



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

December 14, 2023

753 South Main St., Angels Camp, CA and
Via Zoom Video Conference 8:30 am

The meeting was called to order at 8:49 AM by Morgan Gace.

Board Members Present: Morgan Gace, Jeff Stai, Susan Weatherby, Amber Sprock, Kathy Collins, Mary Jane Genochio,

Absent Members: Betsy Uttley, Bonnie Randall, Katie Abresch, Tom Hix

CVB Staff Present: Martin Huberty, Jessica Johnson

Advisors Present: Jamie Andriola, Calaveras County Representative; Rebecca Callen, City of Angels Camp Representative, Aaron James, USFS, Allison Nielsen, USFS

1. **Approval of November 2023 Meeting Minutes:** Kathy C. motioned to approve with date corrected. Jeff S. second. All approved. None Opposed. None abstained.
2. **Approval of November 2023 financial reports:** Susan W. motioned to approve. Jeff S. second. All approved. None Opposed. None abstained.

Domo Madden Media Website Report: Martin has a call scheduled today with Charlie at Madden Media to discuss new strategies to drive more visitors to the CVB website. Placer AI report shows that everyone saw more visitors in November than October. The CVB offices interacted with 990 in November and fielded 154 calls. Martin, Jessica, and Jody from the CWA are discussing whether it's more beneficial to be open on Mondays rather than Wednesdays in Murphys.

Marketing & Social Media – Molly & Michael from H, L, & T: Molly reported there was a very nice placement in Diablo Magazine regarding winter sports, and Calaveras was one of only four destinations mentioned. Ginny Pryor, who wrote the article, visited a while ago and has done other travel articles about Calaveras. Diablo Magazine, located in the Pleasanton & Dublin area, is a top demographic for Calaveras. The magazine has a distribution of 20,000 for printed versions, and also has a large digital

CVB Mission Statement

The Calaveras Visitors Bureau is Calaveras County's core tourism promotion organization dedicated to creating long term and sustainable economic growth for the region and its members through innovative tourism programs, promotions and partnerships.



distribution. Molly and Martin are working on a press release for Calaveras winter sports. Molly is working to interview the new team at Bear Valley to create our own feature for winter sports. The next few months, HLT and CVB will be working on Women's History – exceptional women in the county past and present., and the opportunity with Visit California's next them "All Things Golden" – focusing on California's Gold Rush. Molly requested anyone to send ideas or content ideas to HLT. Valentines Day – Media relations and social marketing need to gear up content to post in January. 2024's campaign contest will be Pets in Calaveras to coincide with the "Dog Mayors in Calaveras". The marketing committee, Jamie, Molly, and those interested, will be meeting on December 27th at 10:00 via Zoom. In January, Martin will discuss with Molly and Morgan the Women of Calaveras campaign. Morgan would like to include District 4 Supervisor Amanda Folendorf & the First Angels Camp City Administrator, Jacqueline Heintz. Morgan would like to target lodging for Valentines Day promotions. Martin will forward lodging promotions to HLT. Allison Nielsen told Molly she'd like to connect Molly with a Forest Service rep to get winter sports info.

Michael reported on the social media analytics. November was very successful with significant increases in page and profile interactions, likes, and new followers. There was a slight dip in Instagram interactions, but 78 new IG followers and 115 new Facebook followers. Michael feels that sponsored posts and the CVB-written blogs about Calaveras events account for the increase and are great draws to get new demographics outside of Calaveras County. Michael suggests continuing to focus on what is going on in the county for blogs and social media posts. Michael will be announcing Winter Q4 Back to Nature photo contest winners today. Michael will send over the winners to the board, and Jessica will contact winners and send out prizes, and that will wrap up the Back to Nature campaign. Michael is excited to see how well Pets in Calaveras does in 2024 because it seems very promising. For the rest of December, the focus will be Christmas dinners, New Years parties, NYE Fireworks @ BV, Dinner for One at Fourth Wall, Speakeasy party at Lube Room. Slated to promote the 2024 calendar and 2024 visitors guide in the next blogs and social media posts. January will focus on snow play, Winter Concert series at MCT, Ovations concerts, and Valentine's events towards end of January.

