

Minutes of the Board of Directors of the Humboldt Lodging Alliance, meeting Tuesday, February 3, 2015 at the Red Lion Hotel, Eureka, California.

Present: Jeff Durham, Gary Stone, John Porter, Diane Cutshall, Brad Laws, Chris Ambrosini, Lowell Daniels, Alex Stillman, Tony Smithers

Guests: Malcolm deSoto, Gary Todoroff

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 pm. A motion was made by Gary Stone and seconded by Diane Cutshall to change the order of the meeting's agenda, to put the video and photo presentations first. This motion passed unanimously, and the meeting proceeded immediately to Malcolm deSoto's quarterly presentation of new video footage.

In his edited presentation, deSoto included more footage of redwoods, the fall season, elk and Fern Canyon. Questions were asked about the copywriting and scripts for edited videos that are part of the contract with Runaway Kite Productions. With the hiring of the Misfit Agency, it was asked, should this scripting be turned over to the agency? Lowell Daniels proposed that the video footage be first shown to Misfit for them to see what they can do with it. Gary Stone agreed. DeSoto was asked to prepare the video for Misfit, but first to remove the 15 to 20 percent of video he considered "garbage." DeSoto agreed, and added that for the final quarter of the contract he would be focusing on local destination content, as directed by Misfit and the shot committee.

Next, Gary Todoroff gave an update of his photography with a slideshow of images taken over the past quarter. He explained his plans for working with the Misfit agency, saying his images would all be loaded into a photo database using the "Lightbox" software, and that each image would be rated from one to five, with one being recommended for discarding, and five recommended for selection toward the contractual 150 images. The committee gave some feedback to the presentation, specifically asking: Where is Shelter Cove? And—take more shots of redwoods; more shots of rivers and college life. Jeff Durham said that Millennials are seeking a sense of place, and suggested that Todoroff shoots places like Blue Ox Millworks to depict the true Humboldt experience. Lowell Daniels added that he should get some photos of weddings in Humboldt.

The committee then examined the October, 2014 board minutes and declared them acceptable.

Tony Smithers then presented the January, 2015 Financial Statement, which contained no surprises but a steadily growing fund balance of the tourism assessment. It was noticed that the City of Trinidad was in arrears in its payment of the assessment to the Humboldt Lodging Alliance, and Smithers was directed to follow up on this with the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee then reported on its choice of the Misfit agency for conducting a marketing campaign for the Humboldt Lodging Alliance, saying that Mr. Kolbert had attended the January meeting and successfully answered a number of questions posed by the committee. A subcommittee of Stone, Daniels and Smithers had been appointed to have weekly contact with the agency.

It was asked whether there was a written agreement with Misfit, and Smithers replied that the proposal is for a month-to-month contract. Nonetheless, the board felt it advisable to have a written agency agreement that clarified ownership of creative materials. Smithers said he would call Matt Kolbert after the meeting and get this in process.

The board then discussed the idea of a “launch party” for the new campaign, to which stakeholders included all assessed businesses, city councils, city managers, chamber executives and board presidents, the Board of Supervisors and the local media would all be invited. The goal is for them to share the excitement of the new campaign and think of ways they can tie in to it with their own marketing and promotions. The board discussed the event and agreed that it would be invitation only, with an RSVP, and that the HLA would bear all the costs of the event. Finally, everyone was admonished to keep it secret.

The board then considered a funding request from the Redwood Parks Association for “Redwood EdVentures” which is a series of “Quest” trails or scavenger hunts in local parks. The proposal and program appeared to be centered in the northern parks, therefore, the board agreed to refer this request to Donna Hufford representing the Northern Humboldt Community Tourism Fund.

Under Directors’ Reports, Lowell Daniels suggested that the HLA bylaws be amended to lower the necessary quorum for a board meeting, so that business can be conducted without having ten board members present (which rarely happens). The board agreed and directed Smithers to place this item on the April board agenda. The Executive Committee was also urged to call board members in advance of the next meeting to urge attendance.

With no further time, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Tony Smithers.