



CAMBRIA TOURISM BOARD (CTB)

(Cambria Local Fund Advisory Board)

Board Meeting Minutes

Cambria Pines Lodge

Treetop Room

May 14, 2024

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Greg Pacheco at 2:00 p.m.

Members Present

Greg Pacheco
Karen Cartwright
Jim Bahringer
Steve Kniffen
George Marschall

CBID

CAO Cheryl Cuming

Guests

Patty Rixman, Stephanie Vassigh, Scarecrow Festival; Katie Sturtevant, Stewardship Travel; Alyssa Manno, Visit SLO CAL; Jackie Hogan, Loren Dion, Cambria Lawn Bowls; Scot Addis, Lion's Foundation; Mitchell Masia, Cambria Inns; Jessica Blanchfield, Archer & Hound; Jill Jackson, CTB MA.

2. Consent Agenda Items

Board Meeting Minutes – April 9, 2024

George Marschall moved, and Steve Kniffen seconded, to approve the board meeting minutes of April 9, 2024, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Public Comment

No public comment was received.

4. Discussion & Action Items

4.1 Piedras Blancas Lens Enclosure Funding Application

Greg said that the first item is a funding application for the Lens Enclosure. It was submitted by the Pinedorado Lions Foundation. He asked Jim Bahringer if he had information to share. Jim said that most of the project has been privately funded. The Tourism Boards assistance has been really appreciated. Scot Addis can add to that. The next phase is critical. Scot thanked the board for their support in order to complete phase one of the restoration. He asked board members to stop by and see the improvements, if they have not already. The strength and appearance both improved. It is well known point of interest and draws visitors. He continued we have completed so far, with your help, phase one of the project: the construction of all the external braces, the painting of the exterior, the addition of the UV film. In the course of that work, however, there was some additional work found on the interior of the enclosure itself. That includes some rust due to moisture driven in by wind and some design defects that we are not properly addressed 30 years ago. The second phase addresses all those issues and painting of the lower part. It will also put us in good shape for many more years than we originally envisioned, instead of five years, we may have ten or maybe fifteen years of service life remaining. He said that they have received private and Light House Association funding. Most of those funds have been consumed in phase one. George Marschall pointed out that there are not enough funds remaining in the Outreach budget for it. Even with next year's funds. Contingency fund balance is \$17,816. Greg said he has a

couple questions. You are going into phase two was phase two an original part of the plan? Scot said, no this work was uncovered during completing the work of phase one. Greg said that last time we talked the fundraising goal was \$118,000, did you meet that goal? Scot said yes. Greg confirmed that they are requesting \$10,000 from the board and that they will fundraise for the additional \$15,000. Scot said yes. They have also approached Supervisor Gibson. Cheryl said that the county budget has been cut. George said there may be softness ahead. Greg said the board is surprised by this and that the project could not be completed with the original funding. Scot said completing the entire job with everything that has been uncovered, really sets us up to be able to extend the service life that is much more meaningful than originally thought. Greg asked about a lesser amount. Cheryl said that because of the meeting dates any funding would not be approved until July. Karen asked about their time window to have it done. Karen moved to approve funding \$4,999. No second obtained.

4.2 Cambria Lawn Bowls Club Event Funding Application

Greg continued, next is the Cambria Lawn Bowls Club funding application George you have that one. George said yes, he said it was not considered in Committee, he moved it forward for the entire board to discuss. The amount requested is \$10,000. He said he would let them go over it. Jackie Hogan introduced herself. She is the president of the Cambria Lawn Bowls Club and involved in Bowls USA on the national level. She introduced Loren Dion, a member of Team USA. She said that they are looking for some help with costs of tournaments that they hold every year. She said that this year they added a tournament and will have three tournaments this year. After the successful repair of the green everyone wants to play here. They calculate a minimum of 325 room night stays. She said they started live streaming last week and have had about 19,000 views from as far as Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and Scotland. New signage to help advertise Cambria would be seen all over the world. She included all three tournaments, even though one is in June. Within four hours of opening registration, it was completely full. There will be one in August and the new tournament added this year will be the Pro-bowlers, where players come from all over the world. George confirmed that \$4,800 is for marketing and signage. Jackie said additional money will go for internet to get the live stream on social media. None of the money goes for prizes. They have created towels with the Visit Cambria logo and website. George said that he supports the \$4,800 for marketing. Greg said that the \$10,000 is for three events and he wants to support any local events, especially in August. They are needed. Jackie confirmed that they are really trying to grow the events, and the sport in the USA. Steve asked if the funds are available and Jill confirmed that \$16,000 remained in the Event Committee Budget.

Jim Bahringer moved, and Karen Cartwright seconded, to approve funding the Cambria Lawn Bowls application from the Event Committee budget, in the amount of \$10,000. Motion carried unanimously.

4.3 CTB List and Letter of Support for Infrastructure Funding

Greg said next is the support letter. Jill explained that she was not able to find the CCSD minutes that included the list. She made a public records request but received a CCSD project list from December 2023. She could not find it as an agenda item either. Steve said he thinks it is on the next agenda. Jill said the only thing she could find was a reference to the Rodeo Grounds. She received the PROs list from Jim. Greg said he would want to see the list and letter before approving anything. Jill said that the CTB may want to add to the list of projects too. Jessica agreed that bike lanes could expand the audience for Cycle Central Coast. Jim asked to table the item for the next meeting, after the list can be obtained.

