

Board meeting 3/20/2023

In attendance are: Board President Sharon Roberts
Board Vice President Karen Kleven
Board Treasurer Susan Bryner
Board Secretary Josie Litchfield
Board Member Riccardo Jacobus
Board Member Janice Haman
Executive Director Joe Niesyn
Marketing Contractor Katherine Sansone
Administrative Assistant Ellie Hinrichs

Sharon calls the meeting to order. 10:00

Karen motions to approve the 2.10.2023 minutes, Susan seconds, all approve.

Susan motions to approve today's meeting agenda, Karen seconds, all approve.

Operations

Annual Report 10:01

Sharon motions to approve the Annual Report, Janice seconds, all approve.

Susan will submit a time to present the Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors. She doesn't think we need to do much more than a strong verbal presentation, especially about our treasurer and some of the things we said in our executive summary. She just wants to highlight what our issues and accomplishments are and how we're moving forward. Karen and Riccardo agree.

Board Members and Terms 10:04

Sharon spent a lot of time looking at terms and as we added new board members we never really clarified what their terms were. Our bylaws when we started were that we were going to stagger one and two year terms, so her suggestion is that we approve the following current terms so that we can move forward:

- **Susan and Karen until November 2023**
- **Sharon and Janice until November 2024**
- **Riccardo until November 2024**
- **Josie until November 2023**

We nominated Katherine Sansone at the last meeting, but there are some questions whether or not we did that properly. Sharon would like to take care of that in our May meeting. We need to confirm that when we fill that open position, do we want it to go through November 2024 or November 2025? That should be part of the Policies and

Procedures Committee meeting coming up and finalizing that. Karen asks if there is a renewal process in the bylaws. Sharon said there is something about the number of terms that can be renewed but we need to clarify that. Riccardo questions if the renewal process needs to be a majority vote or all in favor. Sharon believes it is a majority vote and Karen will check the bylaws.

Susan motions to approve terms as Sharon outlined, Janice seconds, all approve.

Organizational Chart

10:07

Sharon proposed an organizational chart that can be discussed more at the May board meeting but suggests we start living by it today so that we don't have a lot of miscommunication. We do need to staff five different committees today and we will do that in each section here following. Riccardo likes it. Karen asks about our accountant not being on it. Sharon said the Finance Committee will report to the accountant, and it's been agreed that the Treasurer is going to have direct reporting to our CPA, because she does not want emails from 3 or 4 of us and back and forth. We could add a contracted person under Finance, but we'll just keep it simple.

Janice motions to approve the organizational chart as put forth by Sharon today, Riccardo seconds, all approve.

Eastern Plumas Update

10:11

Susan attached the agenda for her original discussion with the entire Eastern Plumas group. The thing she noticed most when she was visiting with them is how much they reminded her of us 6, 7, 8 years ago, full of passion and information. They're a really great group, a really intelligent, passionate group that she's hoping we can work with at some point. So out of that meeting she made a couple of commitments to them:

- Put together a meeting for us on the western side of the county so that Richard can make a presentation to us and find out how our lodging providers felt about their proposals
- To report back to all of you. We met yesterday and she got a really great response from our lodging providers in Northwest Plumas. Our biggest ones were present as well as one of our naysayers. It was a chance to visit with Kenny Wilson of Wilson's Camp Prattville, and the meeting went really well. Richard presented the idea of an increase, or a public initiative to either do one of two things:
 - Force the county to make good on their commitment (2006?) in the 3% increase in the TOT when it went from 6 to 9
 - Or raise the TOT .75% with some of the ideas he had for funding fire departments, recreation, Chambers, Visitors Center, etc.

Susan said that in talking with our lodging providers, they all felt strongly that they would rather first see our initiative force the Board of Supervisors to honor their original agreement on that increase in 3%. The way it was laid out back then, which they had said they would do but did not or stopped doing (in 2012?) was:

- 1.5% of it would go to the Chambers
- .75% would go to County Recreation
- .5% would go to Supervisors recreation funds (the funds supervisors were able to use without any board approval)
- .6 to libraries, Sheriffs, museums, etc.

