



**San Luis Obispo County  
Tourism Business Improvement District Advisory Board  
(CBID)**

Board Meeting Minutes  
March 23, 2022, 12:00 p.m.  
Cambria Pines Lodge

**DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED**

SLO CBID Members Present:

Board: Bram Winter, Mike Hanchett, Gary Setting, Matt Masia

County Liaison: Tessa Cornejo, CAO Cheryl Cuming

Absent: Laila Kollmann, Aaron Graves

Guests: Eric Parker (SLO CAL), Hilary Townsend, Kristine Howland (WMT)

**Call to Order**

At 12:09 p.m.

**Public Comment**

None

**Presentations**

Hilary presented her strategy for media missions including media clusters, pitching techniques, efficiency, follow-up and relationship building. In 2021/2022 there have been six missions to date. They include Visit California (IMM and regional events), in-market desk sides, SATW and Travel Classics. H1DR must pitch and be invited to these events. Coverage highlights include Forbes, Sunset, USA Today, Travel + Leisure, Via, Washington Post, LA Times, Parade and Reader's Digest. Upcoming coverage includes AARP, Westways, Nat Geo Traveler and Coastal Living. There has been success in getting the H1DR direct site links from digital stories, which has really driven sessions. There are also white list blogs and ads. Bram asked if there have been stories from each visiting journalist and Hilary confirmed that there has been. She has a strict vetting process which is more often saying "thank you" than "yes." Mike noted Hilary's success and quality. It was highlighted that there is a lot

of work with LFA marketing agencies, as well as the H1DR dream team, a partnership with Monterey, Santa Maria Valley and Santa Barbara.

Kristine Howland presented information on the Western Monarch Trail. Confirmed sites along H1DR include the Monarch Grove Natural Area in Los Osos, Hearst San Simeon State Park, and Downtown Cambria. A site at Trilogy in Nipomo is awaiting final approval from the landowner. Additional sites beyond H1DR include SLO Botanical Garden, Pismo State Beach grove, and Elwood Nature Preserve in Goleta. Proposed sites include Avila Valley Barn (pollination garden) and the Octagon Barn. The project timeline is:

January - April, grant funding application submission and review  
April - May, grant funding approval and panel content development  
May, panel content design begins; June, panel content approved  
July, panel fabrication; October, panel installation.

Bram asked about native habitats since Eucalyptus trees are not native. Kristine noted the Monarch Butterfly Ball fundraiser on September 10.

### **Administrative Items**

**Roll Call:** Bram Winter, Matt Masia, Gary Setting, and Mike Hanchett are present.

**Consent Agenda:** A motion was made by Mike Hanchett and seconded by Gary Setting to approve the February 23 minutes with no changes. With no further discussion, these minutes were approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board.

**Financials:** CAO Cuming reviewed the February financials, which have been reconciled with not outstanding items to resolve with the county.

YTD financial reports as of February 2022:

1. General Fund - February 22 against the Budget
  - a. This General Fund report ties back to the Bid Bunch expense tracking, both reporting a total of \$774,153 in expenses for July through February.
2. When looking at the year-to-date actuals versus the year-to-date budget here are some comments:
  - a. YTD revenue collected \$1,075,928.38 is \$334,770 more than what was budgeted YTD
  - b. YTD expenses paid of \$772,153 came in under budget by \$175,060.
  - c. Net income is \$613,867 which is \$509,837 more than budgeted YTD.
  - d. Overall cash allocated to the General Fund increased by \$266,752 from June 30, 2021.

**SLO CAL update:** Erik Parker from SLO CAL introduced himself to the board, and thanked the CBID board for their ongoing partnership.

### **Upcoming Events/Deadlines**

- Next board meeting dates are April 27 and May 18; both at Cambria Pines Lodge.
- Form 700 is due April 1, 2022.
- CBID renewal Board of Supervisors meeting dates are April 19 for ROI and May 17 for public comment

### **Discussion Items**

#### **Strategy & Topic Discussion**

- **22|23 Budget Collection Projection:** CAO Cuming asked the board members to anticipate the next fiscal year outlook for lodging. Bram noted that travel may “cool off” sometime though bookings are still strong through spring. Matt said he feels very encouraged and believes the area will remain a popular destination. High gas prices may be an advantage in attracting the CA drive markets. Gary said that repeat business will be strong and Mike noted that the area is well insulated from impacts that hit other markets. There was hesitation from the group to budget at 40% over 2019 (the current trend with actual collections), with a preference to lean more conservative. Foreign travel is expected to increase again soon. Bram believes the market locally has changed with gas prices having an impact and work-from-home generating more mid-week business. CAO Cuming will bring a projected budget to the April meeting.
- **Evolve 5-Year Strategic Plan:** CAO Cuming presented the proposal from Whereabout’s Matthew Landkamer to determine if the project should be included in the budget for the upcoming year. Gary was in support of working with Matthew. Mike was also supportive of the process and believes the investment of time to be worthwhile. Based on support of the board, CAO Cuming will include the cost in the 22|23 budget.

#### **Marketing & Stewardship Travel for Good**

- CAO Cuming noted roll-up report was included in packet. The Board did not have any questions.

### **Action Items**

**QR Code Rack Card:** Prior to COVID, the CBID invested ~\$60,000 annually to distribute 250,000 H1DR maps throughout California in 1,500 Certified Folder locations. Pick-up was solid, however no visitor data was collected. The BID Bunch

is recommending evolving to QR codes that promote the lead-generation maps. Recent data reports 30-35% of people offered a QR code option will scan the code to download information. In 2018-2020, there was a 94% increase in the number of QR code interactions. The proposal is to conduct a 4-month test from May through August to determine if H1DR can capture a 30% engagement rate, based on rack cards distributed compared to number of email addresses collected. In the current database, 30,000 users are from lead-generation efforts, which equates to 40%.

CAO Cuming reviewed the options.

Option 1: Test with 5 tourism partners (CWC, SLO VC, Cambria VC, agriCULTURAL VC, FES VC) totaling 10,000 rack cards and no distribution costs. Conversion goal of 3,000 new email addresses. Cost of \$2,750 (printing and freight).

Option 2: Test with same 5 partners + 183 Certified Folder sites totaling 25,000 rack cards. Conversion goal of 7,500 new email addresses. Cost of \$5,250 (\$3,750 printing and freight + \$1,500 CF distribution).

Matt is very excited about the dynamic content offer, including the possibility of having different languages. He strongly believes it is worth doing. Bram and Laila both supported option 2. Gary is interested in seeing the measurements and amount of emails captured.

A motion was made by Mike Hanchett and seconded by Gary Setting to approve \$5,250 for option 2; with no further discussion the motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

### **Local Fund Board Members and Local Fund Area Applications**

- **None**

### **Closing Comments**

It was shared that Hilary Townsend is retiring and she will be working with CAO Cuming to find the right person to replace her.

### **Future Agenda Items**

- April: Strategic Marketing Outline and draft 22 | 23 budget; June contract renewals
- Cambria Art & Wine Festival postponement

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:37pm