

Draft Until Approved
Avila Beach Tourism Alliance
Board Meeting Minutes
Amended 3/9/22

February 9, 2022 – 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
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 10:01 am.
2. **Roll Call:** by Stephanie Rowe
3. **Public Comment:** None
4. **Consent Items:** A motion was made by Dean Hutton and seconded by Golda Escalante to approve the January 12, 2022 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. Website traffic strong: users 86,400/+77% Y/Y; sessions 100,300/+76% Y/Y; over 161,500 total page views; email getting great engagements-cleaned out those who were not engaging so have about 87,000 emails in database.
 - b. Claudia doing great job on social media; seeing some progress on YouTube.
 - c. TOT/Assessment growth comparing Avila Q2 2019/2020/2021 collections: 2019-\$370,700; 2020-\$506,800; 2021-\$582,800.
 - d. Reviewed 2021 Local Fund Area funding recap. Avila had two projects totaling \$410,000
 - e. In the midst of Season of Coastal Discovery promotion which ends on February 28th. Wildlife map is engaging folks and toolkit is being used by constituents.
 - f. The next promotion starting on March 1st will be around the best beaches on Highway 1 with toolkit available in the next couple of weeks.
 - g. Mid-Year Highlights: Averaging 112 new emails a day; audit the database every 3 months to remove folks who do not engage to ensure it is a valuable resource; 31% more users at 400,000, with 15% less spend; paid media exceeds 20M impressions and 370 clicks; cost-per-visitor down 400% from last year; campaign alignment with SLO CAL generated more engaged website visitors.
 - h. LFA Imperative Co-op continuing to do well with expanded SEM program and social media ads driving more traffic to our website.
 - i. Avila Beach's assessment collections were 20.04% of overall total contributions.

6. Budget Update: Stephanie Rowe confirmed that collections in December totaled \$18,473. Available funds (including the 2020-2021 carry-forward) total \$342,514. Funds after approved applications and anticipated expenses removed total \$159,861. Dean Hutton suggested using some extra funds to specifically focus on our constituent's marketing efforts. John Sorgenfrei noted that they will come back with some proposals for additional campaigns.

7. Committee Reports:

a. TJA Activity Report/Website Analytics Update – John Sorgenfrei, Claudia Torkelson and Rick Turton: John Sorgenfrei reported that he coordinated with SLO Coast Wine to bring a couple of wine media folks to Avila Beach. Influencer Richard Miyake will be visiting on February 19-21. Allison Levine will be visiting on March 12-14 as well as a writer from Wine Spectator.

Claudia Torkelson reported on social media activity in the last month. She noted that we had a really strong start to 2022 for impressions and engagements. Facebook fans decreased slightly by 14 fans to 78,653. Total Impressions up to 631,500/+392% and engagements up to 19,700/+156%. Video views (not to completion) at 211/-66% and video views (100%) at 154/-69%. She noted that this was expected because she didn't post many videos last month. She noted the top posts. Instagram gained 493 new followers for a total of 34,003, with impressions up to 1,208,300/+705% and engagements up to 11,380/+18%. She noted the top posts for Instagram. She used the ad budget to boost a post on Instagram for the Wine VIP promotion and that had 5,700 link clicks directly on to the page for more information. Carousels doing really well so she will continue to lean into them. YouTube increased last month to 459,773 lifetime video views, up to 87 monthly video views and 1 average monthly hour watched. She listed the top 4 videos. No e-newsletter was sent. The blog was about the Avila Beach Bucket List. She did two Travel CA Stories about dining and luxury experiences in Avila. She also noted that the luxury experiences story had the highest click-through rate last month.

Rick Turton reported on the website stats for the month. The total unique visitors for January were down 13,700 vs 18,000 for a 24% decrease year-over-year. Search was 54% of all of our traffic sources and paid search was 22% with over 3,000 visitor sessions. Top page views were Avila Beach Hotels with over 3,500 views and Sycamore Mineral Springs with over 3,000 and Lodging Specials with over 2,000. We had 71% visitors on mobile devices. We saw top mobile views of 1,700 for hotels, 2,300 for Sycamore Mineral Springs, and 1,500 for Lodging Specials. There were over 3,000 visits from CBID paid search efforts for 3.69 paid search pages/visit vs. 3.82 site wide average pages/visit which is very good. SLO Coast Wine sent us 386 visitors due to the Wine VIP promotion. Lodging referrals were up 75% with almost 4,000 this year vs. 2,300 last year. Rick also reviewed a new report with Google Business Listings that showed 30,000 total searches, 40,000 listing views and 27,000 photo views.

8. Action/Discussion Items:

a. Update on TOT/Assessment Collections from Flying Flags Cottages – Cheryl Cuming reported that the County is saying that the new Flying Flags cottages at Port San Luis are not set on permanent foundations, therefore, they will not be collecting TOT/assessments on these units. Per County Code 3.08, taxes are only imposed on fixed or permanent locations. Cheryl has asked SLO CAL to look into this given that TOT/assessments were collected previously from Avila Hot Springs, a similar lodging property, before changing to a 30-day minimum rental policy.

9. Future Agenda Items/New Business:

- a.** Review of Follow-up Report from SLO Coast Wine VIP Promotion (by April meeting)
- b.** Additional Campaign Proposals to Directly Benefit Avila Beach Lodging Partners

10. Closing Comments: Stephanie Rowe reported that she had received confirmation from the organizer of the Avila Farmers' Market that it will be held this year after being cancelled for the last two years due to the pandemic. It will be held for a slightly shorter period than normal from May 6th – August 26th.

11. Next ABTA Local Fund Advisory Board Meeting:

Date: **March 9, 2022**
Time: **10:00 am – 12:00 pm**
Location: **Zoom meeting**

12. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 am.