



**Humboldt County Visitors Bureau
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, July 18, 2024

Present: Ken Hamik, Ara Pachmayer, Justin Legge,
Zoom: Molly Blakemore, Jenny Early, Shannon Hughes, Carlton Nielsen, Lisa Sundberg, Sam Wedll
Julie Benbow, *ED*, Dianna Rios, *County Liaison*
Absent: Lowell Daniels, Supervisor Michelle Bushnell,

- I. The meeting was called to order at 11:37 am.
Role call was taken. Directors checked in.
Guests: Marc Rowley, HCVB Board Member, Retired
Yvonne Hendrix, ED of the Southern Humboldt Chamber of Commerce.
- II. Public Comment: There were no public comments.
- III. Approval of Minutes of May 16th meeting
Carlton made the motion to approve the minutes as submitted.
Justin seconded the motion.
The motion to approve the minutes as submitted passed unanimously.

IV. Board Committee Reports

- Executive Committee:

Ken: The Board of Supervisors decided to extend HCVB's contract and funding for six months, through December 31st 2024. Having conversations with community members and hearing concerns regarding the County budget deficit and fear regarding the negative impact throughout the county if the Bureau marketing functions cease. Future tourism revenues will decrease, and it is currently third major revenue generator for the county.

Julie: Main concern is the county not having a plan for tourism marketing. Successful marketing needs to be consistent and able change course quickly in response to analytics and data. Concern that businesses depending on tourism will suffer.

Ken noted that the Annual Report gives a very clear picture of the ROI for the very small amount of funding.

Ara (*Tourism & Outdoor Recreation Professor at CalPoly Humboldt*) has established a group of industry professionals from throughout the county to help with the program and enrollment, and career pathways to keep them in Humboldt.

- Financial Report

Julie: The end-of-year financials will be finalized on receipt of a couple of outstanding invoices. Projection is that there will be \$215 +/- in our accounts to carry into the new fiscal year. Created a six month budget that includes all our administrative and operational contracts, continuing to do marketing, and a couple of priority projects. Budget #1 includes the \$143K in funds that the county has committed to. Also develop a budget that does not include these funds in the event that the they do not come through.

Dianna commented that the budget needs to reflect the scope of contracted services and what County wants HCVB to start transitioning out and prepare for termination of contract. In January,

the balance of TOT funds will fund a strategic marketing analysis and asset assessment which will inform where and how future funds should be spent.

In response to Julie's comment about the possibility that there will be no marketing for an unspecified amount of time, Dianna said that the Gateways and chambers will take over marketing responsibilities. The Directors discussed the detrimental impacts on tax revenue and visitor spending of no professional marketing.

- Marketing

Analytics: (June 16th – July 17th) Over 79K people reached on Facebook and Instagram combined over the past 30 days. Although our reach dropped on Facebook over the past few weeks (72.1K) compared to last month, our page visits increased 113%. The same for Instagram - overall reach dropping (7.4K) while seeing a 61% increase in profile visits. This means that our followers are increasingly interested in content and visited our page/profile, but didn't share the posts enough to compete with recent engagement numbers.

Website - looking solid with 6.1% increase in "event count" (user interactions) and over 236,000 views which is up 5.1%. 93,000 of this month's 96,000 total users were new, up by 4%.

(See full report at end of minutes.)

23/24 - Number of visitor interactions and information requests, 10,000 by phone, email, and walk-ins. Large percentage through the website, and from Canada and international. Also responded to 30+ requests for relocation information, this total does not include the special packages for Cal Poly and Providence.

The draft 2024 Map & Guide will be sent for review to the county, gateways, chambers, partners and stakeholders for review in the next two weeks. Julie thanked Molly for her expert proofreading and editing. It will go to press when input has been received and incorporated.

NOO / VCA Grant Application: Wrote and submitted the grant application for \$54K in match funds from Visit California. Will be attending the NOO Annual Board Meeting tomorrow (via Zoom).

Visit California Rural Counties Board Meeting Sacramento October 1 which Julie will be attending.

V: County Update

Dianna assured the Board that County staff are fully supportive of the Bureau and their desire to cooperate during the contract process.

