



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

Board Meeting Minutes
January 24, 2024, 12:00 p.m.
Cambria Pines Lodge

DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED

CBID Board Members Present: Mike Hanchett, Gary Setting, Bram Winter, Melissa Kurry
County Liaison: CAO Cheryl Cuming
Absent: Matt Masia, Laila Kollmann, Aaron Graves
Guests: Lori Keller, Lori Ritchey, Lisa Belanti of SLO CAL, Kristin Howland from CCSPA, Steve Kniffen. Zoom: Nilesch Patel, Jessica & Keith Ireland from Sunshine & Bourbon

Call to Order

At 12:03pm

Public Comment

None

Presentations

Kristin Howland from Central Coast State Parks Association (CCSPA) shared information about the installation of five (5) Western Monarch Trail signs and the role of CCSPA and transition of program to Xerces Society. Installed signs include: Nipomo on County Parks property, the Los Osos Preserve near Sea Pines, Hearst San Simeon State Beach at the entrance to the pier (bilingual English and Spanish). The Avila Barn sign has been delayed due to flooding, so it's rescheduled for spring; and Cambria is awaiting the chamber to install sometime in February 2024. Recent media coverage includes National Geographic, thanks to the H1RT public relations team.

Administrative Items

Roll Call: Gary Setting, Melissa Kurry, Bram Winter and Mike Hanchett are present.

Consent Agenda: A motion was made by Mike Hanchett and seconded by Gary Setting to approve the December 6 minutes. With no further discussion, these minutes were approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board; Bram Winter and Melissa Kurry abstained.

Financials: Financials are reconciled through November. Items of note:

- General Fund and BID Bunch expense tracking report \$91,213; YTD is \$725,980.
- YTD collected revenue is \$857,600 which is \$89,770 under budget.

- YTD expenses paid are \$725,980 which is \$326,211 under budget.
- Net income is \$236,400 more than budgeted YTD.
- Overall cash increased by \$340,545 from June 30, 2023.

Administrator & Partner Updates:

- SLO CAL: Lisa said that SLO CAL is forging ahead with the nomenclature project and Gary is the star! There is a heavy emphasis on paid media in key markets. They are also hosting the SLO CAL Open surf contest.

Upcoming Events/Deadlines

- Board meetings: February 28 and March 27
- Form 700 due by 4/2

Strategy/Ideation Topic

H1 Brand Evolution: Keith, Jessica and Nilesh presented via Zoom the brand approaches for H1RT that complement the SLO CAL “Life Is Too Beautiful To Rush” brand. Board comments following the brand promise presentation included Bram stating that “Fast Can Wait” is his initial preference. Gary mentioned “Coasting Along” vs “Slowing Down” since the area is more than just the coast and likes how “Just Coast” created a relaxed vibe. Melissa felt the “Fast Can Wait” paired well with SLO CAL. Mike questioned the “Just Coast” ambiguity and how well it would represent non-coastal areas. CAO noted that H1RT name is not limited to destinations on H1, including Edna Valley, AG Valley, Los Osos and Nipomo, and we could consider our region as coastal based on its proximity to the Coast. There was discussion around how H1 can fly in formation with SLO CAL’s County brand and the emphasis on the pillars of People, Pace, and Place. Some board members expressed concern that “Fast Can Wait” may be too similar to SLO CAL’s brand, and that “Just Coast” does fit nicely under their brand. A discussion around how “Just Coast” creates more of a connection to our area, while “Fast Can Wait” could represent other destinations and may not differentiate us enough.

Mike inquired about getting consumer feedback. Jessica said that focus groups are an option for qualitative and leveraging an email database provides quantitative feedback. Lori Keller suggested paid social as an option. Jessica reminded the board that brands are authentic as they represent the soul of a place. Lisa offered to share SLO CAL’s research on Life Is Too Beautiful To Rush. Mike asked about the scalability of both options and Keith confirmed they are workable. CAO Cuming will present the options to Laila and Aaron to get their feedback (note: concluded that “Just Coast” was the clear choice for both Laila and Aaron).

Discussion Items

Marketing - Roll-Up Report: Lori Ritchey presented the mid-year report. The SEO report reflected that ranking was down 17%; in post-meeting review it was determined that this metric is misleading and a decrease actually represents an improvement in ranking.

