

**Minutes of the Executive Committee
Humboldt Lodging Alliance
Wednesday, April 8, 2015
Red Lion Hotel, Eureka, California**

Present: Brad Laws, Mike Caldwell, John Porter, Gary Stone, Donna Hufford, Lowell Daniels, Tony Smithers

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 by Lowell Daniels, chairing the meeting in the absence of Chris Ambrosini.

The minutes of the March meeting were reviewed and approved (Caldwell/Laws/unanimous).

The agenda for April, 2015 was approved without change (Porter/Hufford/unanimous).

The financial statement for March, 2015 was then presented by Tony Smithers, along with an updated report on Community Tourism Funds and Opportunity Marketing Funds. Smithers was directed to distribute this report to all board members, who comprise the various community committees. "Each area can make its own decisions on projects," was John Porter's comment. Smithers was also directed to contact the Misfit agency and request that the monthly campaign budget report be prepared a week earlier so that it can be included in the committee information packet. And finally, Smithers was directed to ask the accountant to update Item 8, Related Party Information, to reflect the relationship between Nil Patel and HLA board members Shailesh Patel and Jayshree Patel. The note should also remove Donna Hufford as an HCCVB board member, and reflect the current titles of board officers.

The committee then discussed the feedback from the Campaign Launch Party held on March 25:

Mike Caldwell: The feedback was good; there was some minor criticism but overall the direction we are taking was well received.

Lowell Daniels: The feedback I received was also positive, though there was a bit of worry about possible connections with the drug culture. (Referring to the "White Rabbit" song used in the event video).

John Porter: Why was that song used for the roll out when it is not being used in the campaign?

Gary Stone: Eureka Mayor Frank Jager and Councilmember Marian Brady hated it.

Lowell Daniels: They're not running hotels.

Donna Hufford: I saw the Arcata mayor wearing the campaign t-shirt given out at the party.

The agency committee then reported on its activities, with Lowell Daniels saying that he does not want to micro-manage the agency at this point in the relationship.

- The agency had floated the idea of a "Mad Hatter Tea Party" in San Francisco to support the campaign. This idea was nixed by the committee. "This is just brainstorming" said Gary Stone.

- The committee had discussed with the agency the idea of extending the campaign to the Sunset Celebration Weekend event, June 6-7, at which the HCCVB is exhibiting. Matt Kolbert had said that they had not yet considered direct consumer outreach (such as travel shows), but they would send someone to the Sunset show to check it out.
- The subcommittee also discussed the video clips being produced by the agency, using HLA footage shot by Malcolm deSoto. These clips will be first pushed out on social media channels, then made available to hotels and other lodgings for their use, both internally and externally.
- Brad Laws asked that a “sampler” of campaign creative be provided so that board members could easily show other people what the HLA is up to. Smithers was instructed to contact Matt Kolbert .
- John Porter added a request to speak to the agency about campaign themed billboards, which could both be part of the main HLA campaign, and could also be funded by community committees.
- Finally, the updated logo with the word “California’s” before “Redwood Coast” was explained and exhibited to the committee.

The next item on the agenda was discussion of ongoing communications with assessed businesses, with Tony Smithers saying the launch party was a good start with many new faces attending. The committee agreed on the need to keep reaching out. The Humboldt Lodging Alliance “Fact Sheet” developed for the launch party should be put in pdf format; that and links to the campaign videos will be provided to assessed businesses, they said.

Next the committee addressed the 2015 HLA board election, with Smithers providing background on the usual process for nomination and polling. John Porter proposed and the committee agreed to create a nominating committee comprising one person from the Executive Committee and one person from the Board of Directors. In his absence, Chris Ambrosini was named as the committee appointee.

The April HLA board meeting was set for the Fortuna River Lodge on April 29. Lowell Daniels asked whether, since Matt Kolbert is unavailable, could someone else from Misfit attend the meeting to provide a campaign update.

Under Old Business, the destination photography project with Gary Todoroff was followed up on. Gary Stone asked whether a hard copy “thumbnail” book of Todoroff’s work for the HLA could be produced so that the process of photo selection could begin. Mr. Stone and Lowell Daniels were named to the Photo Selection subcommittee.

Under public comment:

- Theresa Porter responded to earlier comments about the perceived remoteness of Humboldt County from the Bay Area, saying that Benbow (near the southern county border) is *not* far.
- Brian Papstein, who had attended the launch party, related that he had also heard some concern about the campaign’s possible connection to drug culture.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Tony Smithers