CVB Mission Statement

The Calaveras Visitors Bureau is Calaveras County's core tourism promotion organization dedicated to creating long term and sustainable economic growth for the region and its members through innovative tourism programs, promotions and partnerships.



3. **Old Business:**
 - A. **City of Angels Presentation Update:** Martin made a presentation to the Angels Camp City Council December 5th.
 - B. **Gold Country Regional Advisory Committee:** Martin sent the information to the board to review. Martin believes it's worth the time to be on the calls to discuss sustainable tourism strategies for next 5 years in the Gold Country.
 - C. **2024 Visitors Guide Update** The guide should arrive the 2nd week of January. The new look is great and great opportunities for advertising.
 - D. **Museum Update:** Going well. Nothing new currently.
 - E. **Ebbetts Pass Scenic Byway – meeting to set:** Michelle Plotnik will be invited to attend the CVB's January board meeting to discuss why EPSB should partner with CVB. Mainly, the EPSB needs assistance to maintain their website and field phone calls, but would keep their own board, funding sources, and organize the Hermitfest event. There is a slight possibility that Alpine County would contribute some of their TOT dollars to assist with the marketing/website maintenance of the Ebbetts Pass Scenic Byway. Michele P. offered to serve on the CVB board as an advisor for one year if it helped the CVB.
 - F. **Scavenger Hunt – Chamber Leadership Group:** The scavenger hunt is about educating people about the museums in Calaveras County and will hopefully be done by the end of December or January. The scavenger hunt videos belong to the CVB since the CVB paid for the videos and getting the scavenger hunt onto the CVB website. Thank you to Susan W. of the CVB for all her work organizing the leadership group and helping to get the videos completed.

4. **New Business:**
 - A. **Strategic Planning Session:** Morgan's takeaways from the session were:
 - 1) Continuously work toward reporting financials and marketing efforts to City and County Governments;
 - 2) Partner with business associations and social organizations to support county-wide tourist attractions through event grants and sponsorships;
 - 3) Develop and present an annual marketing plan utilizing marketing tools such as Placer AI to ensure the CVB is an excellent steward of marketing funds both internally (county) and externally (outside the county);
 - 4) Facilitate round table conversations with lodging owners and managers - bring back the lodging association. Morgan feels that the CVB only receives funding from TOT which is only generated from lodging. To continue to

CVB Mission Statement

The Calaveras Visitors Bureau is Calaveras County's core tourism promotion organization dedicated to creating long term and sustainable economic growth for the region and its members through innovative tourism programs, promotions and partnerships.



be good stewards of those funds, the CVB needs to make sure to hear from lodging businesses, managers, and owners to market the lodging industry the way it wants to be marketed. Martin tried to get the lodging partners together in the past, but it wasn't well attended. Morgan wants to address this again, bring the lodging representatives back to get them involved, and understand how they want the TOT funds spent since they are the only generators of this income. Morgan feels the CVB has a unique opportunity to be a source for the lodging partners and assist with disseminating emergency information to visitors. Rebecca agrees with Morgan especially after meeting with the county OES and the CCSO to discuss emergency operation plans/evacuations. Discussion included how to align with emergency departments with getting evacuation/emergency plans and policies to the public. One of the holes they found is that tourists who visit who don't know emergency plans, evacuations, etc., and how do we get that info to lodging partners and visitors. Another comment that came up was to figure out how to get business associations involved with the CVB because it would open communication and be a great way to disseminate information to visitors and businesses. TOT funds are meant to market the county, but mostly TOT funds are to mitigate the strain on public works and emergency services because of the need for additional resources in the county when visitors come. After the discussion, Morgan will write up and distribute the CVB's 2024 Strategic Marketing Plan for review and adoption by the board via email.

- B. Policy and Procedures Update:** The policies and procedures manual desperately needs to be updated because the last time it was updated was in 2018. Since the partnership with the Angels Camp Museum and the opening of the Murphys office, the manual will have lots of changes. Martin and Jessica will work on the updates to the manual as well as updating the bylaws for the CVB board to review in January. The manual will provide the CVB's budgetary policy and give a scope of everything the CVB does.
- C. Employee Handbook – board opinion:** In 2021, the CVB worked with Paychex to develop the CVB Employee Handbook that employees are given when they are hired. Martin will be conducting employee reviews, making sure everyone has read the employee handbook, and have each employee sign off they have read and understand the CVB

CVB Mission Statement

The Calaveras Visitors Bureau is Calaveras County's core tourism promotion organization dedicated to creating long term and sustainable economic growth for the region and its members through innovative tourism programs, promotions and partnerships.



policies. Morgan suggested to have the CVB board review and sign off on the CVB employee handbook and social media policies, as well as all CVB volunteers. Morgan recommended going to GCVA for examples of other DMO organization's employee handbooks. Martin will reach out to other DMOs for their suggestions to see if they are in line with the CVB's standards and any state and/or federal laws.

