. YouTube has 457,900 lifetime video views, 185 monthly video views and 1.9 monthly hours watched. The E-newsletter was not sent in April, but subscribers increased to almost 26,000 from 23,500.

Rick Turton reported on the website stats from the last month. He recommended taking a break from Reddit because the ROI per responses is pretty costly. He noted that Google AdWords cost about .50 per click which is far more reasonable. Golda Escalante asked if we are monetizing our YouTube Channel. Rick responded that there was really no way to handle the money if we were to. The website numbers were very good. The total visits for April were 16,355 but it does not make sense to compare to last year during the pandemic. Rick noted that lodging referrals per visitor sessions jumped up to 22% vs 13% last year. CrowdRiff is doing very well. Also, 17,000 sessions came in through Google AdWords and they are viewing more pages than the average.

8. Action/Discussion Items:

- a. **Review Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Projected Budget and Allocation:** Stephanie Rowe reviewed the current budget, projected carry forward and proposed 2021-2022 budget and allocations. She suggested the following changes to the allocations: increase Administration to 15% from 14%; increase Events to 15% from 10%; decrease Marketing to 50% from 55%; decrease General/Contingency to 20% from 21%. The Board agreed to the suggested changes.

A motion was made by Dean Hutton, and seconded by Golda Escalante, to approve the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 projected budget and allocations as proposed. With no further discussion, the budget was approved by a voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

- b. **Review of TJA 2020-2021 Marketing Recap / Review of TJA 2021-2023 Contract Proposal:** John Sorgenfrei reviewed the social media results through April 30: 78,904 Facebook fans, a 1.26% increase; 287,154 engagements, a 60.42% increase; 11,531,534 total impressions, a 135% increase; 2,082,530 video views (not to completion) which is a 239% increase; 97,425 video views (100%), a 20% increase. Facebook demographics are 73% women and 26% men, 1% nonbinary. Instagram followers are at 31,401, a 20.31% increase; 179,000 engagements, a 104% increase; impressions at 4,900,833, a 110% increase. Instagram demographics: 72% women and 27% men, 1% nonbinary. Showed top posts and monthly stat comparison to previous year for Facebook and Instagram. Web traffic did very well: 175,000 sessions, a 52% increase; 668,000 page views, a 65% increase; 338,000 lodging referrals, up 154%; 23,600 hotel referrals, up 158%; 15,124 vacation rental referrals, up 148%; 22% lodging referral/visitor session, up 9%; 87,344 CrowdRiff views, up 78%.

John Sorgenfrei presented the 2021-2023 proposal. The Board had previously agreed to a 2-year contract. TJA will continue to have the same goals and objectives, and marketing approach as previous years with a change of tactics for a post-COVID-19 audience. They will concentrate on the past successful campaigns and focus on the drive market while building

brand awareness of “Pick Your Perfect Paradise” and pent-up demand for travel. Rick Turton noted that it has been 4 years since the last website revamp so he would like to do a refresh. John reviewed the proposed budget summary totaling \$178,100. Per Ken Kelly’s suggestion, the board agreed to increase the total budget to \$200,000 in alignment with the approved 50% budget allocation for marketing. John agreed to research potential local billboard advertising and will also check into co-ops with Visit CA. Stephanie Rowe will check when the current Cycle Central Coast partnership ends and invite Jessica Blanchfield to present a new proposal.

A motion was made by Ken Kelly, and seconded by Dean Hutton, to approve the TJA contract proposal for a total annual investment of \$200,000 and a total 2-year investment of \$400,000 effective July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2023. With no further discussion, the proposal was approved by unanimous voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

9. Future Agenda Items/New Business:

- a. Review Cycle Central Coast Partnership Proposal (June)
- b. Review of SLO Coast Wine VIP Program Sponsorship (June)
- c. Review Visit CA Co-op Programs (July)
- d. Consideration of SLO Coast Wine VIP Program Fund Application (July)

10. Closing Comments: None

11. Next ABTA Local Fund Advisory Board Meeting:

Dates: **June 9, 2021**
Time: **10:00 am – 12:00 pm**
Location: **Video Conference**

12. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 am.