As a representative of the Tourism Association, Susan talked a lot about our lack of faith in our county government. She was very much against adding anything to the county coffers with the current fiscal mismanagement that was going on, and she made a strong case to those present as to why we formed the Tourism association. There were two reasons: it would be a stable source of funding, which is what Richard wants. They said it was a stable source of funding that is governed by everybody in that room, and they really got it, and it's time limited: if we don't execute, if we don't do well, everybody in that room can shut us down. She said that's why we formed the Tourism Association and that's her idea of good fiscal management. They all agreed and Richard got on board with that, though she thinks his people want that .75% increase no one felt strongly about how he had it laid out, because he wants Sheriff and fire departments to get a section of that money if we were to increase it, and we have some real issues on this side of the county with some of the fiscal mismanagement in our fire department. So she thinks when it ended everyone was very comfortable, and would get behind an initiative this November, or maybe next May, to put it on the ballot to have that 3% executed in the way it was originally agreed to be, but it would be mandatory. It could no longer be at the discretion of the Board of Supervisors. So the next step is up to Richard. He said he needs committees and this and that. So we'll have to hear from him, but he did commit to saying that he will be a big supporter in Eastern Plumas when it comes time to renew and get on board with us. Sharon asked if we can get something on the ballot that forces the Board of Supervisors on that 3%. Is there legal grounds to do that? Susan said yes, Supervisor Tom McGowan was at that meeting and he was wholly supportive of that. He felt comfortable raising the TOT to 10% but that was if and only if all of this was laid out better, if our tax collector came around, or we got a new one. He agreed with us that throwing more money at a broken system was not a good idea. Granicus came up several times, and I think Richard finally understood what it could do for us. They were fully on board with working to pressure the County to use the full Granicus contract to do the work that our tax collector can't do. The thing that really stuck out in the crowd was the fact that so many VRBOs are not paying, and the people right next to them are, and the inequity in that is part of what Ken Wilson is upset about.

Sharon asked if Tom confirmed that the Granicus contract was renewed last November, but Susan doesn't have clarity on that right now and will have to find out. Karen wants to know if it's an either/or: is Richard going to look at trying to have that 3% tied to the original agreement, or try to raise the TOT with this initiative. Susan said it was an either/or that he presented to us, and we told him as a group (that included Gulan and it included Mark Lily of Antler, so it was all of our biggest lodging owners that were there) that we would agree to only keeping it at 9% and forcing the county to distribute that 3% as originally intended. So he walks away with our wishes, so we'll see. Karen thanked Susan for doing all that and knows they are a really great group.

Policies and Procedures Committee

10:19

Karen has volunteered to lead the Policies and Procedures Committee. We need at least one or two other board members willing to assist. Janice volunteers to join. No one else offers, and Karen thinks that's good enough. Sharon says they will have things to share with us in May.

Executive Directors Report

Monthly Activity for March

10:21

Joe's report was attached and was based on some directives. He is getting into a nice routine. He has been getting out in the community and communicating with our business stakeholders. He was able to get 5 or 6 properties uploaded into our business database and has met with or communicated with about 40. With all the weather we've been having, he has had to reschedule many Almanor meetings to late April or May to visit the properties, do the Bios in the Business Directory, and make sure everyone's represented. He is starting to get to know people and is very encouraged by that.

Community News

10:22

Joe has reached out to Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship (SBTS), speaking with Kyla, the General Manager. They're a pretty dynamic organization with a lot of people on their board and a lot of volunteers. They are giving us a booth at their Lost and Found Gravel Grinder event in June, which starts at the park right along the water in Portola. It will be a good opportunity for us to capture a lot of names and email addresses and possibly a lot of social media hits with 1,000 to 1,500 riders and another 500 vendors/volunteers. So we have the opportunity to interface with 2,000 people in the community and from outside of the community. He would love to do some sort of raffle with them, provided they provide us their contact information to get them in our database and on a mailing list. He is open to suggestions for the raffle, probably something to do with mountain biking.

The same thing could be said for the High Sierra Music Festival (HSMF), they are very difficult to get hold of. He has reached out to several people and has not yet got a response. Joe thinks having representation there for the four days will be well worth it, not knowing what the price is. Riccard has reached out to Lisa, HSMF's art director, who said that they do offer free booths to community nonprofits like ours, so that is a possibility and she will get back to him. Joe said that between HSMF and SBTS shows great intent and willingness to work with us. He has reached out to Kara at Plumas Arts and Rebecca at HSMF but has not spoken with Lisa yet. Even Cheryl at the Chamber and John at the Fairgrounds didn't really know how to get in touch with them.