5. **Board Updates:**

Morgan Gace: Morgan had another meeting to attend and had to dismiss herself before giving her updates.

Kathy Collins: Real estate continues to remain the same. Airbnb was slow in November and through the end of the year. The Garden Club sold arrangements in front of Cal Lumber and was successful raising lots of money for scholarships.

Mary Jane Genochio:

Susan Weatherby: Christmas is busy for Moke Hill Nuts & Candies. The Hotel Leger thanked CVB for being there for the CVB Christmas party. The current owners decided to lease out the restaurant and bar and possibly the hotel but will remain involved in the community.

Aaron James: The forest still has Christmas tree permits available. A total of 15K were available, and 11K have been used. Forest roads are closed for the winter until April. Once there is enough snow, they will start grooming Spicer up to Highland Lakes. Campground fees will be increasing next year, and the Forest Service will do it in phases. Some day use areas will start charging a fee next year. Aaron would like to be involved with the EPSB organization, and he will advocate for the relationship. An Amador/Calaveras consensus group is working on a Forest Project Plan II regarding field treatment, upper Mokelumne watershed, local/visitor impacts, and Aaron will invite people to the meetings. The group is mostly based out of the El Dorado Forest but will include Stanislaus. The Spotted Owl will be listed as endangered, so trails will be impacted within the next five years.

Rebecca Callen: City Council approved the greenhouse gas plan which is out for public comment. City of Angels Camp should receive funding soon. Rebecca met with Senator Alvarado-Gil about the upcoming Habitat for Humanity project and toured the grounds. The senator is concerned about homeowners' insurance in California, and she is looking

CVB Mission Statement

The Calaveras Visitors Bureau is Calaveras County's core tourism promotion organization dedicated to creating long term and sustainable economic growth for the region and its members through innovative tourism programs, promotions and partnerships.



for an insurance contact in Calaveras to consult Senator Alvarado-Gil. The senator is going to the City of Angels Camp with water treatment plan funding. The senator may be able to earmark some funding through her office. The city sold out of BOGO local frog bucks, but gift cards are still available which keep money local. Rebecca attended a meeting yesterday with OES and CCSO, and there is a need to better market Zone Haven, an application that has done significant mapping of evacuations during flood and fire emergencies, and Everbridge, a mass notification app before, during, and after emergency events, to get people to sign up for them. Utica Park – doing geotechnical boring in the next few weeks to put everyone’s mind at ease that the park grounds are safe. The subcommittee approved the new playground. Met yesterday to discuss the fitness components/adult playground. The City Council approved the commercial building policy for vacant buildings and will begin educating building owners how to come into compliance with the new ordinance. Councilmember Chimento felt it a good idea to add a fire marshal inspection requirement of each building via code compliance. The council included the requirement in the ordinance.

Jeff Stai: Painting and slurp event at the winery. Wine sales are doing well.

Jamie Andriola: Jamie felt the CVB update presentation to the Calaveras BOS was an overall good update. She felt the BOS and County CEO understood and appreciated the update and the work of the CVB. The Enterprise did an article on Jamie’s presentation which reviewed the information presented at the BOS meeting. Jamie has given the BOS the latest Balance Sheet as they requested.

Amber Sprock: Open in the North Grove and pile burning. New Year’s Day hike is happening. John Bartell doing a story and hike on snowshoeing.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:21 AM. Next meeting is January 11, 2024, at 8:30 AM at 753 South Main Street, Angels Camp, CA 95222 or via Zoom.

CVB Mission Statement

The Calaveras Visitors Bureau is Calaveras County’s core tourism promotion organization dedicated to creating long term and sustainable economic growth for the region and its members through innovative tourism programs, promotions and partnerships.