

Draft Until Approved
Oceano and Nipomo Local Fund Advisory Board
Minutes

May 23, 2023

Public meeting location at Oceano Dunes Visitor Center

Board Members Present:

Linda Austin, Oceano West, Inc.
Clare Class, Nipomo Property Management

Others Present:

Claudia Torkelson, TJA Advertising (via Zoom)
Stephanie Rowe, ONTB Admin
Roger Jacobs, State Parks-Oceano Dunes District
John Sorgenfrei, TJA Advertising
Bonnie Ernst, Oceano Constituent
Danielle Carpenter, New ONTB Admin

Board Members Absent: Kevin Beauchamp,
Kaleidoscope Inn (excused)

CBID (CAO): Cheryl Cuming

1. **Call to Order:** by Board Chair Linda Austin at 5:11 pm
2. **Public Comment(s):** Danielle Carpenter introduced herself. She is currently the administrator for Los Osos, Cayucos, and Edna Valley/AG Valley and also manages marketing for two of these local fund areas. She noted that she has submitted a contract proposal to take over the admin responsibilities from Stephanie Rowe.
3. **Consent Items:** A motion was made by Clare Class and seconded by Linda Austin to approve the April 13, 2023 minutes. With no further discussion, the minutes were approved by a voice vote of the local Advisory Board.
4. **CBID Local Fund and Financials Update:** Cheryl Cuming gave an update from the past month:
 - a. Highway1RoadTrip.com rebranding from Highway1DiscoveryRoute.com continues to improve. It was anticipated that it would take 6 months to improve but has taken a bit longer.
 - b. Organic sessions were up 17% Y/Y to 109,729 and users up 25% to 98,556.
 - c. Facebook fans over 109,000 with over 3.2million impressions and 126,196 engagements.
 - d. TOT/Assessment still soft for Jan/Feb/March/April but we had budgeted 20% down so are doing fine.
 - e. CBID Board changing the Local Fund Area Matching Fund Program. Matching funds monies will be allocated to the LFA Imperative Program in the new fiscal year.
 - f. Top 3 Tourism Predictions in 2023-2024: bleisure (business and leisure) travel will continue to rise; sustainability will influence travel decisions; travelers will seek unique authentic experiences.
 - g. Next CBID Board meeting May 31 at Cambria Pines Lodge.
 - h. Key Initiatives for 2023-2024: Focus on CA drive market; implementation of updated Strategic Plan; branding H1RT; content is king...storytelling; sustainability & stewardship; partnership marketing opportunities; GA4, AI and more. Year-end report available on members' site.
 - i. Oceano and Nipomo assessment collections are 5.59 % of total contributions for the fiscal year.
5. **Budget Update:** Stephanie Rowe reported that March assessment collections totaled \$4,660. The available funds (including the carry-forward) total \$124,274 and after anticipated applications and expenses are removed the funds total \$41,220.
6. **Member Updates/Committee Reports:**
 - a. **Review TJA Monthly Activity Reports** – Claudia Torkelson presented the recap below which provided additional information besides the monthly report.

7. Action/Discussion Items

- a. **Board Seat Application from Bonnie Ernst** – Linda confirmed Bonnie’s interest to serve as an Oceano Nipomo LFA board member. Cheryl noted that if she were to be appointed to the Oceano Nipomo Tourism Board that funding applications before the O/N board from the organizations in which Bonnie is a member, Bonnie would need to recuse herself. Cheryl also noted that Bonnie has provided paid video work for TJA Advertising, Avila Beach Tourism Alliance, Oceano Nipomo local fund board and the CBID and if appointed to the board, she would need to resolve any conflict-of-interest concerns.

Linda Austin noted that she did not feel comfortable moving forward with a new board application when there was still a board application from Roger Jacobs that remains unresolved by the Board of Supervisors, after being approved by the Oceano Nipomo Tourism Board and the CBID Advisory board. Cheryl noted that our Local Fund Area boards are allowed between 3 - 7 board seats, with 2/3 constituents and 1/3 non-constituents. Cheryl also noted that the State Parks, as a non-constituent, based on the current CBID policy, can be appointed to the board and has been a long-time tourism partner serving on the board for many years via Danielle Bronson. With 4 available board seats, both Roger and Bonnie are welcome to join the LFA board. Bonnie Ernst noted that she was one of the members of the Oceano Beach Community Association, and the group did submit a letter opposing Roger Jacobs’ appointment. She noted several reasons for the opposition to his appointment. Cheryl shared her hope that the Oceano Nipomo board could continue to provide projects and programs that benefited both visitors and residents, sharing that the LFA had funded 46 projects/programs since 2011 at over \$355,000. Linda noted that State Parks have been a valuable member of the board.

Bonnie noted that she has offered her home as a vacation rental for many years, understands tourism, and has been on the frontline of TOT.