The 20 Mile House is doing a wedding fair April 23, usually about 100 couples attend. They are the premier wedding venue around here and did about 75 weddings last year, 55 the year before, 45 the year before that. They are a dynamic group responsible for bringing about 73K people to the county every year. The peripheral spending with those events is incredible for our economy. Joe is open for suggestions on how to garner and gain everyone's contact info at the wedding fair. He knows the general manager there and she may just hand it over which would be ideal, but he'd like to be able to get people to interface with our booth by having some type of giveaway or raffle with them to build excitement. He knows the industry and has some ideas, so he thinks he'll be able to garner a lot of followers from them.

The Forest Service lost their campground concessions, they just couldn't survive everything we've had to deal with, including the fires, Covid, and the downturn in the economy. They're

accepting bids and getting a lot of activity with that. Joe was a little concerned at first but now thinks there's a lot of positive potential in working with these people, introducing ourselves to a new concession there, making sure they're all on board for the campgrounds that are liable to pay the 2%.

Joe reached out to several car clubs. The Golden Gate Chapter of BMW Car Club of America (out of San Francisco) got back to him and it turned out he helped perform the couple who runs the car club's wedding over at the 20 Mile House, and they recall each other. They'll be coming up mid-spring to just meet with him. He knows we do not produce events, but we can work on connecting them with all the correct people. He'd like to bring 50 to 100 couples up here in their BMWs, and one idea would be a museum crawl. We've got five museums in the county that could use help in getting people to their doors. Possibly doing a kind of Road Rally and tie it in with lodging and food and beverage. He spoke with the new owners of Grocery Outlet in Quincy. We've got them on our website, and they're very excited about potentially being involved in offering their parking lot for a car show for no cost. His ideas are just to bring these people to the community, bring them to the stakeholders, such as the museums, and get them hooked up with the lodging providers to start putting heads and beds through these means and really talk up our area.

Web Advisor Training

10:30

Joe put together a summary wrapping up the five days of his Web Advisor training. They do a lot of nonprofit education seminars. This one was recommended by Karen and he thinks it was the right one. He got a lot out of it and encourages the board to read his summary and then contact him with any questions. It reviews how a board and how an executive director are supposed to work together, behave and accomplish, and there is a lot of good information there. He will be viewing it again sometime in the next month or hopefully next couple of weeks. He only has the opportunity to view the seminars once more in preparation for a training certification, so unfortunately the board members can't access it. It was very, very worthwhile. Karen thought the recordings would be available, but Joe reached out to his advisor and you can view it again for \$49 and get a retake on the test because they are in the business of selling the seminars. He'll talk to them again and see if there's a way others can piggyback on that, or he might be able to record it.

Susan complimented Joe on a nice report. In public relations, she asks that he would check with her on the properties he visits and give her those dates he's going because if there's any chance for her to take part, she will. Joe welcomes that.

Sharon tells Joe he needs the contact from Plumas National Forest (PNF) that's going to sign the contract with the new concessionaire, not necessarily the concessionaire to start with. If we can get the TOT and the 2% in the contract that PNF uses with their concessionaire, we will be miles ahead and it will be a great example to share with the National Parks System and the Lassen National Forest (LNF). If we can't do that, then getting the concessionaire to agree to voluntarily do that, would be amazing. Karen told Joe that this is the time to get a meeting with Leslie Ecklund (who is in Quincy Rotary) because she knows what's going on and was the one who gave Karen that information that they are in the process of choosing a contractor. She is

the recreation person for the Mount Huff District of PNF. Joe has her contact information and will be doing that. Sharon will be back next week and would like to be a part of that conversation or meeting because she knows the history and has done the research on concessionaires on federal lands that do pay this assessment, that might help. We're not asking for something that hasn't been done elsewhere. Joe will set up a Zoom or in-person meeting with Leslie and include Sharon. Karen says Leslie may suggest that the PNF head of recreation, Erica Brenszavich, be at the meeting. Josie will send Joe her contact info.

Finance

10:35

Susan said Robin the accountant will be on the committee and asks if anyone would like to join the Finance Committee. Susan will be the chair. Sharon volunteers.

Susan says we wouldn't normally have a budget overview cash flow report today, but maybe we should each time, because we are so tight right now. We got word from our county tax collector that she would not be giving us all of our fourth quarter assessment in March. Joe said this week we're supposed to be getting through \$13,401.33. She told Joe we wouldn't get the rest of it until May, and she did not have any idea how much that would be.