VI: Other Business

Next Meeting: September 19, 2024

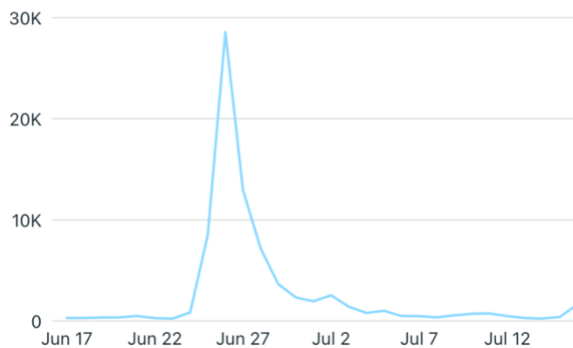
The meeting was adjourned at 12:43 pm.

Facebook and Instagram Results / Digital Summary / June 16 – July 17, 2024

We reached over 79K people on Facebook and Instagram combined over the past 30 days. Although our reach dropped on Facebook over the past few weeks (72.1K) compared to last month, our page visits rose 113%. The same is true on Instagram where we saw our overall reach dropping (7.4K) while seeing a 61% increase in profile visits. This means that our followers were increasingly interested in our content and visited our page/profile, but our posts weren't shared enough to compete with recent engagement numbers.

Facebook reach ⓘ

72.1K ↓ 51.9%



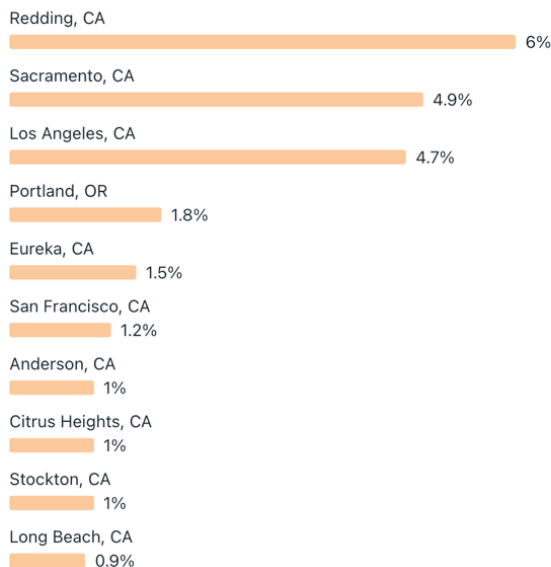
Instagram reach ⓘ

7.4K ↓ 27.6%

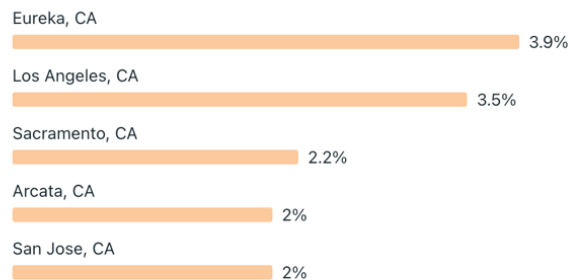


As mentioned in the past, we do tend to see a drop in our social engagement during the Summer as our followers are out on break in early July.

Top cities

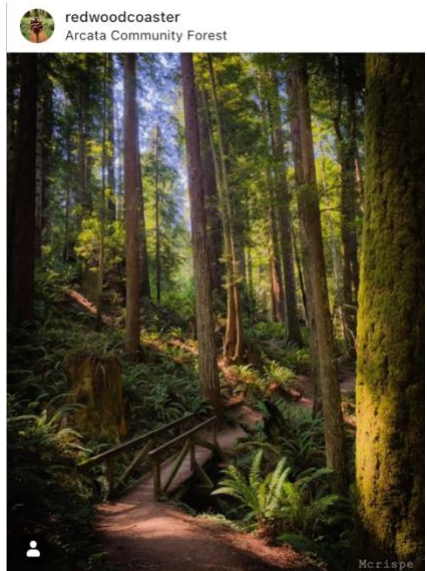


Top cities



Last month's most popular Facebook post was Julie's "Humboldt Moment of Zen" featuring a sunset in Trinidad.

Reach = 64,833
 Impressions = 66,672
 Interactions = 2,159



Instagram lacked a standout winner, but we did see several consistently popular posts/reels. Our forest and tree photos ruled this month with a top post showcasing the Arcata Community Forest.