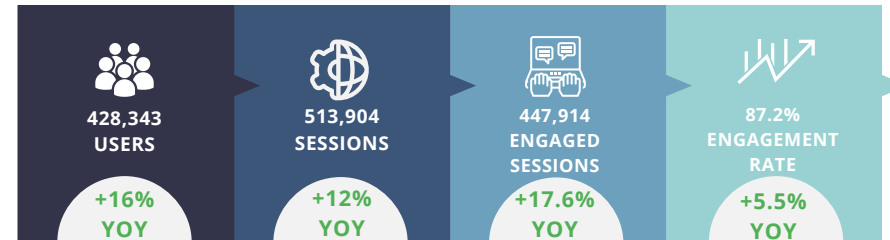
Highway 1 Road Trip

MID YEAR REPORT

JULY 1 - DECEMBER 31, 2023

Website Performance

- H1RT has **recovered from the URL change**.
- Between July and December, the H1RT website saw a **16% rise in user numbers** compared to the same period last year, **surpassing half a million sessions**. This shows **more people visited the site**, and **more users came back repeatedly**, indicating **growing interest** and **engagement with the site**.



SEO Summary

Session default channel group	Users	Sessions
SHOW ALL ROWS		
	114,258	145,182
	vs. 73,980	vs. 97,606
	↑ 54.44%	↑ 48.74%
1 Organic Search		
Jul 1 - Dec 31, 2023	114,258	145,182
Jul 1 - Dec 31, 2022	73,980	97,606
% change	54.44%	48.74%

◀ **Year-over-year Organic Traffic for the mid-year period was up 54% for Users and 48% in Sessions.**
54% increase in organic search traffic is a huge win!!

Top pages	Clicks	Impressions
https://highway1roadtrip.com/things-to-do/highway-1-scenic-drive-where-to-stop/	9,976	455,071
https://highway1roadtrip.com/things-to-do/best-restaurants-in-cambria/	3,032	120,435
https://highway1roadtrip.com/things-to-do/moonstone-beach-cambria/	2,081	113,780
https://highway1roadtrip.com/things-to-do/elephant-seals-san-simeon/	1,978	138,610
https://highway1roadtrip.com/things-to-do/best-restaurants-in-san-luis-obispo/	1,928	160,163
https://highway1roadtrip.com/things-to-do/dining-on-highway-1/	1,905	54,395
https://highway1roadtrip.com/things-to-do/montana-de-oro-state-park/	1,716	110,793
https://www.highway1roadtrip.com/things-to-do/highway-1-scenic-drive-where-to-stop/	1,662	94,352
https://highway1roadtrip.com/things-to-do/biking-pacific-coast-highway-1/	1,634	36,894
https://highway1roadtrip.com/	1,627	100,275

▶ **We continue to see strong Organic Traffic from the dining pages carving out a whole new share of organic traffic is a big win!**

This shows there is opportunity to capture awareness in areas that are complementary to our activities/destinations/events. These dining focused pages all are in our top 10 for capturing organic search traffic.

Email Summary

Overall, our strategies for email content have consistently **increased open** and **click through rates** and **decreased the unsubscribe rate**.

CONTENT ENHANCEMENTS MADE SINCE JULY:

Template design refresh

A/B testing of subject lines and content lengths and tones

Personalization in the body text

Animated hero images

Resends to non-openers

Built a **new modular template** to be used for automations and other ad-hoc sends (like the survey email in progress). January's plans are to get that in place for existing automations and start using the **interest categories to start doing some targeted content**.

Paid Media AT A GLANCE BY CHANNEL...



Paid Media VIDEO INSIGHTS

YOUTUBE
We delivered a whopping **2 million impressions with YouTube**. This along with the **154K full-video views** and **31K clicks** makes video a major mover for 2024,

CTV
We continued our CTV program with Amazon. By adding QR codes to video ads shown on TV screens we were able to pull viewers to the website. For the Fall campaign, the UTM codes from CTV captured **407 views, 122 sessions** and **55 new users**. This is on top of a **97% completion rates** for **:30 second videos** showcasing the beautiful imagery of highway 1.

