

**Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Humboldt Lodging Alliance meeting  
Wednesday July 18, 2012  
HCCVB offices, Eureka, California.**

Present: Gary Stone, Chris Ambrosini, Lowell Daniels, Jeff Durham (by phone)  
Staff: Tony Smithers

The meeting was called to order at 10:07 am. This being the first separate meeting of the HLA Executive Committee, there were no minutes to approve.

In reference to a "Talk Shop" radio interview in which Smithers was asked about the Tourism Business Improvement District, Gary Stone said he would like to know ahead of time about all public comments concerning HLA. Mr. Stone also requested the creation of a one-page sheet with the HLA board and committee members identified.

The first item on the agenda was the "Community Grant Program," the sharing of up to 25 percent of HCTBID revenues with community partners to generate overnight stays. It was first of all agreed that the program would be a once-per-year process, rather than an ongoing cycle. Secondly, everyone agreed we should not use the word "grant." The title should be touristy like "heads in beds bucks."

Jeff Durham suggested that other stakeholders such as the cities, arts organizations and chambers of commerce be included on the community committees to consider funding proposals. Others felt that the committee makeup should be left to each jurisdictional committee to decide. Lowell Daniels said that these people were not the ones being taxed. They could be invited to make presentations and advise, but they should not be part of the committees and should not have a vote. Gary Stone concluded that this issue should be left for each city/county committee to decide. He also requested that staff develop draft policy and procedure materials for this program by the end of the year. We will target next April/May to begin the program, when HCTBID revenues are actually coming in, and don't need to consider it until then. Finally on this issue, Chris Ambrosini expressed concern that the program may become highly political, and suggested that the local committees begin meeting and working sooner rather than later.

Next, the committee addressed implementation of and compliance with the new tourism assessment. Lowell Daniels suggested a gentle educational process for some lodging operators who may be dragging their heels, saying it's to the HLA's benefit to give them a gentle nudge. Gary Stone proposed that the Humboldt Lodging Alliance send a follow up letter to lodging operators, reminding them that the assessment began on July 1 and is now the law of the land, but also communicating the positive effects of more marketing that all will share in. After some discussion, it was agreed that what was needed immediately was an official letter from the county and the cities so that assessed businesses will know it is legitimate. Smithers was directed to follow up with the cities.

A draft chart of accounts for the Humboldt Lodging Alliance was next presented for the committee's comment and approval, which was given. Staff was requested to procure a map showing the regions or divisions within the County unincorporated area.

The issue of working with non-assessed lodging business was next addressed. Chris Ambrosini said that the board needs to set a clear policy about when and how the HLA works with the tribes, noting that Cher-ae Heights will be adding a hotel just as Blue Lake and Bear River have done. The policy should also if these businesses should be promoted by the HCCVB if they are not partnering with the Humboldt Lodging Alliance.

It was suggested that the process begins with Blue Lake Casino Hotel, and that John Porter of the Benbow Inn should be asked to participate because of the respect he commands. Finally, it was agreed that other small properties that are not in the assessment (Blue Lake and Rio Dell) can be included in the marketing program for a flat 2 percent to match the assessment.

Smithers then gave a report on insurance coverage for the Humboldt Lodging Alliance:

1) Commercial liability insurance in the amount of \$2 million had been obtained and the certificate had been delivered to the County of Humboldt risk manager prior to the July 1 start of the district.

2) A quote for Directors & Officers insurance was being worked on and this coverage would be secured within the month.

The committee briefly discussed the HLA board retreat held in June. There was general consensus that it could have been more productive and that the facilitator, Carl Ribaldo, was following a pre-set agenda and was not being particularly responsive to the needs of the board. Nonetheless, all felt that as a social occasion and an opportunity for the board to get to know one another, the event was a success. The notes of the retreat had been provided to the board/committee and would be reviewed to extract action items and help set priorities.

Finally, Gary Stone inquired about creating a logo for the Humboldt Lodging Alliance and printing stationery. Mr. Smithers said he would work on this.

The August meeting of the Executive Committee was tentatively set to be held at Redwood Capital Bank so that the officers could sign up for the HLA checking account at the same time. Smithers would try to arrange this.

With no further time, the meeting was adjourned at 11:25 am.

Respectfully submitted by Tony Smithers