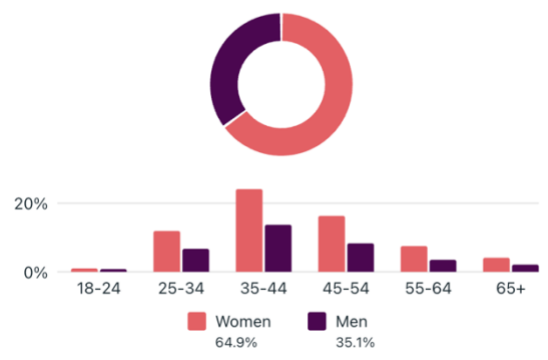
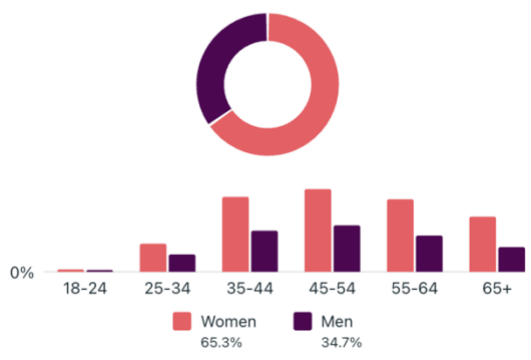
Reach = 1,808
 Impressions = 1,830
 Interactions = 342

Facebook followers ⓘ
 60,524

Instagram followers ⓘ
 18,228

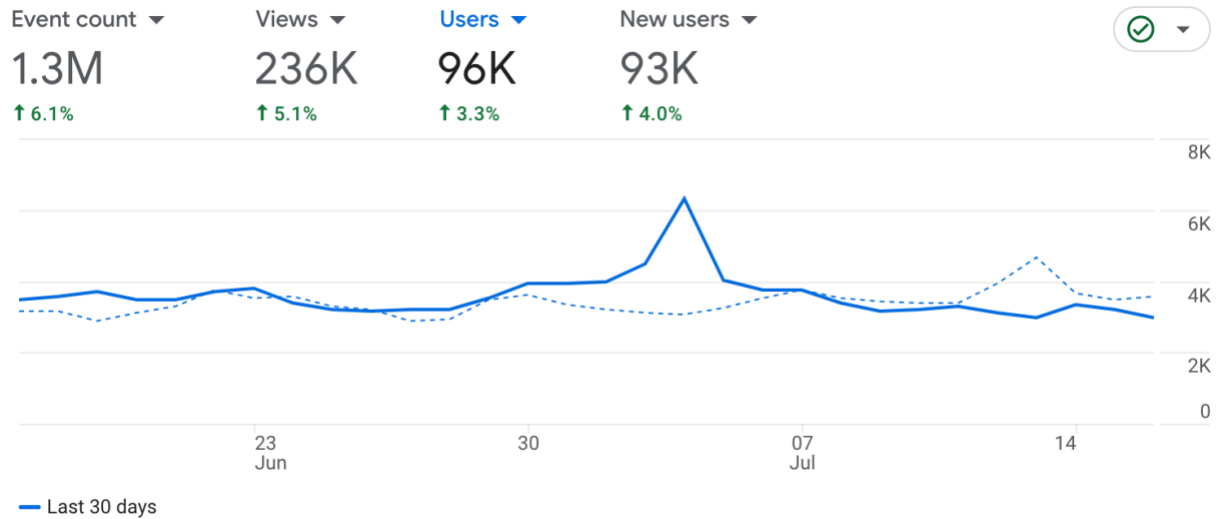
Age & gender ⓘ

Age & gender ⓘ



VisitRedwoods.com Stats – June/July 2024

Our analytics are looking solid with 6.1% increase in “event count” (user interactions) and over 236,000 views which is up 5.1%. 93,000 of this month’s 96,000 total users were new, up by 4%.



Top ten pages over the past 30 days include:

Page title and screen class ▾	+	↓ Views	Users
		235,704 100% of total	96,190 100% of total
1 Avenue of the Giants		16,809	12,162
2 Drive Through a Redwood		13,239	9,830
3 Events		10,503	2,490
4 4th of July Celebrations!		8,599	5,883
5 Redwood National Park		8,326	5,379
6 Travel Info for the Redwood Forests of California, Eureka and Humboldt County		8,124	6,347
7 Lodging		6,674	3,457
8 Fern Canyon in Prairie Creek Redwoods SP		6,493	4,909
9 Request Map & Guide		5,253	3,796
10 Tour the Avenue of the Giants		4,930	3,716