



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

Board Meeting Minutes
May 22, 2024, 12:00 p.m.
Cambria Pines Lodge

DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED

CBID Board Members Present: Mike Hanchett, Gary Setting, Bram Winter, Melissa Kurry, Matt Masia

County Liaison: CAO Cheryl Cuming, Tessa Cornejo

Absent: Laila Kollmann, Aaron Graves

Guests: Cathy Cartier, SLO CAL; Lisa Belsanti, SLO CAL; Steve Kniffin; BID Bunch: Lori Keller; Kirstin Koszorus; Katie Sturtevant

Call to Order

At 12:05pm

Public Comment

Matt thanked everyone for their well wishes, and feels grateful to be back.

Presentations

Cathy Cartier presented an update on SLO CAL, including their CEO search, and the Rocky Creek closure of Highway 1. Gary commented on the importance of alignment and Cathy said that SLO CAL will stay humble and pivot as needed.

Kirstin Koszorus presented a recap of the public relations coverage. There have been 175 articles to date, with 16 in the top outlets and 143 including a link to highway1roadtrip.com. Upcoming coverage includes *Travel + Leisure*, *Passport*, *Paste*, *LA Times* and *McClatchy News Syndicate*.

Katie Sturtevant shared the Stewardship Travel for Good update. Highlights include the Back to Nature Tours, Coastal Clean-up, Earth Day & State Parks Week, and an updated landing page that includes a linking strategy to authority content on the website.

Administrative Items

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

Consent Agenda: A motion was made by Mike Hanchett and seconded Bram Winter to approve the April 24 minutes. With no further discussion, these minutes were approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board; Matt Masia abstained. Motion carried.

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

- General Fund and BID Bunch expense tracking report YTD is \$1,256,651.
- YTD collected revenue is \$1,205,042 which is \$43,859 under budget.
- YTD expenses paid are \$1,256,651 which is \$459,734 under budget.
- Net income is \$415,875 more than budgeted YTD.
- Overall cash increased by \$107,388 from June 30, 2023.

2019-2023 TOT Growth:

TOT by FY			CBID 2% by FY	
July 1-June 30	Amount		July 1-June 30	Amount
2009-10	\$ 4,571,111.70		2009-10	\$ 1,014,440.83
2010-11	\$ 5,830,816.17		2010-11	\$ 1,293,731.87
2011-12	\$ 6,148,596.03		2011-12	\$ 1,368,015.44
2012-13	\$ 6,689,125.74		2012-13	\$ 1,482,526.37
2013-14	\$ 7,449,651.69	} Doubled last 10 years	2013-14	\$ 1,649,654.73
2014-15	\$ 8,113,417.38		2014-15	\$ 1,797,401.92
2015-16	\$ 8,395,992.37		2015-16	\$ 1,860,859.26
2016-17	\$ 8,688,186.22		2016-17	\$ 1,920,703.94
2017-18	\$ 8,413,643.81		2017-18	\$ 1,974,908.69
2018-19	\$ 9,493,575.85		2018-19	\$ 2,187,601.94
2019-20	\$ 8,559,967.69		2019-20	\$ 1,940,363.05
2020-21	\$ 11,673,827.18		2020-21	\$ 2,462,320.26
2021-22	\$ 14,178,355.26		2021-22	\$ 3,073,675.41
2022-23	\$ 14,906,811.51		2022-23	\$ 2,977,069.39
2023-24	\$ 8,797,631.75	* As of Jan 31, 2024	2023-24	\$ 1,931,936.72
	\$ 131,910,710.35			\$ 28,935,209.82

The CBID outpaced all other DMOs in SLO County with + 57% rate of change in TOT in the last 5 years:

- CBID +57% with 1 new hotel
- SLO + 35% with 4 new hotels
- PB + 54% with 4 new hotels*
- MB + 19% with 3 new hotels
- PR +50% with 5 new hotels*

*Both PB and PR increased TOT by 1%; figures are normalized and do not include TOT increase.

Administrator & Partner Updates:

Tessa noted that the CBID annual renewal at the Board of Supervisors was successful. The protest rate was 0.0805%, including 23 vacation rentals and 1 hotel; it was noted that Cambria Pines Lodge withdrew protest.

Upcoming Events/Deadlines

- CBID meetings on June 26, July 24 and August 28 (the August meeting is subject to cancellation).

Strategy/Ideation Topic

Marketing Plan Implementation: Lori Keller reviewed the 2024 | 2025 Marketing Plan with the focus of always pivoting.

Tessa asked for details on what defines a lookalike audience and Lori provided context. Matt noted that the plan showed lots of progression. Lori confirmed that it will “fly in formation” with the new brand. Mike mentioned the growth of an active and interested audience; quality is key.



The Big Things:

- New Branding Integration
- New Methods of Measuring Success
- Improve Website Usability
- Maximize “new” Technology
- Opening of Highway 1



SHIFTS in TEAM & TACTICS

Strategic Management Shifts

- Co-lead and Manage Brand Development/Strategic Integration
- Oversight of Measurement Methods
- Directing Shifts in Strategy Based Upon Data



Content Shift to Reflect New Branding

- Audit – Create – Adapt – Distribute
 - Website
 - Social Media
 - Email Marketing
 - Blog
 - Digital ad assets
 - Visual assets



Creative Director – New BID Bunch Contributor

- Creative Direction
- Campaign Concepting and Execution
 - Video Production including Brand “sizzle” Reel and assets for paid media and LFAs
 - Production of multiple campaign themes including wildlife, beaches, and small towns / big experiences



Email Shift Toward Personalization

- Build User Preference Buckets to segment audiences
- Deliver dynamic and relevant content to maximize exposure and engagement
- Integration – Connect email with other marketing streams to create a more holistic customer experience and better understand the target audience



Social Integration of New Voice Optimized for Search

- Incorporate and update all organic messaging and imagery using the new brand voice across all platforms
- Integrate with search engine optimization efforts:
 - Encourage sharing posts from the social platforms
 - Optimize all social profiles with strong branding
 - Create engaging posts that drive website interest



SEO Focus – New Content and Updates

- New Content - 12 items where we can capture additional search traffic:
 - Big Sur Content (hiking, surfing, things to do, restaurants, etc.)
 - LFA-focused Nightlife
 - Beachfront Hotels on Highway 1, Highway 1 Hotels with Pools, etc.
- Updates – 24 older pages with thin content
 - LFA-focused pages (fishing, hiking, surfing, etc.)