Susan says right now have \$59,000 in the bank. Our budget said at the end of March, we should have \$52,000. Even with \$13,000 added, we will have a shortfall in both April and May in cash. She has lodged my disgust in complaint with the Supervisor here in Lake Almanor. She said, "This is not okay. This is not how you do business." They're still working out the software bugs, but he assured Susan that our county administrator is on top of this, and it's a priority to get it fixed. The only way Susan sees us making it through April and May is to ask Tim O'Bryant if he can defer his second payment, and she doesn't know if that's possible so she's going to be pushing a little bit harder because it's just not okay. It's just not okay. Karen asks to clarify that \$59,000 is the total amount that we have in the bank. Susan clarifies that it is, as of March 18th. She said there may be a few things that haven't been paid or expended yet, but if we expend everything in April and May that we say we will, which includes the second \$15,000 we will be in a cash deficit situation. Karen asked if we already paid the first \$15,000 and Susan said we have. As Joe reported to us, the tax collector said it's going to be like this until she gets her software figured out, and that's just totally unacceptable. Karen said our contract says it must be paid to us within 30 days, so that's going to be part of our presentation to the Board of Supervisors. Rather than giving them a glitzy presentation, we just need to drive hard on some of the issues that we have.

Sharon asked if we can ask the Board of Supervisors to front us \$15,000 because of Julie's inability. Susan thinks that's a great idea because the short bar is \$23,000 right now, so we need them to front the \$23,000. Sharon said that will not make the people pay attention, but it'll show that they really don't care about tourism if they can't front us that. The money's been collected. They're holding the money and they should be audited. This is very scary. Both Sharon and Karen came to the same conclusion in looking at her scans that it's most likely a penalty from the third quarter of 2022 that PG&E didn't pay for some reason. So it is our belief at this time that it doesn't even have anything to do with the fourth quarter.

Market the Region

Logos

10:42

Katherine was assigned to work with one of her my graphic designers to come up with some logos that she thought would be good for Plumas County. She has narrowed it down to two options. One of the issues that we've had is that some of them have been too busy, so both of these are very simple and they won't compete with anything else that we do like an ad. They both show well on merchandise, which is one of the criterias that we that we wanted. They're easy to read and you see the name immediately without having to look for it, so that's important that we get identity. They both work in black and white, since we're not always going to have everything in color.

Logo 1: Katherine says the strengths on this one are that there's movement which is always nice to have something that there is some movement on it. The symbols are subtle without being like one of the old ones that we did, like the person kayaking. One of the symbols is obviously the feather which you can identify with. The lines have the movement of a river, of water, and even the triangle has the essence of a mountaintop. So those were all things that we took into consideration in looking at. The lines connect to the name rather than having it two entities, a mark and then a name. The way the lines flow they connect into the name of Plumas County. People read left to right, so this design has you moving left to right. And this one is really very strong and impactful in black and white, more so over the other one.

Logo 2: One of the things that came up at the meeting a couple of the Board members wanted is something retro, and this mark is very, very retro in the way it's designed. This is more of a mark because of the square. There's no reading, you just look at it and it's there. Katherine thinks this one will be stronger when it's in color rather than black and white.

Those are some of the reasons that Katherine narrowed down to these two. The designer initially presented 13 designs. We had a lot of different iterations. She presented how these two look on merchandise. Plumas reads very well on **Logo 1**. She really likes that movement across, Plumas reads very well, because that's what we want people to remember: Plumas. Once again you can see how strong **Logo 2** is on an item that you just read it. You can read the name very well, and the symbolism with the feather, the water, and the mountain is also very strong. They look good size wise, we can go bigger or we can go smaller and you're not going to lose Plumas County when it goes small. That's why she had them do it in caps but not too bold, so that it worked with the mark. Katherine is very pleased and thinks they're very, very good.

Riccardo asks if there are any examples of the logos in color. Katherine says no, because people get swayed by color, and they lose the essence of the design. So she always has her designers design and black and white, because that will tell you the strength of the logo just because you won't always do everything in color. That's the philosophy behind showing them in black and white, because they're dynamic, and if you have a weak logo it won't work in black and white and you'll need color.

Josie disagrees with Katherine a bit on this and finds both of these logos to be very corporate. She says the first one is almost identical to Plumas Bank, so she thinks there would be a lot of confusion with that one. On the second one there's no inspiration. It doesn't really tell any kind of story. It's not something I would want to wear on a hat, because the logo itself is not that inspiring. It says to her, "I'm a government entity."

