



**Humboldt County Visitors Bureau  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, March 3, 2022 • 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Via Zoom

Present: Libby Maynard Jeff Durham, Ara Pachmayer,  
Paul Beatie, Lowell Daniels, Jenny Early, Ken Hamik, Shannon Hughes, Justin Legge,  
Aaron Ostrom, Julie Benbow, Staff: Supervisor Michelle Bushnell,  
Absent: Chris Ambrosini, Pete Oringer, Marc Rowley, *Ex officio*, Scott Adair, *County*

- I. Libby called the meeting to order at 11:35 a.m.  
Board members checked in.
  
- II. Approval of Minutes of February 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting
  - Ken made the motion to approve the minutes as submitted.  
Jenny seconded the motion.
  - There were no additions, corrections, or comments.
  - The motion to approve the minutes as submitted was passed unanimously.

III. Board Committee Reports

- Executive Committee:

As Libby was unable to attend, Julie reported that Jeff ran the meeting, and all agenda items will be discussed at this meeting.

- Financial Report:

Julie thanked Michelle for lobbying for release of the TOT funding. Expecting check in near future so requested that the pass-through funding checks for Garberville and SHBVB be cut (a total of \$60319.38) so they can be delivered by hand at the countywide Chamber mixer to be held at the Benbow Inn on Friday 4<sup>th</sup>. Julie and Kristin will be attending and stay overnight.

Julie noted that the HCVB has a very old server and email system which became an issue as the county email system was recently hacked. HCVB's IT consultant is no longer in business so we will be hiring Renaissance Computing and getting a new server. Would Board Members like an HCVB email?

*(The check was sent to the wrong address, returned and took another three weeks...)*

- Advocacy / Funding

Jeff: Working on how to move funding forward for 422 – looking at grant opportunities. Will craft a letter to send out to potential stakeholders.

Julie: Meeting with John Bartholomew regarding the upcoming Measure J to extend TOT to unincorporated County campgrounds and RV parks and increase the TOT by 2%. Estimated revenue it will bring into the County (\$800K+-) will not make a significant impact on the percentage that the Bureau receives. Going to ask for a larger percentage of monies and show impact in marketing. Important to advocate and be involved in discussions with the County. Important to speak up at upcoming BOS meeting. Public support

Michelle: Issue will be coming before the Board on March 8<sup>th</sup> for inclusion in the June ballot.

- Marketing:

Ken: Contacted Peggy Murphy with Project Trellis regarding the progress of the Cannabis Branding & Marketing RFP and has not heard back. Not optimistic that the marketing money is available even though it was earmarked before the Measure S situation developed. Most exciting thing right now is the sustainability direction – this in a competitive advantage for Humboldt, need to develop a great marketing story around sustainable Humboldt.

Julie: Attended a seminar on global food destinations focused on developing destinations with amazing agriculture – farmers and producers of all kinds – that work with sustainable practices. Humboldt has this already – including a number in Ferndale dairy farmers including the Foggy Bottoms Boys. Going to meet with Thomas (FBG) to begin creating these stories and messaging. Bring together some of our great producers from throughout the county and tell their stories to build an interactive exhibit at 422 for visitors and residents alike to educate them and tap into the increasing interest in agri-tourism.

Media:

- Bureau currently hosting a German journalist, Verena Wolff, and Justin is giving a guided tour of the Redwoods later today. She's staying at the Carter House. Will be having dinner then visit the Skywalk in the morning before she leaves.
- Working with a Canadian photographer, Dustin Silvey, hired by BMW to ride a high-end bike and document a road trip from Vancouver to South America. Planning on doing the backroads of Humboldt and be in Willow Creek for Bigfoot Daze (July 9th). Also do Rte 36 and go to Shelter Cove.

Julie/Justin: Working with Wish of a Lifetime Foundation (AARP) to host Glenda (82 yrs old from Texas, in a wheelchair). Two days guided redwood adventures: one at north next day south (Avenue of the Giants).

Julie: Met with Cassandra and Nate from the Film Commission who are excited to do a display at 422 in the near future. Update from Paul re: KEET.

Paul: "Live from the Old Steeple" was picked up by 32 states, 3,000 episodes have aired – which equates with 6,000 sponsor spots as two per episode. Embedded at start and end of each episode. New sponsorship package for Season Two for three spots – price gone up to \$1K for each episode of thirteen in the series. Kinetic Coffee, Visit Ferndale & HLA, and HCVB & HLA. Reached almost half of population of country. Want to reach out to big names and emerging artists. Goal to become the next Austin City Limits. Known for redwoods, artists, cannabis – should also be known for our music. Important factor: PBS viewers are higher educated, higher disposable income and more likely to travel. Need a commitment in next couple of months for the fall taping.

Julie: Bureau went in with HLA for sponsorship @\$1500 each (\$3K per spot). However, with the potential number of viewers, demographic, and geographical reach, definitely worth \$13K.

Takes Humboldt to another level. Maybe put together a partnership of food producers for a combined spot promoting Humboldt as a Culinary / agriculture destination.

Idea: in 2016, Campari sponsored a National Negroni Week. Want to do one in Humboldt.

Engage bars throughout the county, use a locally distilled gin and Campari will sponsor it. Idea is have a competition for best Negroni and Best Bartender. Negroni Passport to drink at different participating bars, vote for the best one. Want to bring Stanley Tucci to come and be a part of this. Put out feelers to see if we can get him or another personality.

IV: County Update

Julie: Edited the Gateway MOU, hopefully more relevant to Gateways.

V: Other Business

- Board Retreat - March 22 in person meeting.

Finalizing Agenda with Carl. Working sessions and important to future direction of Bureau and as leaders for community health and wellbeing. Coffee and lunch served.

- Community Updates:

Ken – Arcata Chamber mixer with Cal Poly Humboldt at Aquatic Center. Auction up through March 10<sup>th</sup> for Arcata Chamber.

Ara – Blue Lake Rancheria Feasibility study for an Indoor/Outdoor waterpark and related activities - Hou'l Park. Working with two tourism students researching waterparks. Focus on sustainability. Good information.

Ken – invited to make a presentation about the future of Humboldt at the upcoming regional economic development summit. Multi-county and with the Tribes.

Julie – Projected that four of five cruise ships docking in Eureka this year. Will be offered on-shore adventures. Eureka need help organizing excursions so hired Jonathan Jones (Pacific Outfitters) to help develop them. Met with Jonathan to help put together a comprehensive list of experiences to showcase Humboldt. Bureau does not have the ability to take a project of this nature on right now. Need to get some County funding to support this work. Not sure about the real economic impact – want passengers to spend money. Meet with Swan Asbury from the City.

Julie – Will not be retiring for another year. Will be having a hip replacement in near future.

Jeff – Getting a placement in May/June edition of Men's Health magazine. Through Libby, getting two new murals painted by local artists at Redwoods Riverwalk, and Ara is bringing class down to visit the boutique motel. Now also engaged with Shakefork Farm CSA program and get box of produce delivered twice a month to support team.

Shannon - Bigfoot Daze will be on Saturday, July 9<sup>th</sup>

VI: Public Comment: No comments:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm.

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