

**Tourism Business Improvement District Board
Minutes
Wednesday, February 10, 2010
2:00 pm
City Council Chamber**

CALL TO ORDER: Chair John Conner

PRESENT: Wallace, Billing, Hutton, Norris, Brown

STAFF PRESENT: Brigitte Elke, Principal Administrative Analyst

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA

ACTION: **Moved Wallace/Hutton** to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Motion carried 7:0

PRESENTATION

City Manager Katie Lichtig introduced herself to the board and attending public.

SUNSET - SAVOR THE CENTRAL COAST

Josh Heiser, event organizer for "Savor the Central Coast" presented the proposed schedule for the event that will take place from September 30th to October 3rd, 2010. They expect around 8,000 visitors to the event over the course of the weekend. Thus far, they have secured \$200,000 in cash sponsors; the City of San Luis Obispo being the first sponsor with \$30,000.

Board member Billing asked about time frames regarding possible sponsorships through the TBID. Several packages are still available, but it would have to be finalized within one month. Sunset is currently trying to sell the gift bag to one of its sponsors. However, if this does not come through, it will be turned over to the event organizer on March 1, 2010. Josh also mentioned the possibility to sponsor the concert that Rossi Enterprises is trying to secure.

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. LEVEL STUDIOS

Ryan Allshouse gave an overview on the current campaign and the website statistics. Traffic is constantly increasing and is up 37% over December. Thus far, the campaign has sent 1,452 visitors to individual hotel sites for booking. In addition, time spent on the site is up and continues to increase. In January, the "Find a hotel" feature saw 861 visits.

Dean Hutton asked about the meaning of SEO. Ryan explained that it is a convoluted field at best, but search engines are trying to figure out the various schemes and hacks that are infiltrating the systems. Google is constantly delisting sites that are not "playing" by the rules. Since the metrics are ever changing, it is a constant monitoring job on the agency's side to make sure the best strategy is applied. Most important is content relevancy, linking to sites, and content links.

Upcoming efforts: New banners are being developed and should go live in two weeks. The new creative will use the "Hendersons", the family featured in the print campaign.

Ryan elaborated on the various event promotions they are working on in collaboration with the City's events promotion contractor.

Holly and Jamie from "On the Horizon" gave an overview on the PR efforts. Holly reiterated the PR objectives designed to support the efforts of the marketing and media campaign. Releases were sent to a broad range of publications depending on their lead deadlines. Ryan asked the committee to submit any ideas or requests, so they can be communicated during the monthly meetings with the PR agency. Lindsey Miller from the Chamber of Commerce will be part of those meetings in order to coordinate efforts.

2. BUDGET 2010 - 11

The board discussed the various line items that were placed on the list during the retreat on January 19, 2010. The item was continued to the March meeting when the board meets with Level Studios to look at the continuation of the marketing contract in 2010-11.

3. EVENTS PROMOTION

Dave Brown, Dean Hutton, and Jamie Wallace will form an event promotion task force to discuss and ultimately recommend a possible grant program. Staff is to coordinate the first meeting.

4. SMITH TRAVEL REPORT

This item was continued to March in order to look at cost for the various reports involved. Staff had already contacted STR and is awaiting a quote.

5. GRANFONDO RACE IN SAN LUIS OBISPO

ACTION: Moved by Wallace/Hutton to allow Level Studios to start work on a package for the GranFondo race as soon as possible. **Motion carried 7:0**

TBID LIAISON REPORTS

VCB Update

John Summer gave a brief overview. He reiterated how important the Sunset event will be for the Central Coast. The Restaurant Month campaign in January was once again very successful and saw 25,000 visits to related web pages. He mentioned that the VCB will be represented at several trade shows and that the Madonna Inn was featured in the TV show "The Bachelor" which was achieved through the efforts of the VCB's film commission.

Chamber of Commerce and CCTC

Molly reported the CCTC's yearly retreat in Santa Barbara concentrating on some long term goals for the organization. At that meeting, California Tourism presented its plans for a new office in India which is one of the upcoming markets.

Lindsey Miller invited the board members to visit the Visitors Center to see the improvements to the center. She also reported on the upcoming events promotion for the Film Festival and Open House and that the LA Times had picked up the Film Festival for an upcoming feature.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 pm.