

**Minutes of the Board of Directors of the Humboldt Lodging Alliance, meeting Wednesday, October 3 at the Adorni Center, Eureka, California.**

Present: Alex Stillman, Shailesh Patel, Marc Rowley, Raul Ainaridi, Lowell Daniels, Pritesh Patel, Jayshree Patel, Chris Ambrosini, Bob Gafford, Jesse Waldon, Gary Stone, John Porter, Mike Morgan

Absent: Mike Caldwell, Donna Hufford, Jim Johnson, Diane Cutshall, Jeff Durham, Emily Manfredonia

Staff: Tony Smithers

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by chairman Gary Stone. The minutes of the May, 2012 board meeting were reviewed and approved (Daniels/Gafford/unanimous).

Under Old Business, the issue of whether the meetings of the HLA Executive Committee were subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act was brought up. Alex Stillman opined that they were, with the usual exceptions that the public would be excluded from committee meetings when litigation or personnel issues were being addressed (ie. closed sessions versus open sessions). The board's consensus was to obtain a written legal opinion on this issue, what Lowell Daniels put as "a definitive answer." Staff was instructed to work on this and have an answer before the next board meeting.

There were no speakers during the Public Comment Period. Chairman Gary Stone proposed a policy of allowing three minutes for each speaker during future public comments, which was accepted by the board.

Addressing the issue of Community Tourism Projects, the board reacted to a draft document that was both program background and program application. Alex Stillman suggested that we limit the word counts for the various answers on the application. It was also suggested that the application could ask whether the proposed project had the required permits, insurance, agency approvals, CEQA documents, etc. as projects could potentially have impacts on traffic and other issues. Alex Stillman suggested that the project application process could work in a similar fashion to the Headwaters Fund, in which applicants may be asked to appear before the board to answer questions about their projects. It was reported also that the Executive Committee had considered an appeals process for disappointed applicants. The board decided to continue working on the document until the next meeting, so the item was tabled with no action taken.

Next, a draft HLA budget for fiscal year 2012-2013 was presented and discussed. Shailesh Patel suggested the board should consider the use of HLA marketing funds to improve the Humboldt "product"—by improving community gateways, for example. There was some discussion of the dangers of "overmarketing" the area when some elements of the destination may disappoint visitors. However, John Porter said "We don't stop marketing because of social issues." The budget discussion was tabled with no action taken.

Tony Smithers then began to present his proposed 2012-2013 Consolidated Marketing Plan, going through a number of marketing issues in detail and responding to board comments and questions. It was soon apparent that consideration of the marketing plan would take much longer than the remaining time available, and it was agreed to schedule a special meeting of the HLA board as a “marketing brainstorm” or work session. It was agreed to append this meeting to the next scheduled meeting of the HLA Executive Committee, coming on November 7. The meeting was to be from 2:00 to 3:30 at the same venue (Adorni Center) if possible. On a side note, board members were asked that when they submit marketing plan comments they do not use the “Reply All” feature of their email. Smithers said he would combine all comments received into the document and re-send it to all board members.

With no further time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Tony Smithers