

Highway 1 Tourism Alliance Board of Directors Meeting Minutes | May 27, 2026 | Cambria Pines Lodge

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Aaron Graves at 2:09 PM.

Roll Call

Members Present: Aaron Graves, Gary Setting, Mike Hanchett, Melissa Kurry, Bram Winter

Members Absent: Laila Kollmann

County: Tessa Cornejo (Admin Advisor), Lisa Howell (Assistant CEO), Jim Dantona (arrived at 2:35pm)

Staff | BID Bunch: Emily Brown (Civitas), Cheryl Cuming, H1TA CAO

Guests: Molly Cano (SLO CAL)

Quorum

A quorum was established with five members present.

Public Comment

Chair Graves provided an opportunity for public comment on items not on the agenda. No public comments were made.

Information Items

- Upcoming Events: Members were reminded of the next meetings scheduled for June 24 and July 22.
- Marketing: The mid-year roll-up report was shared. Key takeaways include that lower traffic is balanced by higher engagement; email list has been pared down to engaged readers; paid media continues to strengthen; TIME magazine article resulted from PR and content compounding; YouTube and Pinterest are steadily increasing.
- Financials: The April financials were reviewed. Of note was the revenue is \$11,514 above budget and expenses paid are \$40,890 under budget. Total available funds are \$403,287.
- Partner Updates: CAO Cuming shared an email received regarding the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) new Highway 1 North Coast Corridor Plan, focused on improving a 12-mile stretch of Highway 1 between San Simeon and Cambria. The email included ways for community members to get involved.

A notice from Travel Paso was also shared which included communication to lodging partners that properties are being contacted via letter for pre-visit ADA accessibility information.

Constituents were encouraged not to respond to the letter.

Molly Cano provided an update from Visit SLO CAL that their fiscal year marketing plan will be up for board approval next week and that IPW produced good traction.

Presentations

None

Consent Items

- Approval of April Board Minutes and Financials. Melissa noted that Mike's name was incorrectly spelled in one place. Motion: To approve the minutes of the prior meeting with correction, and financials. Moved by: Melissa Kurry; Seconded by: Bram Winter. Motion carries.

ADA Notice: To receive reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act during the meeting, please notify the local fund area administrator at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting.



Action Items (each topic will allow for Board Discussion, followed by Public Comment)

- 1989 Renewal & 1994 Formation: Mike stated the importance of organizational alignment between SLO CAL and H1TA as both organizations look to form/renew the 1994 district. CAO Cuming reviewed a summary of the May 19th Board of Supervisors (BOS) meeting for the renewal of the 1989 district noting the 1989 district was renewed with a 5-0 vote based on 0.315% protest. It was requested to confirm the percentage of the overall 0.315% protest received from “zero rent” properties.
CAO Cuming noted a 2nd motion by the BOS to have further review of the 1994 Management District Plan. Mike and Aaron expressed concern about the direction of the BOS discussion -- sensing a lack of support -- noting that some issues continue to be raised by specific Supervisors despite data having already been provided. The board noted that the 1994 Formation Steering Committee, made up of Local Fund Areas constituents, and the H1TA board have extensively reviewed the MPD over the last several months, and agree it is important to ensure there is flexibility within the 1994 Management District Plan given the 5-year structure that the plan must exist within. There are concerns about specifics being written into the plan that restrict how Local Fund Areas can support their communities.
Bram stated that TOT collections, the 2nd largest contributor to the County General Fund, should be focused to serve both visitors and residents. Aaron added that self-imposed districts like the H1TA are generating TOT for the General Fund, and the assessment collected from these districts are legally bond to provide benefit to the payors – the lodging constituents. Aaron added that it’s essential to further educate the Supervisors to gain more understanding and support for an industry that contributes to all three of the largest funding sources in the General Fund – Property Tax, TOT/Bed Tax and Sales Tax.
Mike raised the issue of being viewed as a duplicative effort with SLO CAL, and believes the regions would be at a disadvantage without these local BIDs, which are one of the few funding mechanisms that bring monies back into these unincorporated communities. He also noted the importance of having the H1TA assessment collections during the recent 3-year closure of Highway 1, and the prior 2-year closure, especially for San Simeon, which is shown a significant drop in TOT over the past 5-6 years based on these closures. Gary commented that Supervisor Gibson seems to understand our BID structure, and sees the benefit to his districts’ communities.
The H1TA board wants to better understand specifically what is needed that will address the Supervisors’ concerns. County staff was asked to clarify the type of input that the BOS may have on the Management District Plan (MDP). Lisa noted that though County staff did provide internal approval of the H1TA Management District Plan on May 15th, staff had not yet brought the MDP to the BOS in a public setting. Melissa stated a need to meet with Supervisors to get direct feedback and address their concerns so we can move forward, sharing her frustration of the numerous delays that have occurred throughout the formation process.
Jim Dantona commented that the BOS can provide additional input for the formation of 1994 District, and encouraged the H1TA Board to get ahead of the issue. The board agrees that Supervisor education is key. Emily advocated that the most effective way forward is for lodging constituents to meet with their Supervisors; Bram agreed. Gary suggested developing a three-item summary of talking points. Gary asked Molly Cano about the impression of duplicate efforts and options for presenting how well the two organizations work together. Emily noted that Staff

