

## **Humboldt County Visitors Bureau**

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

September 25, 2019 Meeting, Eureka Chamber of Commerce, Eureka, California

### **MINUTES**

Present: Chris Ambrosini, Paul Beatie, Barbara Groom, Cathy Kunkler, Laura Lasseter, Justin Legge, Meredith Maier, Marc Rowley, Scott Adair (Director, County EconDev). Staff: Julie Benbow, Genie Brady, April Hagans

Absent: Lowell Daniels, Libby Maynard, Pete Oringer, Aaron Ostrom, John Porter, Supervisor Rex Bohn

The meeting was called to order by Marc Rowley at 12:02 pm.

by Donna Wright, ED of the Eureka Chamber of Commerce, welcomed the group to the Chambers new offices.

As this was Scott Adair's first HCVB Board meeting, Board member introductions were made.

The minutes of the August 28, 2019 Board meeting were reviewed. Julie noted that per Laura's request, the additional phrase "due to the existing design we were unable to make additions" should be added to the discussion regarding the Redwood Coast Map & Guide. Chris made a motion to accept the minutes with the noted changes, seconded by Libby. Approved, with one abstention: Barbara.

The Sales Report: April Hagans noted that wedding requests were dwindling and they were all inquiries from outside of the county. She reviewed the status of the 2020 Arboriculture visit. Chris asked if this was the same group that has been worked with for years. April answered that she has only been working with them since October. She reported on the many recent and future Media FAMs. Laura asked how far south these FAMs go. April responded that the last visitor was unable to visit Southern Humboldt due to timing & a tight schedule, however the next writer was specifically visiting Shelter Cove and had a county-wide itinerary including Southern Humboldt. April noted that she had been working with Aaron to define the scope of the Sales job description.

Media & Marketing: Julie Benbow shared multiple articles that have recently been produced through the Bureau for Humboldt County: Westways, Gypo & Lost Coast, & Chainsaw Art. Laura asked what the Bureau's role was for the Gypo & Lost Coast piece. Julie responded that Visit California sent the contact information & the Bureau hosted the writer. Justin noted that, through the Bureau, he had been contacted by a writer who he took on a tour through Fern Canyon & the biggest redwoods. Sadly, much of that information shared did not make it into the article.

Executive Director's Report: Julie noted an upcoming meeting with local entrepreneur & marketing professional, Jason Baxter, to be reported on later. She reported on the interview process for a Media Relations Manager. Julie said that the new Marketing Committee will meet after the County Tourism Meeting on October 10<sup>th</sup>. This meeting of county tourism stakeholders had been convened to explore the Bureau's successes and challenges, and to define the future role of the Bureau. Julie reviewed highlights from the September 19<sup>th</sup> North Coast Tourism Council meeting held at the Bureau offices. She updated the Board on membership numbers after the changeover from year-round membership to fiscal year start membership. Genie stated that there are currently 109 current members.

Much discussion ensued regarding the stop-gap 2019 Map & Guide. Laura was extremely displeased that many of her requests had not been included. She also noted the inclusion of a cannabis magazine advertisement in a guide that crosses state lines using federal postage system. Laura emphasized that many Southern Humboldtians would like to see a full reprint. Scott asked the cost to reprint. Julie answered \$22-23k was paid for the 150k printed. Chris commented that he was unsure about doing a full reprint, but that a resolution could be to include a Southern Humboldt insert. Julie mentioned that had already been distributed. Marc commented that, much like Southern Humboldt wanting more space and listings, he would have a problem as both eastern and northern Humboldt would also like more presence. He repeated that Julie was working with a predesigned document & this short run was only to correct mistakes and fulfill the Bureau's responsibility of producing an annual map & guide. Laura asked Julie if she took full responsibility, to which Julie answered, "Yes, I take full responsibility". Meredith requested that the Southern Humboldt updates be done on the website. Meredith made a motion to update the website and add Southern Humboldt dining (at the very least) within two weeks. Cathy seconded the motion, then rescinded as she didn't think it fair to put such a tight deadline on the staff. More discussion ensued. Barbara inquired as to the amount of resources and time the updates would take. Chris reminded everyone that the Bureau is a membership organization & that members are listed on the website & in the guide. Laura explained that, disregarding the listings, the Map & Guide descriptive of Southern Humboldt (i.e. The Lost Coast) is inaccurate with many omissions. Chris examined the request, wanting to be clear, that the updates be made to members & verbiage on the website, but included that if Southern Humboldt is updated it would call for an all-county update as well. Barbara suggested that it was fair to update the descriptions, events, & things to do on the website. Chris made a motion that within the next two weeks memberships & descriptions of all county areas be updated. Meredith seconded. **(Approved, with 1 no vote from Cathy reinforcing that she doesn't think it is enough time to reach out & receive back information).**

Scott Adair raised the issues of the Bureau's report to the County, due in December, as he had to leave the meeting. As there would be no Board of Supervisors meetings November 26<sup>th</sup> or December 23<sup>rd</sup> due to the holidays, the Bureau would be on the December 10<sup>th</sup> agenda. Scott said the Bureau has to follow procedure and submit the report one month in advance, giving staff three weeks to review it & one week to work on it. The Bureau needs to submit the report by November 10<sup>th</sup>.

The August Financial Report: In Pete Oringer's absence, Julie briefly reviewed the report. No comments were made.

There was more discussion regarding the upcoming County Tourism Stakeholders meeting. Meredith commented that the invite list did not include representatives from all of the cities in the County, such as McKinleyville & Trinidad, and noted that the list appeared to be mostly HLA members. She requested that invites be extended to others as well. Julie stated that the invitees were specifically those currently spending marketing dollars. Marc concluded that but that it a separate meeting for the cities etc. could ne held in the future.

Other business: Marc stated that the Executive Committee meetings for November & December will be brought forward to accommodate the Board meetings: November 20<sup>th</sup> & December 18<sup>th</sup>.

Next meeting: Wednesday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The meeting adjourned at 2:04 pm.

*Prepared by Benbow/Brady*