SPOTIFY
:30 video ads on Spotify are seeing **0.81% CTR, 89% completion rates, and 95% engagement rates**. These are really good numbers for Spotify - we think its combination of beautiful creative and an engaging medium where people aren't overwhelmed with video ads.

The Spotify video ads only appear when the user is actively engaging with the app so they are sure to see it and since everyone using Spotify will have sound on, we can be sure they are going to hear the message too!

Paid Media NEW AD FORMATS IN SOCIAL

LA TIMES HANDSHAKE AD
Top Conversions: Ranked **5th in conversions** and **highest CTR at around 5%**.

Cost-Effective: CPC's have been **low at \$0.21** and **CPE at \$0.25**, making every penny count.

Massive Reach: **22k new users** and **3,137 individuals exploring 4+ pages**, harnessing the LA Times name for strong engagement.

High Engagement: An outstanding **89% engagement rate** (site avg. 86%) ensures our message resonates.

Precision Targeting: While not limited to LAT followers, a **Handshake ad allows precise targeting, leveraging the LA Times name for impact**.

Los Angeles Times with California Highway 1 Road Trip
Sponsored · 18
The ten small towns on our stretch of Highway 1 are small places for big adventures. Just pull over, and you will have arrived.
highway1roadtrip.com
Take the long view Experience awe.
1.2K · 58 comments · 111 shares
Like · Comment · Share

FB COLLECTION AD
New Unit: focused on **driving Map download**. Great overall results but CPL is a higher than average.

Reach: **215k impressions, 9k clicks at 4% open rate** (Higher than last month) and **low CPC at \$.18** cents (on low spend of \$1600). **875 new users**. 38% (336 folks) checked 4+ Pages.

Cost Effective: Super low **Cost Per Engagement at \$.02 cents**. Drove **174 map downloads**.

Engagement : **45 second avg. engagement time** (site is avg. is :58).

California Highway 1 Road Trip
Sponsored · 18
It takes a small town to offer a big thrill. We hope you'll consider ours. Download our Small Towns, Big Experiences map!
Unearth HIDDEN TREASURES
Small Towns. Big Experiences.
Like · Comment · Share

Social + Video /Photography

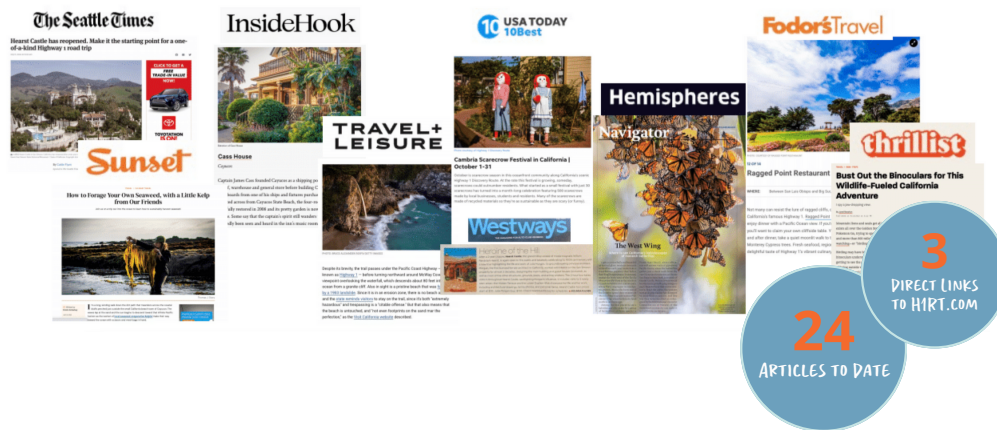
Transitioning to raw footage has really enhanced our social media efforts. As we are revisiting communities we are **shooting video at lodging properties** highlighting where It is within the community, views, etc.

The footage from lodging has allowed us to **collaborate with LFAs to maximize exposure and reach**, while **highlighting lodging**.