Website Usability Moves from Yellow Pages to Guidebook

- SEO For “Best Of”/Plan Your Trip Results
- Clean up Navigation
- Replacing Interactive Map Platform
- Revamp Listing Pages
- Lots of Behind the Scenes Updates



Integrate Travel for Good Experiences

- Continue Integrating Sustainable Messaging
- Include Stewardship Experiences during media FAMs to encourage writers to promote content like the wildlife viewing tips
- Integrate with Visit SLO CAL’s efforts in the sustainability space
- Integrate ‘stewardship tips and sustainable’ messaging in alignment with new branding
- Launch & Promote the New “Back to Nature” Tours & Experiences



Public Relations in Person

- Outreach Continues to Focus on Targeted Outlets, but In-person Media Hosting and Media Missions Become Stronger Focus
- Media Hosting:
 - 1 themed group FAM (3-5 Media)
 - 8-16 Individual Media Visits
- Media Missions:
 - Travel Classics
 - IMM
 - Visit California Media Event
- Utilizing Muck Rack to create more robust reports.
 - Tracks coverage of the region on an ongoing basis
 - Provides details
 - unique monthly visitors
 - sentiment of the article
 - social coverage of the article
 - clicks to Highway1RoadTrip.com and more.



Paid Media: Test and Learn Approach

- Expansion of First-Party Data integrations
- Testing of Refined Targeting
- Database growth our top KPI – map downloads
- Test Effective retargeting strategies
- Utilization of automation and AI for streamlined data collection, reporting, and analysis
- Data-driven ad targeting and personalization for tailored messaging to relevant audience segments.
- Expansion of Google video content
- Extension of programs into LFA imperatives for improved cost efficiencies and metrics



Action Items

SLO CAL CEO Letter of Support: Melissa Kurry noted that Cathy's 3-year history with the organization is important. Gary said that he enjoyed working with her on the nomenclature video. Lori Keller commented that if partnership is the focus, Cathy truly cares. Gary asked Lisa about the SLO CAL culture and she noted the cohesion with a focus on the organization's overall purpose, and that there is more internal team collaboration. Cathy is considered to be a singular force in the DMO world and the region is ripe for exponential growth. A motion was made by Bram Winter and seconded by Melissa Kurry to approve the letter of endorsement as presented for Cathy Cartier as the President and CEO of SLO CA. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board; Matt Masia abstained.

2024 | 2025 Marketing Plan: A motion was made by Bram Winter and seconded by Mike Hanchett to approve the plan as presented; Mike noted how far the CBID has come. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board.

Local Fund Area Applications

Cambria & San Simeon Scarecrow Festival: A motion was made by Mike Hanchett and seconded by Bram Winter to approve \$15,000 for Cambria and \$4,500 for San Simeon. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board.

Avila Beach Pale Kai Event: A motion was made by Bram Winter and seconded by Mike Hanchett to approve \$5,500. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board.

Avila Beach Admin: A motion was made by Melissa Kurry and seconded by Bram Winter to approve Stephanie Rowe's contract renewal as presented for \$48,240 for 24 months beginning July 1, 2024. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board.

Los Osos Marketing: Mike asked Gary if he continued to support the renewal of this contract and Gary commented that he knows that Danielle continues to do a great job; Melissa also has worked with Danielle and supports this contract renewal. A motion was made by Mike Hanchett and seconded by Melissa Kurry to approve Shadetree's marketing contract renewal as presented for \$49,116 for 12 months beginning July 1, 2024. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board.

Edna/AG Valley Admin: A motion was made by Bram Winter and seconded by Mike Hanchett to approve Shadetree's admin contract renewal as presented for \$11,500 for 12 months, beginning July 1, 2024. It was noted that the contract is for 2 years, so motion was amended by Bram and Mike to reflect 24 months. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board.

Edna/AG Valley Marketing Liaison: A motion was made by Bram Winter and seconded by Mike Hanchett to approve Shadetree's marketing liaison contract as presented for \$6,000 for 12 months beginning July 1, 2024. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a voice vote of the Advisory Board.

CAO Cuming noted that the Big Red Marketing contract renewal was not accepted by the EV AGV board so was not brought forward to the CBID. It was also noted that the VAC LFA Imperative funding for SF Gate will be addressed in the June CBID Advisory Board meeting.

It was noted that the EV AGV SLO Coast Wine Collective affiliate partnership for \$3,100 and the Los Osos CCSPA Butterfly Ball sponsorship for \$2,500 were both signed by chair, Gary Setting.

Closing Comments

None

Future Agenda Items

- CBID Board Succession (June); CTB Lawn Bowling sponsorship; LFA Budgets
- 2024 | 2025 Agenda Topics (August)
- BID Bunch presentations: Paid Media (June); SEO & Website (TBD); Content Calendar (Sept)
- BID Bunch LFA Bylaws and CBID and LFA Policy Updates

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:01pm