

**Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Humboldt Lodging Alliance meeting  
Wednesday, March 19, 2014  
Victorian Inn, Ferndale**

Present: Mike Caldwell, Raul Ainardi, Lowell Daniels, Chris Ambrosini, John Porter, Gary Stone, Marc Rowley, Tony Smithers

The meeting was called to order by Chris Ambrosini at 2:10 pm.

The minutes of the February, 2014 meeting were examined and approved (Rowley/Caldwell/unanimous)

The agenda for the March meeting was then approved as-is (Caldwell/Rowley/unanimous).

Under Old Business, the feedback from the notes of the January board retreat was discussed. Tony Smithers reported that he had received five or six written replies from HLA assessed businesses, and that the provided deadline of February 28 had passed.

Also under Old Business, Mike Caldwell provided further details about the Plein Aire event in Shelter Cove that was being funded by HLA Community Funds. Caldwell displayed sample flyers and posters for the event, said that he had already received room reservations for the event, and that event planning was otherwise coming along well.

A brief related discussion ensued when it was asked whether Community Funding projects should be posted on an HLA website. Smithers reported that he was working on this and would report progress at a future meeting.

Further Old Business was follow up on the committee's response to the Convention & Visitor Bureau's proposal for committee and staff changes. Smithers reported that the bureau's Executive Committee had that same day approved establishing a hospitality committee in lieu of a marketing committee. He also reported that Frank Whitlach, marketing VP at Humboldt State University, had agreed to serve on a new marketing advisory committee for HLA projects.

Under Action Items, the first item of business was presentation of the February, 2014 financial statement, which included an updated Community Funding and Opportunity Marketing report. Under this item, the question of improvements to the visitor signage at the Stone Lagoon Visitor Center was brought up, and it was reported that the issue had been communicated to Marna Powell and she was working on it. Subsequently, the financial report was approved (Porter/Ainardi/unanimous).

Next, a presentation was received from the North Coast Journal on their proposed "Insider" visitor publication, for which they were seeking HLA seed money. Representing the Journal were Judy Hodgson, Chuck Leishman, Drew Hyland and Jennifer Fumiko-Cahill. These individuals presented their proposal for a quarterly publication of about 100 pages that would be distributed to current Humboldt visitors with the goal of extending their stays and encouraging repeat visitation. Details of editorial, production and distribution were shared, and a funding request for \$60,000 was made.

Chris Ambrosini asked how visitors would find the publication online.

Lowell Daniels asked whether enough copies would be printed so that one could be given to each guest. He also observed that the publication was obviously advertising driven, and would ad sales be made to hotels and casinos—and how would that impact the Lodging Alliance?

Marc Rowley asked whether this publication could meet the Visitor Bureau's needs for a travel guide for out-of-county marketing. He further commented that the Lodging Alliance needs editorial freedom in the publications it funds for tourism promotion.

Board member Alex Stillman suggested that the publication be published without advertising, and that the HLA could cover the entire cost.

Mike Caldwell said he liked to look and feel of the publication, and asked whether the HLA and the bureau would have access to its content electronically.

Gary Stone asked what percentage of the publication was devoted to advertising.

John Porter observed that editorial content was more attractive and believable than advertisements.

Following this general discussion and the answers provided by NCJ staff, a motion was made by Marc Rowley and seconded by Lowell Daniels to commit funding of \$20,000 for the first, summer issue of Insider, and to direct staff to pursue the project and address the questions and concerns identified above. In further discussion, John Porter asked why this decision had to be made now, and other committee members agreed that there were too many unanswered questions. When the question was called, the motion failed to pass.

The next item on the agenda was an update from Malcolm deSoto and Don Banducci on the Winter video footage that had been shot. A sample edited video was shown with scripting by Mr. Banducci and voiceover by Eric Hollenbeck, that focused on the redwood experience. Mr. deSoto expressed the need to agree on the shoot list for Spring video soon, and the video committee (Ambrosini, Ainardi, Smithers) agreed to meet the following week.

As part of this presentation, a potential vendor for still photography, Leon Villagomez, was introduced and he briefly displayed some of his work and spoke about his business. Mr. Villagomez was encouraged to develop a proposal to present for the HLA's consideration.

Finally, Smithers reported that as instructed he had taken steps to create a money market account at Redwood Capital Bank, and that he had forms for board officers to sign.

With no further time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Tony Smithers