had communicated that the BOS will next address the MDP at a future meeting in July, which pushes the timeline for district conversion into 2027. Molly noted that SLO CAL is planning to launch their 1994 renewal in January 2027. The H1TA expressed their concern about having the H1TA and the SLO CAL petition drives overlap, and agreed that this is not something that should be done as it would create confusion amongst our lodging constituents. Civitas and H1TA will formulate additional talking points, a comparison chart to show the available options, as well as a milestones timeline showing the impact and costs of these continued delays.

- FY 26 27 Marketing Plan

Motion to approve the 2026-2027 Marketing Plan as presented. Moved by: Bram Winter; Seconded by: Mike Hanchett. Motion carries.

- FY 26 27 Contract Renewals:

The following LFA contracts were approved at each LFA board, and came before the H1TA board for approval:

Motion to renew the Visitor Alliance of Cayucos administrative contract as presented for D&S Shadetree. Moved by: Bram Winter; Seconded by: Melissa Kurry. Motion carries.

Motion to renew the Visitor Alliance of Cayucos marketing contract as presented for D&S Shadetree. Moved by: Melissa Kurry; Seconded by: Bram Winter. Motion carries.

Motion to renew the Visitor Alliance of Cayucos social media and marketing contract as presented for Danna Dykstra-Coy. Moved by: Melissa Kurry; Seconded by: Mike Hanchett. Motion carries.

Motion to renew the Visitor Los Osos | Baywood administrative contract as presented for D&S Shadetree. Moved by: Mike Hanchett; Seconded by: Bram Winter. Motion carries.

Motion to renew the Visitor Los Osos | Baywood marketing contract as presented for D&S Shadetree. Moved by: Mike Hanchett; Seconded by: Gary Setting. Motion carries.

Motion to renew the Cambria Tourism Board marketing contract as presented for Archer & Hound. Moved by: Mike Hanchett; Seconded by: Bram Winter. Motion carries.

Motion to renew the Avila Beach Tourism Alliance marketing contract as presented for TJA Advertising. Moved by: Bram Winter; Seconded by: Melissa Kurry. Motion carries.

Motion to renew the Oceano Nipomo Tourism Board marketing contract as presented for TJA Advertising. Moved by: Bram Winter; Seconded by: Gary Setting. Motion carries.

- Local Fund Area Applications

- Los Osos | Baywood: Central Coast State Parks Association Butterfly Ball Gala \$500 - Application was signed by Aaron Graves

- Los Osos | Baywood: Central Coast State Parks Association Western Monarch Educational Materials \$500 - Application was signed by Aaron Graves; noted that funds were received by CCSPA in 2025 so no release of funds is required for this application

- Senate Bill 1316

Motion to sign in support of the letter as presented. Moved by: Melissa Kurry; Seconded by Mike Hanchett. Motion carries.

Future Agenda Items

- SEO and AI
- Paid media plan
- Investment policy

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Closing Comments

None

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting. Moved by: Bram Winter; Seconded by: Mike Hanchett. Motion carries.
Meeting adjourned at 4:07 PM.

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