

Draft Until Approved
Avila Beach Tourism Alliance
Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 14, 2024
Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort Boardroom

Board Members Present:

Dean Hutton, Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort
Ken Kelly, Coastal Vacation Rentals
Mindy Hunter, Avila Village Inn

Others Present:

John Sorgenfrei, TJA Advertising
Claudia Torkelson, TJA Advertising
Rick Turton, TJA Advertising
Christopher Oh, Avila Lighthouse Suites
Stephanie Rowe, ABTA administrator
Kathleen Naughton, SLO Coast Wine

Board Members Absent: None

CBID: Cheryl Cuming

1. **Call to Order:** By board chair Dean Hutton at 10:07 am.
2. **Roll Call:** Stephanie Rowe
3. **Public Comment:** None
4. **Consent Items:** A motion was made by Dean Hutton and seconded by Ken Kelly to approve the January 10, 2024 minutes. With no further discussion, the minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote of the local Advisory Board.
5. **CBID Local Fund Area and Financials Update:** Cheryl Cuming gave an update for the past month.
 - a. Web traffic continues to grow with almost 700,000 page views due to H1RT rebranding.
 - b. Email subscribers over 117,000 and Facebook fans over 112,000.
 - c. TOT/Assessment collections soft but January looked better and are continuing to do all the marketing they had planned despite re-forecasting budget lower.
 - d. Mid-Year Update: The website has recovered from the URL H1RT change; video is the lowest CPE at \$0.06; .30 Spotify ads have a 95% engagement rate; raw footage is enhancing social and focusing on lodging; PR has generated 24 articles; Travel for Good is being integrated into all channels.
 - e. Flyers with QR codes to download maps are available on the member page under Shared Assets.
 - f. Cambria has created a weddings page where they receive several inquiries a week so check it out.
 - g. Avila Beach's assessment collections were 20.21% of overall total contributions for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.
6. **Budget Update:** Stephanie Rowe reported that assessment collections in December totaled \$16,404. Available funds (including the carry-forward) total \$373,705. Funds after approved applications and anticipated expenses removed total \$201,451.
7. **Committee Reports:**
 - a. **TJA Activity Report/Website Analytics Update – John Sorgenfrei, Claudia Torkelson, Rick Turton and Tom Walker:** John noted that they launched a \$15,000 digital campaign with Visit CA at the beginning of February that is doing well so far.

Claudia reported on social media activity in the last month. Facebook fans went up by 1%/+10 fans to 81,178. Total Impressions +88% to 259,561 and engagements +58% to 15,457. Videos watched decreased -93% to 7,500 because she used a carousel instead of video so this is normal. She noted the top posts. Instagram gained +1%/72 new followers for a total of 43,523, with impressions +195% for

total 1,132,884 and engagements +12% for total 5,848. She noted the top Instagram posts. She also reported on the social ad spend which was a Restaurant Month boosted post: reach 212,640; website visits 6,216; profile views 12,855 and the cost per website visit \$0.48. YouTube stayed the same with 463,957 lifetime video views, up to 385 monthly video views and up to 3 average monthly hours watched. She listed the top videos. The monthly blog was about Restaurant Month. The quarterly newsletter sent to our subscribers was about Avila Restaurant Month and had an open rate of 26%. Claudia also reviewed the results from the influencer couple, @cal.euphoria, who visited in early February and stayed at the Avila Lighthouse Suites. They loved their stay in Avila and posted multiple reels with high engagement rates.

Rick Turton reported on the website activity for the month. The total visitor sessions were 26,536 for a 14% increase year-over-year. The Restaurant Month promotion had almost 7,000 page views. We had almost 82% visitors on mobile devices again. Rick also gave a preview of the Chatbot he has been developing. He showed the potential use by Visit Avila Beach to answer visitor questions. John noted that they would be testing it before any implementation.

8. Action/Discussion Items

- a. **SLO Coast Wine Tasting Passes** – Kathleen Naughton presented the wine tasting pass proposal. She reviewed the current program in Woodenville Wine Country in Washington. She is proposing that the partnership with Avila be similar with the difference being that the board purchases passes for distribution to Avila lodging partners. Kathleen noted that promo codes would be created for distribution to each participating lodging partner to give out to guests for redemption of the passes. After discussion, the board decided to purchase 100 2-day tasting passes and evenly distribute to lodging partners who choose to participate. They discussed that each participating lodging partner would create their own terms & conditions and would market on their end. John Sorgenfrei also noted that TJA would develop a marketing campaign to promote the overall program.

A motion was made by Ken Kelly, and seconded by Dean Hutton, to approve a not to exceed amount of \$6,000 to purchase 100 2-day SLO Coast Wine Tasting passes to promote overnight stays in Avila from March – June 2024. The funding will come out of the current TJA Advertising budget. With no further discussion, the proposal was accepted by unanimous voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

- b. **Cycle Central Coast December Takeover Data** – Rick Turton reviewed the website data from the December takeover month. He noted that 1,529 people landed on our cycling page from Cycle Central Coast and only 7 went to our lodging page. John Sorgenfrei noted that we have another takeover month in April and said he would talk with Jessica about getting better results, or perhaps doing our own cycling campaign better suited to the casual cyclist on the Bob Jones Trail.

9. Future Agenda Items/New Business

- a. Board Seat Renewal for Ken Kelly (April)
- b. 2024 10C SLO Down Truck Show Sponsorship Consideration (April)
- c. Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget (April)
- d. Administrative Services Contract Renewal (May)
- e. Pale Kai Outrigger Canoe Event Funding Application (May)

10. Closing Comments:

11. Next ABTA Local Fund Area Board Meeting:

Dates: **March 13, 2024**
Time: **10:00 am – 12:00 pm**
Location: **Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort - Boardroom**

12. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:24 pm.