

## **Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Humboldt Lodging Alliance, meeting Wednesday, August 9, 2017 at the Red Lion Hotel, Eureka, California**

Present: Lowell Daniels, Cari Shafer, Chris Ambrosini, Donna Hufford, John Porter, Tony Smithers

Guests: Matt Kolbert and Cameron Tyler

The meeting was called to order by Chris Ambrosini at 12:10 pm.

The minutes of the July meeting were examined and approved as submitted (Shafer/Hufford/unanimous) The agenda for the September meeting was then approved as presented (Daniels/Shafer/unanimous)

The first item of business under Action Items was an update presentation from Matt Kolbert of the Misfit Agency. Mr. Kolbert began with some scheduling comments, saying that he was going to share his agency's social media plans with the committee in September, along with plans for the 2018 marketing campaign which they were currently mapping. The focus today, he said, was on new creative being produced by the agency. His presentation included:

- A request to make a change in the scheduled flight of television advertising for the fall. Kolbert noted that there were three flights scheduled during Giants games, but that Giants viewership is way down. He would like to change the planned Giants buy in early November to a Golden State Warriors buy. This was approved by the committee without a vote taken.
- A half-page "added value" ad had been secured in Sunset Magazine.
- New banner ads were presented
- New digital video spots (online) were presented (with a reminder that these spots only appear for targeted/profiled users).
- A new :30 TV spot was shown

Chris Ambrosini asked about the performance of the ComCast LiveStream ad buy. Kolbert replied that HLA is still in the program, but the impressions are inevitably impacted by how the Giants are doing. He said he is working with ComCast to make up the contracted impressions in other assets.

Next, Kolbert and Tyler screened the re-edited "Location Featurette" videos, which had been updated based on the committee's input. These included the Avenue of the Giants video, Old Town Eureka video, and Patricks Point video. All are produced in 4k with HD quality. The re-edited videos were well received by the committee. John Porter asked how they would be used. Kolbert said they have a variety of purposes, from staff training to social media promotions, in-room channels and take-home DVDs for guests. As more Location Featurettes are developed, a library of Humboldt County attractions and locations will be available. Lowell Daniels observed that it's a shame the videos will mostly be seen by people who are already here. Chris Ambrosini said he still felt the Eureka video had "too much history" in it and not enough attractions. John Porter asked about putting a hotel branding tag at the end of each video—Kolbert agreed there could be customized tags and several versions of each video depending on the intended use. The committee then voted to approve these three videos as presented (Shafer/Porter/unanimous).

Next the committee made further plans for its board planning retreat, beginning with an agreement that September was not a good time for this event. Chris Ambrosini suggested pushing it into October and combining it with the quarterly board meetings.

Mr. John Poimiroo was suggested as a facilitator; staff was instructed to check on his availability.

The committee brainstormed topics for the retreat, and came up with:

- Budget policy and the percentage going to the marketing campaign
- 10-year plan and goals
- Transition from “branding” to “marketing”
- Update policies and procedure for grant program
- Staffing options and solutions

Staff was directed to survey board members as to their availability on October 19 and 20, to attend a board retreat at the Victorian Inn in Ferndale. An optional overnight stay would be offered.

The September Executive Committee meeting was discussed, and it was agreed that Misfit would present its social media recommendations and preliminary 2018 campaign and budget.

Next, it was reported by staff that a newly re-elected board member, Sharie Larson of the Best Western Country Inn in Fortuna, was no longer with that company. The committee was asked to determine the selection of a replacement board member. Staff was instructed to communicate the open board seat to all assessed businesses in Fortuna, with interested candidates to be presented to the HLA board of directors in October for selection.

The committee then revisited its recommended slated of board officers, still in limbo since the July board meeting had been cancelled. Chris Ambrosini indicated he was more than willing to step down from the Chairmanship to let someone else drive the bus. The committee favored recommending Cari Shafer to the position, but Ms. Shafer said that her contract with the Red Lion would be up in the spring and she did not know where she would be at that time. Given this, Lowell Daniels moved to retain Chris Ambrosini as board chair; Cari Shafer seconded and the committee approved unanimously.

In reviewing the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2017-2018, the committee agreed that the changed allocations of the new Management District Plan, effective July 1, 2017, should not be applied to the FY2016-2017 assessments, even though they are received in 2017-2018. The budget and financial statement would be changed accordingly.

Tony Smithers then reported that he would begin development of an Annual Report, required by the HLAs operating agreement with the County of Humboldt, using some of the “best practices” and samples which he had obtained at the TBID seminar he attended in June.

Under Old Business, Chris Ambrosini brought up the issue of renewing the “Bus Wrap” advertising in San Francisco, suggesting a four-month renewal. After discussion, the committee agreed to a two-month renewal at a cost of \$4,500 a month (Shafer/Porter/passed).

In director reports, John Porter said that Reggae on the River continues to slow down, while Cari Shafer noted the withdrawal of PenAir from serving the Humboldt market.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Tony Smithers