

## **Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Humboldt Lodging Alliance, meeting Wednesday, January 10, 2018 at the Red Lion Hotel, Eureka, California**

Present: Chris Ambrosini, Marc Rowley, John Porter, Cari Shafer, Lowell Daniels, Gary Stone, Tony Smithers

Guests: Paul Beattie, Pat Wille

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 pm by Chris Ambrosini.

The agenda was approved (Shafer/Porter/unanimous), and the December minutes accepted as presented (Shafer/Rowley/unanimous).

John Porter requested that the topic of meeting times be placed on the next agenda. He said he would like to move the Executive Committee meeting from the second Wednesday of the month to another day.

The first item of business was a presentation by Pat Wille and Paul Beattie from the Ferndale Chamber of Commerce regarding the Concours on Main event for 2018. Wille and Beattie said:

- Of the \$10,000 granted to the event by HLA last year, \$2,000 was still in the bank, and would be used toward a \$2,600 advertisement in the Redding-area Enjoy magazine.
- The event was being moved to the weekend after Labor Day.
- It is now a three-day event.
- In year one there were 22 entrants and in year two that grew to 60 entrants. Even more are expected in 2018.
- Pat Wille attended nine auto events out of the area to promote the Humboldt event.
- The event is put on with 100 percent volunteers from the Chamber of Commerce.
- They have joined the Association of California Car Clubs which has 135 member organizations.
- For the 2018 Concours, Rolls Royce is the "Featured Mark."
- There have been many positive testimonials from event attendees.

Chris Ambrosini asked about the event's marketing focus, to which Paul Beattie replied that the marketing is expanding into Sacramento and the North Bay Area as they reach out to spectators as well as entrants.

John Porter confirmed that Southern Humboldt gets business from this event. Mark Rowley described what he called an "echo bounce" from events such as this in which the rewards are greater than the event itself because the event attracts VIPs who will then bring their own groups and events to our destination. "We want this market" agreed Lowell Daniels.

John Porter moved and Lowell Daniels seconded funding \$8,000 for the 2018 event. After discussion, the motion was withdrawn in favor of a new motion by Cari Shafer to split the \$8,000 between the HLA and the Ferndale community fund. Lowell Daniels seconded and the motion passed with Marc Rowley dissenting. "We should give them more," said Rowley. "We should think bigger. This event has performed and we should support them. It has potential—they should hit the 100 (entrant) mark in a couple of years. We are at a moment where there is little community volunteerism to do new events, and the Concours on Main is an exception."

A general discussion of HLA event and attraction funding followed, with the example of the Humboldt Botanical Gardens used to illustrate two issues: one, deciding whether certain funding requests were appropriate for the countywide HLA funding or whether they should be city- or region-specific, and two, the difficulty in follow up and supervision of grant recipients.

“I support the idea of three-year funding to help kick start events, then moving on to support other events” said Gary Stone, who reiterated his preference for a 30-day period in which to consider funding requests rather than being asked to make on-the-spot decisions.

“We need to take these requests one at a time because they’re all different,” said Cari Shafer. John Porter agreed and said that with some projects it is possible to make a snap decision.

Next, a research proposal from Destination Analysts was reviewed and discussed. The committee agreed that at this time we don’t need the several different analyses that were proposed, just the one that was a re-run of the research this company performed in 2013. “We need to compare apples to apples,” said Cari Shafer. The committee directed Tony Smithers to work with Destination Analysts for a more targeted proposal, and specifically to ensure that the survey sample would include 500 received surveys, not 500 surveys sent out. The topic was then tabled until February. John Porter also suggested that an opinion be sought from the Misfit Agency about this research, and also that the Visitors Bureau could possibly conduct some research with a survey sent to its “house list.”

The website committee reported an initial meeting with the Misfit Agency in which they were asked for suggestions and costs for upgrading the HLA website. Gary Stone reported that Misfit will make a presentation about this in March, with the goal of “making it a more functional website.”

The staffing committee had nothing to report and the item was moved to the next meeting.

Next, Tony Smithers brought a potential event to the committee’s attention. “The Great Race” would like to make Eureka a stop for its 2019 event and had submitted a Request for Proposals. The committee was interested in supporting this event, provided that a committee of local car enthusiasts and others could be formed to do the actual work in coordinating and hosting it.

The financial report for December 2017 was then presented and accepted, with some clarification of the HLA’s “reserves” requested.

Under Director Reports, Cari Shafer said that she had spoken with film commissioner Cassandra Hesselstine about her attendance at the Sundance film festival, which the HLA funded. It was positive, with Humboldt County getting good exposure to the industry.

Chris Ambrosini reported that HSU athletics had been saved, in part due to contributions from the Eureka and Arcata HLA Community Funds.

John Porter suggested that the Visitor Bureau Marketing Committee could possibly switch its meeting day (first Wednesday of the month) with the HLA Executive Committee.

With no further time, the meeting adjourned at 2:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Tony Smithers