

Minutes of the Board of Directors of the Humboldt Lodging Alliance, meeting Tuesday, July 23, 2013 at the Red Lion Hotel, Eureka, California.

Present: Marc Rowley, Gary Stone, Shailesh Patel, Raul Ainardi, Donna Hufford, Pritesh Patel, Jeff Durham, Jesse Waldon, John Porter, Lowell Daniels.

Staff: Tony Smithers

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm. The minutes of the April 2013 meeting were examined and approved (Waldon/Durham/unanimous).

The Executive Committee's decision to provide funding to the Humboldt/Del Norte Film Commission (in the amount of \$20,000) was moved to the top of the agenda. Shailesh Patel asked how the return from filming in Humboldt was being tracked. Smithers said that the agreement with the Film Commission (included in the board packet) included their reporting on what productions were secured and what they spent locally.

There were no members of the public present during the Public Comment period.

The board requested an annual schedule of meetings and dates be developed for the coming year, and directed this item to be put on the Executive Committee's agenda.

Next, Smithers gave a report on the 2013 HLA board election. He detailed the process by which nominations were sought, notwithstanding the fact that no new nominations were received and the board ballot which was mailed to HLA assessed businesses contained the same names as the 2012-2013 board. The ballots received confirmed the current board members, with no write-in candidates.

The proposed slate of HLA board officers was then presented for the board's approval:

Chair:	Chris Ambrosini
Vice Chair:	Marc Rowley
Chair Elect:	Lowell Daniels
Secretary-Treasurer:	Donna Hufford
Member At-large:	Mike Caldwell
Member At-large:	Gary Stone
Member At-large:	John Porter
Member At-large:	Raul Ainardi

The above slate was approved (Porter/Rowley/unanimous) with a vote of thanks to Gary Stone for his chairmanship during the HLA's first year of operation.

Next, Smithers reported on the Humboldt County Grand Jury Report on the formation of the Humboldt County Tourism Business Improvement District. The Grand Jury had not discovered any irregularities in the district formation, but had provided several recommendations to the HLA relative to compliance with the Brown Act. At the direction of the HLA Executive Committee, Smithers had drafted a response

to the Grand Jury and County of Humboldt indicating the HLA's willingness to comply with the recommendations. A copy of this response was included in the board packet.

A proposal to approve a "virtual agency" marketing team was then presented by Smithers and discussed extensively. The discussion included:

- The presentation from Catalyst Marketing, which many were dissatisfied with.
- The actual costs involved with Catalyst. Smithers had nailed Catalyst down on actual costs of billing and creative services versus using the proposed "virtual agency" team. A report was provided in the board packet which calculated a difference of some \$90,000 in the actual ad buy.
- Direct billing of the Humboldt Lodging Alliance from media and consultants, as opposed to writing one big check to an agency. The Humboldt County Convention & Visitors Bureau staff would provide leadership and account management under its administrative agreement with the HLA.
- A proposal had been received from a trio of independent consultants: Marci Fernandez of Buy Right Media is a media planner and buyer; Fred Fortune of Fortune Squared is a creative director and graphic designer; and John Poimiroo of Porimiroo & Partners is a destination marketing expert. The proposal was included in the board packet for review.

Some initial creative ideas from the above team were also included in the packet. Staff requested approval of issuing purchase orders for a total campaign budget of \$300,000 to work with this team for the HLA Fall Campaign. In discussion, it was pointed out that properties which do not collect the HCTBID assessment could not be included in the campaign, and staff was specifically instructed to not include the two casino hotels in Humboldt County. Gary Stone asked the board whether they might want to do something bigger for this campaign, but the consensus was to start with a \$300,000 campaign. The proposal was then voted on and approved (Daniels/Stone/unanimous).

Finally, a report on the community funding program was given by staff. There were two funding requests under consideration in Eureka, one for an Arts Alive marketing campaign and one for the Films in the Park program. In Fortuna, the Dog Park project had received funding, and another request for the People Mover was being considered.

Marc Rowley suggested that these issues and others should be addressed by another HLA board retreat. Lowell Daniels wondered how a retreat should be conducted in compliance with the Brown Act.

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

Respectfully submitted by Tony Smithers