Linda reiterated that she is not comfortable moving forward with the application and would like to hold until Roger’s application has been resolved. The board agreed to place Bonnie’s application, as well as Roger’s appointment confirmation, on the Future Agenda Items

- b. **Administrative Services Contract Proposal from Danielle Carpenter** – Cheryl Cuming noted that Stephanie Rowe will be transitioning out of her role as administrator for the board after almost 11 years. Danielle Carpenter, who introduced herself earlier in the meeting, has agreed to take over administrative responsibilities. Danielle’s proposal is for a 2-year contract at a rate of \$33/hour and will be effective starting on May 15, 2023 through June 30, 2025.

A motion was made by Linda Austin, and seconded by Clare Class, to approve the administrative services contract proposal for Danielle Carpenter at the rate of \$33 per hour for a maximum of 25 hours per month for a total annual amount of \$11,137.50 for the first year and \$9,900 for the second year, for a total 25.5 month amount of \$21,037.50 effective May 15, 2023 - June 30, 2025. With no further discussion, the proposal was approved by unanimous voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

- c. **FY 2023-2024 Draft Budget and Allocations** - Stephanie Rowe reviewed the current 2022-2023 budget, projected carry forward and proposed 2023-2024 budget and allocations. She suggested the same allocations as last year: Administration - 20%; Events/Contingency - 20%; Marketing - 50%; Capital Fund - 10%. The Board agreed to the suggested allocations.

A motion was made by Clare Class, and seconded by Linda Austin, to adopt the projected budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 as proposed. With no further discussion, the budget was approved by a unanimous voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

- d. **FYs 2021-2023 TJA Advertising Recap / FYs 2023-2025 TJA Contract Renewal** - Claudia Torkelson presented a recap from the past year: 11,800 Facebook fans, +2%; 6.4m impressions, -36%; 66,300 engagements, +108%. Reviewed the top Facebook posts. 3,500 Instagram followers, +98%; 1,769 new follower growth; 1.4m impressions, -67%; 8,900 engagements, +46%. Reviewed the top Instagram posts. The quarterly E-newsletter has 9,584 subscribers with an average open rate of 20%. CBID co-op results: Very good overall for the \$6,000 spent so far. Social media CPC at 26 cents is one of the lower in the group; SEM-average session duration increased over time to 1.5 minutes per session. The LocalHood Stories she has been posting that appear on Visit California and Google have shown incredible growth also.

Claudia also gave an overview of the 2-year TJA Advertising contract renewal. The overall goal is to attract users on social media to gain overnight visitors. It is similar to the last contract which includes a monthly retainer for posting/content creation/curation, monitoring & engagement, and analytics & reporting for a total of 14 hours per month. These activities will be billed at \$95/hour for a total annual cost of \$15,960; Mailchimp quarterly e-newsletter creation and hosting for a total annual cost of \$1,380; advertising and influencer campaigns for a total annual cost of \$45,000. A contingency budget in the amount of \$2,660 is included for any unforeseen expenses. All segments of the proposal come to an annual total investment of \$65,000.

A motion was made by Linda Austin, and seconded by Clare Class, to approve the TJA Advertising contract renewal for an annual investment of \$65,000 and a total 2-year investment of \$130,000 effective July 1, 2023-June 30, 2025. With no further discussion, the contract renewal was approved by unanimous voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

- e. **FY 2023-2024 LFA Imperative & CBID Co-op Program** - John Sorgenfrei reviewed the various opportunities and noted that the board approved similar funding last year. He also noted that as Claudia reported, the results have been great. They are recommending a similar plan this year: Search Engine Marketing Co-op: November 2023 - June 2024 (8 months), \$500/month, \$4,000 total; LFA Paid Social: November 2023 - June 2024, \$4,000 total, (\$4,000 match for \$8,000 total); Total Co-op spend for Oceano/Nipomo = \$8,000. Cheryl noted that this program drives traffic to our website.

A motion was made by Linda Austin, and seconded by Clare Class, to approve \$8,000 for the 2023-2024 LFA Imperative Co-op program. With no further discussion, the funding was approved by unanimous voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

8. Future Agenda Items/New Business:

- a. Oceano Welcome Sign Funding Application
- b. Board Seat Application from Bonnie Ernst
- c. Update on Roger Jacobs' Board Appointment Confirmation
- d. Discuss Moving to Quarterly Meetings

9. **Closing Comment(s):** Linda Austin thanked Stephanie Rowe for her time as the administrator of the Oceano Nipomo Tourism Board and presented her with a beautiful flower planter and a thank you card from the board.

10. Next Local Fund Advisory Board Meeting:

Date: August 15, 2023
Time: 5:00 – 6:15 pm
Location: TBD

11. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:22 pm