



**Humboldt County Visitors Bureau
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

MINUTES

Thursday, January 13, 2022 11:30 a.m. Via Zoom

Present: Libby Maynard, Jeff Durham, Ara Pachmayer, Pete Oringer, Paul Beatie, Lowell Daniels,
Jenny Early, Ken Hamik, Shannon Hughes, Marc Rowley, *Ex officio*,

Julie Benbow, *Staff:* Scott Adair, *County*,

Absent: Chris Ambrosini, Justin Legge, Aaron Ostrom, Supervisor Michelle Bushnell,

- I: Libby called the meeting to order at 11:35 a.m.
- i. Change in the agenda:
Item IV County Report moved to follow Approval of Minutes
Board members checked in:
- II. Approval of Minutes of December 9 meeting:
Pete made the motion to approve the minutes as submitted.
Jeff seconded.
Lowell commented on the volume of subject matter discussed. As meetings are recorded, more comprehensive. One typo (Garberville)
The motion to approve the minutes with one correction was passed unanimously.
- III: County Report:
Scott: Updates.
- \$18M State award to Humboldt for cannabis. Proposal for groundwater drought resiliency for cannabis industry developed by HCGA. Planning & Building Dept. look to use funds to align with strategies in study.
 - Cannabis marketing RFP: BOS approved changes to bylaws to allow the Project Trellis Committee to be the assessing body for the Proposals. All proposal will be reviewed for ranking and scoring and recommendations.
 - Measure S: Discussion to waive or defer Measure S to go in front of BOS. This measure will fund the Cannabis Marketing contract, so if waived or deferred may impact funding set aside for the awarding of the project, and may result in cancellation or modification to RFP.
 - ARPA: Much frustration over no dispersal of dollars for pandemic economic recovery - \$7M set aside. Developing ARPA grant program with housing, childcare & broadband priorities. Over 50 pages of instructions how funding can be used. County don't have

resources to administer the program. Short staffed. Third party orgs to administer grants. Slow progress. Much community frustration.

- County under scrutiny from outside agencies regarding conflict of Interest issues and Brown Act compliance. Reached out to partners to ensure all partners are following regulations. If HCVB Board wants training, county can do this.
- BOS ratified that Supervisor Bushnell will be primary contact and Scott staff alternate for the Bureau.

Shannon: The famers intent to suspend Measure S is in not to negate RFP.

Scott: If there is a suspension of Measure S Taxes, it would not have an immediate impact on the cannabis marketing funds – based on previous years revenue.

Ken asked what were the Trellis By Law Changes.

Scott: Changes in response to lobbying by HCGA to have the RFP's assessed by local people not an ad hoc committee. BOS accepted proposal so Project Trellis Board will be reviewing the RFP's. Trellis Board chosen by BOS.

Julie: Will continue to send Scott all board documents and report. Oher California Counties have already dispersed significant ARPA funds to DMO's to support tourism efforts. Can share.

Julie reported that, to conform to Brown Act, the website is being updated to include Board meeting docs (agenda, minutes, financials) as well as meeting dates, list of directors and standing committees. This information will replace the Membership info which is no longer valid. Also have hard copies of all the documents on file at the office for public scrutiny.

Board Committee Reports

Executive Committee: Libby reported that the committee met in December. General discussions.

Financial Report:

Pete commented on maintaining good balances as expenses on for operations and minimal on marketing.

Julie:

- Expenses for 422 move detailed in ED report. Received 90% of original 322 deposit and rent for the Holiday pop-up.
- Submitted invoice to County for TOT funding - \$103K for HCVB.
- Creating a budget for 422. Met with Lucas Thornton and Jason B to start developing mural map, displays etc. Will be working with funding /advocacy to develop equitable equation then do presentations to towns and regional LA's to secure funding. Process should take a few months. Bring in corporate sponsors, develop new funding model to cover the development of all displays etc. and operations for a year.
- MOU has been edited to include Gateway Chambers complying with Brown Act. Will meet with them individually. Will present survey for their region assets for 422 displays.

Advocacy / Funding

Jeff – working on establishing funding goals, identifying sources and timelines.

- Planning on holding a joint Marketing & Advocacy / Funding meeting in near future.
- Julie asked Board members to confirm their service on the committees.

Marketing:

Ken: Working on moving 422 forward and developing marketing plan for '22. Lot of opportunities for sustainable tourism and HCVB's leadership and collaboration role in the county.

- Shannon – As part of marketing, can reach out and meet with cannabis farmers and develop relationship to stay abreast of issues and situations. If awarded RFP, cannot collaborate with HCGA, as considered a conflict of interest, but can directly with farmers.
- Cannabis RFP: Julie reached out to Project Trellis regarding updates on RFP. Agree with S – will reach out to farmers (north and south) regardless of the RFP award. Important that they know HCVB supports them.
- Question: Should HCVB write a letter to the BOS in support of the growers? Can draft a letter and send to Board for approval. Would do it for another sector of the community.
- Ken – cannabis is another component of the life of the county. Love to see an advocacy letter.
- Lowell – HCVB stands for the entire county and all its assets. Cannot focus just on cannabis.
- Letter needs to be authorized by Executive Committee then approved by the Board.

V: County Update: (*See previous*)

VII: Other Business:

- Jeff: Need to seriously evaluate our funding and expectations moving forward. Cannot rely on the County. Shout out to Shannon who connected Jeff with an artist, Josh, who has created a Bigfoot for the Hotel.
- Julie reported that the Blue Lake Rancheria feasibility project is starting. Working with Ara and Dr. Chris Hopper at HSU and hiring interns.
- A list of the dates of the Meetings will be sent to the Board.
- Board Meetings will continue being on first Thursday of the Month at 11:30 am.
- Executive Committee meetings on Third Tuesday of the Month at 11:30 am.

VII: The meeting was adjourned at 1pm.