Susan disagrees. She looked at the Plumas bank when the feather was suggested for use, and it doesn't bring up Plumas Bank to her. She likes the idea that we're trying to promote Plumas. After going to the conference and looking at the interest in the global, national and statewide interest in indigenous populations, that having the feather and the fact that Plumas is Spanish for feather in our logo, she thinks is really strong. She really likes the flow after having looked at a few others. So just to counter Josie a little bit on that one. She doesn't like the retro one, it doesn't draw her in as much as the flow of the first one.

Riccardo is torn. He doesn't like the second one, and kind of agrees with Josie that the first one reminds him of Plumas Bank or a corporation. He'd like to see it in color because right now it's "blah."

Sharon clarifies that if we choose one of these two, the designer will then go back to our designer and do a whole bunch of changes so we can see it in color. She likes the motion and that Plumas stands out because that's what we want people to think of, and it looks good on swag. She was leaning toward just keeping the logo we have but feels this is an improvement on that one. She is tired of changing logos but feels this one is much stronger. We've spent close to \$10,000 on branding so she wants to make sure we don't make a mistake.

Karen would choose the first logo, but she's just not convinced that we need a feather because how many people know that Plumas means feather.. She does see that it is somewhat similar to Plumas Bank.

Sharon said it did not remind her of Plumas Bank and she banks with them. If it's similar, she's sure they had some real experts come up with their logo. And any logo you have can look like another logo. We've looked at so many.

Karen agrees, and says there are so many Feather River logos that have the feather in them. She, along with Josie, Ricardo, and Samantha (from Eastern Plumas) went to a branding session that was quite good. She thinks this logo is kind of friendly, but does it represent us?

Riccardo thinks keeping it simple is a good idea, with not a lot of stuff to look at. He appreciates that we've taken out a lot of the "noise" from the last one, but he's not wild about it. He's having a hard time liking it. He appreciates all of the hard work Katherine has put into it.

Sharon respects those who voice their lack of liking it. She doesn't know in this process where we are in our budget, but it sounded like no one was in favor of the second logo and people either like or are on the fence or don't like the first logo, but with color that might change. If we're not jumping at this, is it the wrong time to ask the designer to add color?

Karen wants to know if we've decided on our colors. Sharon wasn't aware if we were changing our colors in our branding guide. If Katherine and the designer have a whole different palette, then we're totally going backwards.

Susan thinks when you see this in color you're gonna differentiate it a lot from Plumas Bank. Also, Plumas Bank is in three counties, and that's a real draw because the more we identify with something that people can identify with the better it is. And frankly, like Karen and Sharon, she is just really tired of this and wants to move forward. She knows we're going to be able to evolve it into something different as we move forward. She'd like to see this first one in some suggested colors because it's going to pop more. She doesn't see it as corporate because of the flow, and corporate doesn't usually flow like that. She thinks it looks good on swag, and having been the one who did a lot of the graphics with Katherine for some of the advertising that we did, she sees it fitting really well with the advertising, better than some of the other logos we have.

Karen would agree with having it in the colors that we chose with Stewart and seeing which ones it goes best with.

Janice really likes the first one. Her problem with several of the other incarnations is that they were just so busy, and this one is graceful and simple. She likes the idea of the second one but the look of the first one better.

Sharon agrees with Janice on that, and agrees with Susan that having the feather ties us in with that we're the Feather River Tourism Association, and the Feather River goes through it. There are different things people are going to resonate with in our county and so many different reasons why they visit here.

Sharon motions that we send Katherine back to the designer, brings colors to the first logo, and we look at this again at the May board meeting and make a final decision with color if we want to use this logo or not. Karen seconds. Riccardo and Janice approve. Josie would not approve. Her vote would be to not put any more resources into this and to keep our current logo.

Karen changed her mind and agrees that the feather does kind of connect us with other things in the county. There's lots of feather logos around, so maybe that's a good thing.

Update on Sierra Rec Advertising

11:02

Katherine presents a slide of our first Sierra Rec ad and says they have been absolutely wonderful in posting weekly, whether it's an event or an update. The Chili cook off was a Publisher's Choice and Charlie did follow up on that. The next slide is of our banner ads where she kept the theme of Destination Plumas County throughout the entire year. Once we add the logo on these ads it will not compete. They ran the Chili Cook-off video and the snowshoe hikes, so working with Charlie has been very, very good. He's open to almost any ideas we present, and he comes up here as well.

