

Draft Until Approved
Avila Beach Tourism Alliance
Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 13, 2026
Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort Boardroom

Board Members Present:

Dean Hutton, Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort & Spa
Mindy Hunter, Avila Village Inn

Board Members Absent:

Ken Kelly, Coastal Vacation Rentals (excused)

Others Present:

Cheryl Cuming, Highway 1 Tourism Alliance
John Sorgenfrei, TJA Advertising
Claudia Jensen, TJA Advertising (on Zoom)
Rick Turton, TJA Advertising
Tom Walker, TJA Advertising (on Zoom)
Tamara Jones, Pale Kai Outrigger Club
Christine Canada, Pale Kai Outrigger Club
Stephanie Rowe, ABTA Administrator

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1. **Call to Order/Introductions:** By Board Vice-Chair Dean Hutton at 10:06 am.
 2. **Roll Call:** by Stephanie Rowe
 3. **Public Comment:** Cheryl noted that the Breakawave Cal Poly Rodeo will be held in Avila Beach on September 25-26, 2026.
 4. **Information Items:**
 - a. **Next Meeting** – June 10, 2026, 10am-12pm, Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort.
 - b. **Local Fund Area Updates and Financials:** Cheryl reported on the activity in the past month. The Year End Report has been submitted to the County. They are working on the 1989 renewal and the 1994 District conversion. Cheryl also reviewed the Code of Civility that the Highway 1 Tourism Alliance has adopted. Avila Beach’s assessment collections are 18.5% of overall total contributions for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.
 - c. **Monthly Budget Report:** Stephanie reported that assessment collections in March totaled \$15,842. Available funds (including the carry-forward) total \$311,375. Funds after approved applications and anticipated expenses removed total \$150,711.
 - d. **Marketing Agency Updates:** Claudia reviewed last month’s activities and social media results. She also worked on media requests from Fodor’s Travel and VacationHunter for Avila to be featured in upcoming articles. Tom and Rick gave updates on website activity. They are working on AI SEO data.
 5. **Consent Items:** A motion was made by Dean Hutton and seconded by Mindy Hunter to approve the April 8, 2026 minutes and March 2026 financials. With no further discussion, the documents were approved by majority voice vote of the local Advisory Board.
 6. **Action Items:**
 - a. **Pale Kai Outrigger Expo Funding Application** - Tamara Jones, Pale Kai Outrigger Sponsorship Director, presented the funding application. Pale Kai Outrigger celebrates the end of racing season with an annual exposition paddle event. It is an opportunity for Pale Kai and guest clubs up and down the California Coast and their families to join for a fun paddle, raffle, silent auction, and Hawaiian

style lunch in Avila Beach. The date of the event is Saturday, September 25, 2026. The amount requested is the same as last year, \$6,500. Stephanie noted after discussing the results from last year with the board chair, he had asked that she communicate to the organizers that they review the overnight stay formula. Given the historical data from last year, that we should expect around 18 overnight stays again, they might consider a more realistic goal to be 20 overnight stays for a \$4,000 grant. Tamara noted that this year they are adding a Packet Pick-up Party on Friday evening with live music at a local venue. They believe this will encourage visitors to arrive on Friday and likely add an additional night to their stay. Dean noted that the goal of the ABTA is “heads in beds” as well as enrichment to the community for return visits. He asked if participants can be polled if they stayed in Avila and the number of nights. Cheryl noted that the Expo is on the same date as the Breakaway Cal Poly Rodeo in Avila. Tamara and Christine thought that their board may change the Expo date given this new event. **Dean tabled this item until the next meeting so that the date of the event can be confirmed.**

- b. **Avila Beach Farmers’ Market Funding Application** - The applicant was unable to attend the meeting so this item will be moved to the next meeting.
- c. **FY 2026-2027 TJA Marketing & Media Plan** - John presented the 2026-2027 Marketing & Media proposal. TJA will continue to have the same goals and objectives, and marketing approach as in previous years. They will focus on the drive market while promoting brand awareness of “Pick Your Perfect Paradise” across social media, the website, and advertising. He reviewed the various elements of the plan for a total budget of \$234,500.

A motion was made by Dean Hutton, and seconded by Mindy Hunter, to accept the TJA Marketing & Media Plan as proposed for a total annual investment of \$234,500 effective July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027. With no further discussion, the plan was approved by majority voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

- d. **FY 2026-2027 LFA Imperative Proposal** - John presented the proposal for the H1TA Co-op program for the new year. Last year, the board approved \$15,500. He recommended using the same formula: Search Engine Marketing Co-op - \$5,000 (\$500/month), August 2026-May 2027; Local Fund Area Paid Social Co-op - \$8,500 (\$8,500 match for \$17,000 total), August 2026-June 2027; Email retargeting - \$2,000, slated for February 2027; total spend for Avila = \$15,500 + \$8,500 Social Media H1TA match for grand total of \$24,000. Claudia manages H1TA’s social media, so it is a good collaboration.

A motion was made by Dean Hutton and seconded by Mindy Hunter, to approve \$15,500 for the H1TA LFA Imperative Co-op Program as proposed effective July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027. With no further discussion, the program was approved by a majority voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

7. Future Agenda Items

- a. **2026 Pale Kai Outrigger Expo Funding Application** (June)
- b. **2026 Avila Beach Farmer’s Market Funding Application** (June)
- c. **FY 2025-2026 TJA Year-End Recap** (July)
- d. **2026 C10 SLO Down Truck Show Follow-up Report** (by September)
- e. **2026 Creeks to Coast Cleanup Follow-up Report** (by November)

8. Closing Comments: None

9. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 11:21 am.