5. Information Items/Presentations

5.1 Stewardship Travel for Good

Greg shared that next on the agenda Katie is going to give us an update on the Stewardship Travel for Good program. Katie introduced herself and greeted the board. She began first and foremost, we have a new logo and we integrated the earth in it. On that same note we are integrating Stewardship now with everything we do whereas before it was a separate, standalone program on

our website. For example, like an elephant seal activity, instead of having a standalone activity on the Stewardship landing page we are embedding it in the current authority pages. So, there will be a Stewardship section on all these pages. They have added Stewardship tips on all of their newsletters now. They are cleaning it up and integrating the landing page and drop down. We just launched the Back to Nature Tours. It is all self-guided tours along Highway 1. They changed Coastal Discovery to focus on wildlife viewing and it did well this last year and it was one of the most successful campaigns this year. As part of the stewardship efforts we like to promote Earth Day, the third weekend in April and the third weekend of September. Any events that or celebrations you are doing around those two weekends we would love to help promote along Highway 1. State Parks Week will also be promoted, June 12-16. She said that they will be spending the next fiscal year focusing the program on Visit SLO, they just recently launched their sustainability tourism framework and we want to partner with them to leverage our stewardship program. It started last year at the World Travel and Tourism Council they did a spotlight video with Visit SLO. They invited us to join, and it was all the tourism partners in San Luis Obispo County. Their PR efforts include booking Carolyn Heller who is coming next week. She will be focusing her trip around stewardship and sustainability. She said that they will also have a makers market Fam trip coming up next week, three journalists are coming, and she and Kristen are personally taking them to Stolo's, Linn's and downtown.

5.2 SLO CAL Welcome Program

Greg said next on the agenda is the SLO CAL Welcome program update. Alyssa introduced herself and explained that she is the partner engagement manager for Visits SLO Cal. She is here today to get some feedback on their customer service program called SLO Cal Welcome. She said that they launched the program back in November of 2022 and to refresh your memories it's a six course program it goes through customer service like 101 to advance customer service 103 and then we have an experiential attractions module and a restaurants module and then a lodging module for people depending on which industry that they work in. There is an equity diversity and inclusion module. We have a destinations module which educates employees on things that are outside of where they reside or work and so that they are able to speak to the county as a whole to visitors. She said that they are looking for input to improve the program. Mitchell shared that he thought it was really well done, now that you mentioned it, I think a refresher that we could probably do of some kind maybe it is a shorter you know quicker thing that could be offered. The certificate given upon completion is nice too. Alyssa shared that she has gotten a lot of feedback around the destinations module that it was super helpful in educating people about things to do in the county. She said that they will be looking to make it more interactive, maybe incorporating some video content of these places to make it more engaging. She shared that the team will be looking for ways to make it more friendly to staff whether that is doing some in person content or a video that staff is able to come together for a meeting and learn the content that way.

5.3 Cambria Chamber of Commerce

Greg said next is Cambria Chamber. It looks like Steve has replaced the Chamber President. Steve said he was granted the position due to the Bylaws, there was no one else to do it. We were close to not doing it, honestly my objective is to prove that it has validity. He said that his directive is to try to prove it has value and make it better. I have a great board; I am highly confident in it. They have cleaned and overhauled the chamber building. Board meetings are on the third Tuesday of every month at 9:00 in the morning and are still available to attend on zoom.

5.4 Marketing Committee Report

Greg said next is the marketing committee report. Jill explained that this item is for any questions or comments on the current report. Greg said he has a comment about the summer campaign. It was kind of left hanging, he said that he was under the impression we want to do something for this summer. George agreed. Jessica said the cost is \$12,000 for the summer campaign and there is only \$15,000 in next year's contingency. Jill said that the remaining balance in the current fiscal year marketing contingency could be utilized. The result is a smaller carry forward amount to next year. Jessica asked for everyone's summer specials and Jill will email constituents for

theirs. Jessica also asked that everyone make sure that they are sharing the Travel App with visitors. Make sure your front desk staff know about it. It is a really great tool.

5.5 CBID Reports

Local Fund Summary – May 2024

Monthly Roll-up Report – March 2024

Year End Report – 2023

The reports were provided to the board but not discussed at the meeting.

5.6 CBID Presentation

CBID CAO Cheryl Cuming said she can give a quick report. She said that they just got over 1,000,000 visitors on the website this year and there are two months left. There was a boost in January and February that I mentioned around a wildlife promotion. We just surpassed 120,000 subscribers so it was nice to get over that hump. I will talk more in the future about our marketing plan which is going to be approved next week at the CBID. She said it was a nice improvement to see January, February, and March TOT actually flat to last year. I know everyone is concerned about it being soft. At the Board of Supervisor meeting, they projected TOT collections to be down 10% potentially. The CBID is projecting flat to this year's numbers. The CBID was renewed for another year. They will get the yearend report up on the site. Jill confirmed that the report was included in the board members' binders. She shared that Katie and Kirsten ended up getting an article syndicated across 136 media outlets. It was a really great article which ended up creating 1.7 million unique visitors. Karen asked about Highway I reopening. Cheryl said they are looking at September to clear both slides. She said that the CBID did say very clearly it does not want to reduce marketing efforts and will be spending about \$100,000 of their contingency budget into the new fiscal year to ensure our program is whole. In addition to the \$40,000 that has already been spent.

5.7 Meeting Minutes and Reports

Marketing Committee Meeting Minutes – May 14, 2024

The committee minutes were provided to the board but not discussed at the meeting.

5.8 Budget Reports

Month Ended March 31, 2024:

Revenue and Expenses

Budget vs Actual

Marketing Budget Expenditures

Grant Funding Detail

The budget reports were provided to the board but not discussed at the meeting.

6. Future Agenda Items/New Business

Jim suggested a discussion about the Capital Reserve account and what type of projects may be funded with it.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Jackson
Managing Assistant