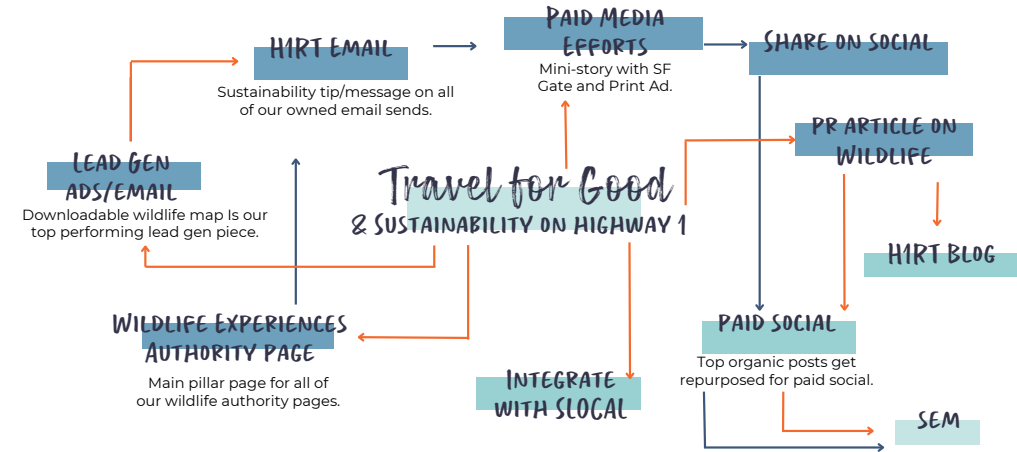
10 Hotels in Cayucos California

Reel insights
42506 · 1871 · 44 · 250 · 525
Overview
Accounts reached 29,884
Reel interactions 2,687
Reach
29,884 Accounts reached
13,254 Followers · 16,630 Non-followers
Plays 41,992
Initial plays 31,618
Replays 10,374
Watch time 77 hr 33 min 41 sec
Average watch time 8 sec

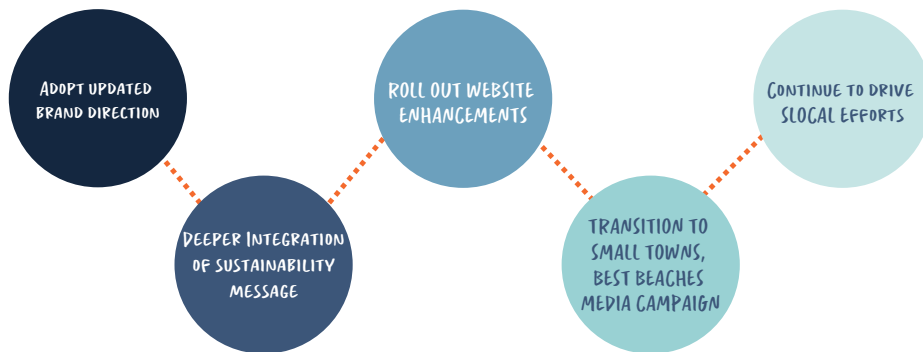
Public Relations Efforts



Travel for Good Integration



What's Next?



Questions?

Action Items

Mid Year Budget Direction

CAO confirmed that there is a net change in the budget of (\$88,351.11), which accounts for the reduction in revenue. This reduction will not impact the current budgeted expenses, but comes from the contingency accumulated in prior years, which was built from excess net revenue. Anticipated net carryforward at year end is \$373k. Bram supports the recommendation not to cut spending. Mike agreed saying that he wants to continue to invest, and the contingency exists for this scenario. Gary supported a review of overlaps in marketing that aren't delivering strong results as an area to reassess. Lori Keller mentioned European travelers are down, and Mike confirmed that the extended Highway 1 road closure is really impacting the north coast.

CAO Cuming reviewed LFA monies with Avila Beach and Los Osos being flat, Cambria, Cayucos and San Simeon are down, and O/N and Edna/Arroyo Grande Valley are up. Lori Keller noted the opportunity to expand group business at Hearst Castle.

A motion was made by Bram Winter and seconded by Mike Hanchett to continue to invest as planned and use the \$100,000 of contingency funds to account for assessment shortfalls to ensure expenses are met. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board.

Local Fund Board Members

Avila Beach: A motion was made by Mike Hanchett and seconded by Bram Winter to accept Chris Oh's application to the Avila Beach local fund area board. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board.

Local Fund Area Applications

None

Closing Comments

None

Future Agenda Items

- LFA Bylaws
- CBID and LFA policy updates

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:54pm