



Humboldt County Visitors Bureau

Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday September 2nd, 11:30 a.m. By Zoom

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

MINUTES

- I. Libby called the meeting to order at 11:32 a.m.
Directors checked in.

- II. Approval of Minutes of August 5th meeting
A few typos were noted. They were corrected.
Ken made the motion to approve the minutes as corrected.
Paul seconded. There were no additions or comments.
The motion to approve the minutes as corrected passed unanimously.

III. Board Committee Reports

Executive Committee:

Libby reported that the Executive Committee met on August 26th - topics discussed included an update on ARPA funding, approaching the cities and towns for support in light of the proposed moved to 422, Marketing Committee meetings, and County approval of the MOU.

All topics to be reviewed with Board.

Financial Report:

- Due to the date of the meeting being so close to the end of the month (August) the financials were not submitted. Julie gave an update on the bank balances for 8/31/21: 283K in the main account (includes \$114K in reserved) and \$68K in the checking account.
- Julie noted that the TOT funds from the County should be forthcoming as the MOU was signed. TOT should be \$205K – with bi-annual payments of \$102K.

Advocacy / Funding:

Jeff acknowledged the Board members who has attended the Supervisors meeting as advocates for the ARPA funding.

- The HCVB application to serve on the Aviation Council was not successful.

Item V - County ARPA Funding Update was moved up the agenda:

- Julie did not attend the August 10th Board of Supervisor meeting at which ARPA funding was discussed but understood that there had been some misunderstandings - for some – as the MOU was also on the agenda and was accepted by the BOS.
- The ARPA funding was not approved, rather the Supervisors accepted Staff recommendations to have the applications processed through local agencies.
- Supervisor Bushnell said the Supervisors had voted and agreed to have three agencies (RRDEC, EDC and HAF) deal with the ARPA fund dispersal. They did not reject any proposal submissions.
- Scott reiterated that the ARPA funds will be disseminated based on the Fed guidelines specifying use for COVID recovery to impacted organizations/businesses. When asked if that negated the HCVB application, Scott shared the guidelines in the chat. How long this process would be dependent upon the County developing a scope of services and MOU with the agencies. He reported that County Staff are considering setting a limit of \$49,500 per award and the submission process re-opened. Julie questioned how this would work as all orgs that submitted proposals did so for amounts between \$200K and \$1M. The details of the process will be publicly shared at a future date.
- Julie told the Board that she would monitor the County progress and report back, noting that this outcome is very disappointing as other DMO's have already received ARPA funds, and this lack of county support severely impedes HCVB 's ability to fulfill any marketing functions.

Marketing:

Ken told the Board that there will be a meeting of the Marketing Committee on September 10th to discuss upcoming marketing projects, budgets and 422. Committee consists of: Ken, (Chair), Jeff, Ara, Aaron, Paul, Jenny, Shannon and Jason B. (consultant).

IV: Humboldt County Welcome Center:

- Julie reviewed the short 422 project description sent to the Board, emphasizing that this notes an important shift in focus for HCVB to a leadership role in destination management, 422 being a nexus for community to come together to learn about tourism and its impacts on the economy and community, to be showcase for all County regions and assets for both visitors and residents. It will also be a good place to offer concierge trainings.
- Ken spoke to the opportunity for HCVB to promote itself and educate the residents to the importance of tourism, and its value as a gathering place to hold discussions and presentations.
- Both Chris and Lowell voiced important concerns regarding the Bureau's financial obligations and ability to undertake a project of this size. Lowell reminded the Board of its legal fiduciary responsibilities. Julie reported that she is developing a budget and is

projecting that securing funding support from towns and regions should be less challenging. A discussion ensued regarding the location, timing and advantages / disadvantages of undertaking this endeavor.

- Libby commented on the value of the location and having one center where visitors can get an overview of all aspects of County life including indigenous history and the arts.

Action Item

Ken made the motion for HCVB to pursue securing a lease for the 422 First Street property to establish a "Welcome Center."

Paul seconded the motion.

Libby called the Board to vote on the motion.

Eight votes for: Two against: Two abstentions.

The motion to proceed with 422 lease negotiations passed.

Due to the time, VI: Other Business - October/November Board Retreat will be carried over to the October meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:04 p.m.

The next Board meeting will be on Thursday October 7th at 11:30 am.