

Draft Until Approved
Avila Beach Tourism Alliance
Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 8, 2026
Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort Boardroom

Board Members Present:

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

Board Members Absent: None

Others Present:

Cheryl Cuming, Highway 1 Tourism Alliance
John Sorgenfrei, TJA Advertising
Claudia Jensen, TJA Advertising (on Zoom)
Rick Turton, TJA Advertising
Tom Walker, TJA Advertising (on Zoom)
Erica Fryburger, Avila Lighthouse Suites
Kelley Abbas, representing SLO County
Supervisor Ortiz-Legg
Stephanie Rowe, ABTA Administrator

-
1. **Call to Order/Introductions:** By Board Vice-Chair Dean Hutton at 10:02 am.
 2. **Roll Call:** by Stephanie Rowe
 3. **Public Comment:** None
 4. **Consent Items:** A motion was made by Dean Hutton and seconded by Mindy Hunter to approve the April 8, 2026 minutes. With no further discussion, the minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote of the local Advisory Board.
 5. **Information Items:**
 - a. **Next Meeting** – May 13, 2026, 10am-12pm, Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort.
 - b. **Local Fund Area Updates and Financials:** Cheryl reported on the activity in the past month. She also reported on the recent LFA projects funded and schedule for the 1994 District conversion which may not be done until January 1st. She noted the reason for the 1994 conversion: We're converting to the Property and Business Improvement District Law of 1994 to create long-term stability, eliminate annual renewals with the SLO County Board of Supervisors, and reduce administrative burden. This allows us to focus more on strategic, multi-year investments that deliver stronger results for our lodging constituents, and in turn our local businesses and communities. Avila Beach's assessment collections are 18.5% of overall total contributions for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.
 - c. **Monthly Budget Report:** Stephanie reported that assessment collections in February totaled \$13,812. Available funds (including the carry-forward) total \$318,015. Funds after approved applications and anticipated expenses removed total \$130,069.
 - d. **Marketing Agency Updates:** John reported that they have been working with Stephanie on the TJA budget and projected expenses through the end of the year. Claudia reviewed last month's activities and social media results. She sent out the quarterly eblast that included thousands of new subscribers received from last year's sponsored events. Open rate was 31%. Tom and Rick gave updates on website activity. 32% increase in sessions Y/Y and 8.17% conversion rate. Tom presented information on AI Brand Awareness.

6. Action Items:

- a. **FY 2026-2027 Budget** - Stephanie reviewed the current 2025-2026 budget, projected carry forward and proposed 2026-2027 budget and allocations. Due to the 1994 conversion, there potentially may be additional admin expenses. Also because the survey noted that constituents wanted to focus on Beautification/Infrastructure projects, perhaps the Board wanted to decrease the Marketing budget. She suggested the following allocations: change Administration to 13% from 10%; keep Events and Beautification/Infrastructure at 15%; change Contingency to 27% from 25%; and change Marketing to 45% from 50%. The Board discussed and preferred to keep the Marketing budget at 50%. Therefore, the allocation for Contingency was reduced to 22% and Marketing was increased to 50%.

A motion was made by Ken Kelly, and seconded by Dean Hutton, to adopt the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 projected budget and allocations with Administration at 13%, Events and Beautification/Infrastructure at 15%, Contingency at 22% and Marketing at 50%. With no further discussion, the budget was approved by a unanimous voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

- a. **Administrator Contract Renewal** - Stephanie reviewed her 1-year proposal and noted that she originally proposed the same rate, \$34.50/hour, for a maximum of 60 hours per month. When she discussed it with Ken, he suggested increasing the hourly rate to \$35/hour which was approved for the new admin who decided to stay in her current position. The Board agreed and thanked her for staying in the position. Stephanie thanked the Board for their continued support.

A motion was made by Dean Hutton, and seconded by Ken Kelly, to approve the administrative services contract renewal for Stephanie Rowe at the rate of \$35.00 per hour for a maximum of 60 hours per month for a monthly amount of \$2,100 and annual total of \$25,200 effective July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027. With no further discussion, the proposal was approved by unanimous voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

7. Future Agenda Items

- a. **2026-2027 TJA Contract Renewal and LFA Imperative Proposal** (May)
- b. **2025-2026 TJA Year-End Recap** (July)
- c. **2026 C10 SLO Down Truck Show Follow-up Report** (by September)
- d. **2026 Creeks to Coast Cleanup Follow-up Report** (by November)

8. Closing Comments: None

9. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 10:54 am.