



CAMBRIA TOURISM BOARD (CTB)
(Cambria Local Fund Advisory Board)
Strategic Planning Retreat Minutes
Cambria Pines Lodge
July 12, 2022

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Greg Pacheco at 11:32 a.m.

Members Present

Greg Pacheco
George Marschall
Jim Bahringer
Karen Cartwright

CBID

CAO Cheryl Cuming

Guests

Jessica Blanchfield, Archer & Hound
Juli Amodei, 12 Toes, Skate Cambria
Steve Kniffen, Sea Chest
Jill Jackson, CTB MA

2. Discussion & Action Items

2.1 CTB Strategic Planning

Greg explained that this is more of a planning meeting, no normal board business will be conducted. He said, I guess you all know, more or less, our mission statement. We went over this two years ago. I will just go ahead and review it really quick, it is the mission of the San Luis Obispo County Business Improvement District (CBID), which the Cambria Tourism Board (CTB) shares, to promote the economic well-being of our constituents (hotels, motels, B&B's and vacation rentals). We serve the lodging industry exclusively but understand that as we see increase in lodging business, other businesses and the community will also benefit. Goals of the CTB: Increase lodging stays, increase return stays in slow and high season, increase length of stays in Cambria, increase mid-week stays; fund projects that positively impact slower season and/or expand the impact on the busier season; create special events and sustainable activities that will promote the natural habitat and surrounding beauty of Cambria. Objectives of the CTB: Work with businesses, local nonprofit organizations and the community at large to create programs and events that will bring visitors to stay in Cambria lodging facilities. Focus these programs and events to occur during the slowest business months of the year – September 15th through June 15th (shoulder season). Make high season stays more attractive to encourage return visits. Whenever possible, make certain these programs, events and activities include an element of sustainability of culture, history, environment or atmosphere for Cambria. Vision: it is the vision of the Cambria Tourism Board to create opportunities to attract more out-of-area visitors who will appreciate and care for our Cambria community, our culture, our environment and our history. Jim asked what the board's objective is. Greg said that it is to review and see if we feel anything has changed. Jill said that she does see one change, the funding applications now list October through June as the slower period. Cheryl Cuming said that they plan to start their campaign much earlier, in August, because there was some concern that the occupancy rates might change due to the economy and gas prices. George said that he had a question about the goals of this CTB, because do we actually create an event? People come to us, we support them, we do not actually do any creating. That can be a very full-time job if you are creating something. Jim suggested hiring someone.

Karen stated, I think making things and sustaining them and making them look good is part of the CTB's mission. The medians were a huge thing a couple of years ago. She said we did not contribute any money to that. Jim asked about clarifying whether maintenance can be funded. Cheryl explained, if you recall we did an event application and then several years after that this infrastructure and beautification application was created and that conversation came up at that point because as people look to create a project we want the onus to be on whoever is developing that in order to maintain it going forward. Cheryl said that the county will not necessarily maintain projects for the unincorporated areas. She said Celebrate Los Osos does a lot of beautification infrastructure projects within that community and they actually then commit the organization to maintaining the project. Karen said that she feels it is important to keep the July 4 fireworks. George said that it is already a busy time. Greg said that Paso Robles had fireworks for the first time, and they had one of their slowest holidays.

George said, I think the Scarecrow Festival needs to do a better job of figuring out how to make money and be self-sustaining. I have no problems giving them money, but I can say what resources can they utilize, or how can we grow an event and make it self-sustainable. But it is all volunteers and a non-profit and you would not want them to go away. Jim said we try to focus all of our funds into the shoulder season, but it says, "expand the impact on the busier season." Jessica suggested for events a focus on outlining the infrastructure needed for the CTB to support an event. Including reviewing the calendar and selecting the months that we will support an event, so that is clearly defined. Also, the marketing investment required to support the event, creating more of a structure, rather than just giving money. There is power in the assets that this board owns. Cheryl agreed with Jessica and said two items, first Visit SLO is starting an events and festivals strategy and I am in that working group and the first meeting is in the next couple of weeks. Our goal is to loop in local fund areas and have this type of discussion and one of the things they are doing is creating a county wide event calendar to see where the opportunities are. Their goal will be to bring in large scale events like Spartan or Eroica is a good example. Events that touch multiple regions and have opportunities to spread overnight stays. That is where this county wide calendar will come from that will help do that. She said as she learns more, she can report back to the marketing committee. Cheryl said that a good start would be to create an events master list. Greg stated that March, April, and May are softer. Eroica is moving to September. Cayucos Sea Glass Festival is a great event, the first week of March. Greg agreed that spring and November need events. Juli said that a criteria for funding requests should be set because right now it seems very fragmented. Cheryl said that it did not work for SLO, events were cancelled when they could not return for funding. Jessica suggested a checklist to define what it is to support events, maybe financial, maybe it is marketing, or internal community outreach.

George said that the funding is for the hotels and the people that stay there, and then the benefit flows from that as you get more shoppers and diners. This is money that we self-assess ourselves, we agree to pay 2% on our hotels. The restaurants can do the same thing. George asked how we educate the public to really understand how this money came about. Juli brought up the dwindling volunteer pool. Jill said they had discussed starting a welcome wagon service to get people interested when they move to Cambria.

Greg asked Jim to go through the Outreach Committee worksheet, starting with goals. Infrastructure/Beautification should be a separate budget item. The goal is brand management, promote the CTB. Jessica offered for the marketing committee to work through this during the next few meetings, make it an agenda item. Jim said current projects would be an ARes Mixer for constituents. Greg summarized the discussion. The goals would be to further promote the brand of the CTB; current/ongoing projects would be the TRPRs and other past funded; future would be ARes constituent mixer. Tasks include brainstorming, prioritizing and an overall outline by the Marketing Committee. Infrastructure/Beautification will be funded from Capital Reserve or Contingency funds. Applications will go to the Outreach Committee.

George reviewed the Event Committee worksheet. The goals include defining marketing funded and involving Archer & Hound in the process; creating a checklist to assist organizations. I think

that is a good idea based on what the application is having them agree that they need to provide. Cheryl suggested some of it must be in addition to the application because of the lengthy process to make any changes. An initial meeting following the funding with Jill and Jessica is key. George said for long-term and future projects: SLO County Festivals and Events; educational outreach; possibly combine websites; all-inclusive calendar. Juli said after the Chamber's recent experience they should be more receptive on the website. Greg said that would be a goal, to foster a relationship with the Chamber.

Greg asked Jessica about the Marketing Committee worksheet. She said that they do have the goal of reviewing keywords for search engine optimization. She said, I think we should collectively, or at least start at the marketing level to look at the keywords. We are prepared for the upcoming new privacy rules, and lack of data sharing as of 2023.

Greg asked everyone what traits they felt the new board member should have. Jim said, someone that shows up. It might be good to have a back up person. Jessica said they could participate on a committee. Jill will reach out again to Pacifica. Jim said we should continue outreach for a vacation rental person.

3. Public Comment

Juli Amodei asked when the board would be voting on a new member and if there was a deadline. She also gave an update on fundraising for the Skatepark project. She shared that the board should define Infrastructure and Beautification Funds on the budget report, it is confusing that it is listed as Outreach.

4. Future Agenda Items/New Business

Committee Action Items

New Board Member

Visit SLO Festivals & Events Program

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Jackson
Managing Assistant