

Draft Until Approved
Avila Beach Tourism Alliance
Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 8, 2026
Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort Boardroom

Board Members Present:

Ken Kelly, Coastal Vacation Rentals
Dean Hutton, Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort & Spa
Mindy Hunter, Avila Village Inn

Board Members Absent: None

Others Present:

Cheryl Cuming, Highway 1 Tourism Alliance
John Sorgenfrei, TJA Advertising
Claudia Jensen, TJA Advertising (Zoom)
Rick Turton, TJA Advertising (Zoom)
Tom Walker, TJA Advertising (Zoom)
Matt Mohle, County Parks & Recreation
Hunter McKiernan, Bob Jones Trail Kiosk
Kristen McKiernan, Bob Jones Trail Kiosk
Bruce Hilton, Friends of Bob Jones Trail
Julie Andrews-Scott, Avila Farmer's Market
Robert Neely, City to the Sea Race
Ben Londo, Beach BreakaWave Rodeo (Zoom)
Allyson Padua, Avila Lighthouse Suites
SLO County Supervisor Dawn Ortiz-Legg
Stephanie Rowe, ABTA Administrator

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1. **Call to Order:** By Board Chair Ken Kelly at 10:03 am. Roll call by Stephanie Rowe.
 2. **Public Comment:** None
 3. **Information Items:**
 - a. **Next Meeting** – August 12, 2026, 10am-12pm, Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort.
 - b. **H1TA Local Fund Area Updates and Financials:** Cheryl reported on the activity in the past month. She will be attending a BOS meeting on July 28th to continue the discussion of the 1994 formation, hoping to have the Supervisors understand that funding is going to events and beautification & infrastructure projects in our local fund areas. Avila Beach's assessment collections are 18.20% of overall total contributions for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.
 - c. **Monthly Budget Report:** Stephanie reported that assessment collections in May totaled \$22,102. Available funds (including the carry-forward) total \$266,370. Funds after approved applications and anticipated expenses removed total \$145,878.
 - d. **Marketing Agency Updates:** Claudia reviewed last month's activities and social media results. Avila Beach was selected to be featured in a Vacation Renter's article about "America's Best Hidden Beach Towns 2026" and she worked with the writer to supply assets and credit the Avila Beach Tourism Alliance. Rick gave updates on website stats. Tom is continuing to plug into the AI environment and doing website maintenance.
 4. **Consent Items:** A motion was made by Dean Hutton and seconded by Mindy Hunter to approve the June 10, 2026 minutes and May 2026 financials. With no further discussion, the documents were approved by unanimous voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

5. Action Items:

- a. **2026 Avila Beach Farmers' Market Extension Funding Application** – Julie Andrews-Scott, manager of the farmers' market, presented the funding request. At last month's meeting, the ABTA Board had asked if the farmers' market season could be extended beyond August. Julie confirmed that she had secured the permits and spoke to the businesses to extend the market to October 16, 2026. She presented the budget and requested funding for an additional \$6,875. (Last month, the board approved \$10,000 in funding for the market.) The board agreed that the farmers' market drew many visitors to Avila.

A motion was made by Dean Hutton, and seconded by Mindy Hunter, to approve \$6,875 to sponsor the Avila Beach Farmers' Market extended season from September 4 through October 16, 2026. With no further discussion, the sponsorship was approved by unanimous voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

- b. **Bob Jones Trail Kiosk Signage Funding Application** – Hunter McKiernan, Avila Beach resident, presented the video of his Eagle Scout Service Project where he designed and constructed a kiosk at the Bob Jones Trailhead on Ontario Road. Earning Scouting's highest rank requires leading a project of lasting community value. In partnership with SLO County Parks & Recreation and Friends of the Bob Jones Trail, the kiosk currently has a temporary sign. Matt Mohle from Parks & Recreation presented the funding request submitted by Friends of the Bob Jones Trail for professional signage. Funding will support the design, fabrication, and installation of three interpretive panels for the kiosk. A total of \$6,517 is requested. The board agreed that this was a great opportunity to provide information to visitors about our area.

A motion was made by Ken Kelly, and seconded by Dean Hutton, to approve \$6,517 to fund the Bob Jones Trailhead kiosk interpretive signage panels. With no further discussion, the funding was approved by unanimous voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

- c. **2026 Beach Breaka-Wave Rodeo Funding Application** - Ben Londo, Cal Poly Rodeo Head Coach & Program Director, introduced himself and provided information about the event. The event has been held in Oceano for the last 5 years. This year it will be held at Avila Beach on September 25-26, 2026. They are looking for a permanent home and feel Avila Beach is a great location because of its proximity to the town, facilities and the Avila Golf Resort as a concert venue. **Ben noted that he realizes it is too late to request funding this year, but wanted to take the opportunity to develop a relationship with the ABTA Board for next year.** He would like the event to be beneficial for all.

- d. **2026 City to the Sea Half Marathon & 5K Funding Application** - Robert Neely, Race Director, presented the funding application for the City to the Sea Half Marathon & 5K. The event is scheduled for Sunday, October 18, 2026. The half marathon starts in San Luis Obispo and finishes at the Avila Beach Golf Resort. The 5K starts and finishes at the Avila Beach Golf Resort. An early morning race start and day before race packet pickup strongly encourages out of area participants to stay locally during race weekend. Last year they capped the participants at 3,000. This year they increased it to 3,500. They are estimating almost 50% from out of the area. Robert noted that they are looking to keep the event in the same locations for the long term. Funding requested is \$5,000. Funds will be used for out-of-area marketing. John noted that they had a great collaboration with the City to the Sea team last year.

A motion was made by Ken Kelly, and seconded by Dean Hutton, to approve \$5,000 to sponsor the 2026 City to the Sea Half Marathon and 5K. With no further discussion, the funding was approved by a unanimous voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

- e. **New Board Member Application** - Allyson Padua introduced herself. She is the Sales Director for Peregrine Hospitality. Avila Lighthouse Suites, soon to be called Avila Beach House, is one of the properties in the Peregrine Hospitality group. Ally reviewed her background and interest in serving on the ABTA Board.

A motion was made by Ken Kelly, and seconded by Dean Hutton, to accept the application from Allyson Padua, representing Avila Lighthouse Suites (soon Avila Beach House), for a seat on the Avila Beach Tourism Alliance Advisory Board. With no further discussion, the application was accepted by unanimous voice vote of the local Advisory Board.

6. Future Agenda Items

- a. **FY 2025-2026 TJA Year-End Recap** (August)
- b. **2026 C10 SLO Down Truck Show Follow-up Report** (by September)
- c. **Bob Jones Trail Kiosk Signage Follow-up Report** (by Oct)
- d. **2026 Creeks to Coast Cleanup Follow-up Report** (by November)
- e. **Upwell Turtles Follow-up Report** (by Dec)
- f. **2026 Avila Farmer's Market Follow-up Report** (by Dec)
- g. **2026 Pale Kai Outrigger Expo Follow-up Report** (by Dec)
- h. **2026 City to Sea Race Follow-up Report** (by Dec)

- 7. **Closing Comments:** Supervisor Ortiz-Legg reported that she is working with the Avila businesses to create a website for information and resources. She also connected ECOSLO with Chevron to request a grant for funds to assist with cleanup and cleaning up the planters.

- 8. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 11:57 am.