Josie loves the visuals and thinks it looks beautiful. She would like to see the data: the backside of how many people took an action both on their end, and more importantly, on our end. Katherine has that from Charlie and will share. Karen agrees, because her big concern is what is the return of investments, and she's not sure how you define what a conversion rate is. Josie explains there are a few different ways, such as how many people opened an email or how many people clicked on the ad, but to her what's more important is our website: how many people took an action to click on a lodging provider, engage some other way with our website, or start to follow us on social media. Those are analytics that are really easy for us to see, and it really tells us whether or not a campaign is "worth it" because to her, the money is in the action.

Katherine adds that with anything in marketing/PR/advertising, there's a slow build. To her knowledge, this is the first campaign we've done to this extent, so we would look at the data and compare it to the next ad he's doing and the next, then look at it at the year's end to make a judgment. She also brought up that a lot of places thought we had burned down, so she would ask that we look at this over a period of time, and not come to a conclusion too quickly since it does build over time and we can't expect immediacy in a campaign like this. That's why you always do a minimum of three ads, because just one would be a waste of money. It's over time, generally your third to fifth ad, that people will respond.

Sharon agrees that right now these campaigns are kind of awareness building. We're not getting as many clicks through to our lodging providers and bookings right now, and part of it is likely the weather. It would help if we would all interact with the Facebook page: make comments, share posts, and that will help with our engagement on the post. We have a lot of marketing to do to build awareness, and then to get our lodging providers more heads in beds.

Marketing Committee

11:09

Sharon offers to be on the marketing committee and asks for volunteers. Josie is happy to be on the committee but does not have the option to attend out of town in-person meetings at this time. If on Zoom or near Quincy she would be happy to participate. Karen thanks Josie for volunteering because she has a lot of experience. Sharon, Josie, and Katherine will be the Marketing Committee.

Communications

11:11

Sharon says we are getting leads each week from the Visit California ad. Most are with people's mailing address, so we need to see if we want to put into our marketing budget being able to send a flyer or something out to the people that have requested information but not given their email. We have sent out nine emails (not much yet) to the leads, eight were opened and one bounced. Great open rate, and the top clicks were Places to Stay and Places to Visit. Since the middle of January it's only been a couple of leads each week. Sharon made a newsletter that can be sent out each week to those leads. That's part of our communication that we need someone to do, both a newsletter to our stakeholders and one to the Visit California leads

and other visitors that we can get added to our subscriber list. Our basic subscriber list is only about 35 people and most of them are us. There are maybe around 20 that are not us.

Karen suggests that Joe and Ellie take on the stakeholder newsletter (and send it to other people for approval and to get different ideas) and then the Marketing committee does the visitor newsletter in some way. Susan agrees. She thinks our communications have been really bad. At the meeting on Sunday she gave out our 2022 Annual Report and they were very happy to get it. There was a lot of information in there they had no idea about, and that's because we have been remiss in getting anything out. If we want to re-up in 2 years, this is really important. She doesn't want to be on more than two committees, but this is so important to her she will at least be one of the advisors. She thinks Joe and Ellie should be the ones to get it out, but she wants to make sure it's getting out right. We need to be continually communicating with them (Karen suggests quarterly and Susan agrees) and actually in getting things into the Town Chatter as well as Plumas News and the Chambers communication sources as to what we're doing. We're worried about brand awareness outside of Plumas County, but Susan's also worried about our brand awareness within, as is Karen. This is a really important committee and an important thing to get done. We've still got Mailchimp at the \$13 level. She hasn't upped it yet because she hasn't seen any indication that people are ready. She confirms with Ellie that she's familiar with Mailchimp and can work with it really well. Katherine adds that she did a story on what we've done with advertising and it was in the Town Chatter also in the Quincy Chamber Newsletter last week. Susan asks her to put it in the LACC Newsletter as well and says she will. There was discussion about who actually reads the Chamber newsletters. Karen says it seems like a lot of people do read Plumas News. Many of us have written articles, but who should be responsible for getting something to them, perhaps once a month? Susan believes there's going to be a big crossover between the Communications and Marketing teams, but by separating it we're dividing responsibility a little bit because we've got internal vs external as she sees it, but we're still going to need to lean on our marketing people for the appropriate way to say something or for final review. Katherine would recommend funneling everything through one person. Sharon adds that the FRTA website should be part of that, for Ellie and Joe.

Josie encourages us to bring Vanessa into this, or somebody in that capacity. She's a great writer, and where people are reading them is on social media. So these stories could be told there, and that's how we grow organically without investing a lot in telling the stories in our own spaces. So she thinks that Vanessa needs to be part of that conversation, or whoever it is that's going to craft it and create the social media strategy. Katherine says that Vanessa has been extrapolating things from our blogs, and she sends press releases to her to extrapolate from and use what she feels is good for social media.

Sharon says Vanessa's contract is at the end of this month. They spoke about the cash flow shortage when Sharon thought we were only getting \$13,000 for the fourth quarter. Vanessa is okay with not renewing her contract until mid April. Vanessa would prefer not to do social media, and Sharon would like to use her for website content. Sharon has three web pages she would like her to write that are going to be quas between when her contract ends and when we get another contract, so that we have content ready when the next Sherpa ad breaks. She will be involved with content marketing and our marketing team. We need to decide what content we want added to the website. Josie asks to clarify if Vanessa will not be doing our social media until the future, and Sharon says she may not. She really enjoys the content marketing but social media is a different hat. She'll do it if we have nobody else, but we may need to look for

someone else. Sharon reached out to Samantha and she sent a proposal, so that is something our marketing team needs to discuss. Karen asks if Vanessa is going to be doing the Wildflowers and Awesome Autumn. Sharon thinks the marketing team needs to make a decision on that. We need to make sure it's really a good return on investment.

Sharon asks Joe and Ellie if they're set to start handling stakeholder newsletters, and sending out other newsletters with direction from the marketing team. Joe says with direction, yes. Susan sees that education is under communications and assumes that's stakeholder education, or mini-summits. She decides she really needs to be on that team because we need a connection to Northwestern Plumas. Riccardo also volunteers to join. So we have Susan, Riccardo, Joe, and Ellie on Communications.

There still seems to be some confusion about the differences between Communications and Marketing. Josie would recommend that the Communications and Marketing teams be one in the same because there's gonna be so much crossover, and you really want to have all of your communications aligned, but she is open to being on both depending on the time requirement. If nothing else, she can perhaps advise by email on the communications team. Susan agrees, and thinks one should be a subset because we need our people who are planning things out to have the same focus. Katherine would agree that they are all under the Marketing umbrella. It's a real important component of growing and getting the message out that they're done consistently, and that there's some continuity with it. So that your messaging is the same across the board.

Riccardo says it sounds like most people are onboard with combining the two. Sharon agrees that Communications should be a subset of Marketing. We need to come up with a plan: we have the email and the newsletters, but then we have outside PR (which Katherine's been doing) under Marketing, and we have Vanessa with website development under Marketing.

To her, the Marketing Committee needs to get a plan together so that we know where we're moving forward and decisions can be made on how we want to spend money and not run in circles. But we do need somebody to take the newsletters (both stakeholders and visitors) over physically, monthly or quarterly.

Josie adds that generally speaking, emailing is a very niche professional skill that if you hire a freelancer who does only this, they will help to grow it in a way that is sustainable, but that's going to require the money. So if we're going to do it in house (by Joe and Ellie) it's time vs money. In the ideal world, she would recommend that we hire somebody to do this one specific thing for us (to the visitors) if the goal is to get them to take an action from the newsletter to grow our audience. We can probably pull it together ourselves with Joe and Ellie, but it is going to require a lot of time to be done correctly. So she would just recommend, if the budget allowed it, that we would hire an emailing freelancer to do that for us.

Susan says this sounds like a Marketing Committee discussion, and asks if Josie would suggest that they get together first (thinking of the Communications team as a subset) and lay out a strategy. It sounded like Riccardo would like to be part of that, so that could be the four of you plus Joe and Ellie for execution. Sharon likes this idea. Riccardo asks if we have money in the current budget for a freelancer, but it seems we don't currently have the resources to do that.

Josie thinks it could run about \$300-500 a month for someone to curate that newsletter and take emails off that are not engaging with us. There's this whole science behind email: cleaning up your email list while growing it and then connecting it to your website and your blog for your SEO.

Microzone Committee

11:33

Susan volunteers to be on the Microzone Committee and chair the Almanor region. Each region will need a chair because the regions will be vetting their own grants. We need our policies and procedures fine tuned because we need a reporting process to hear back from those we've granted money to. Janice will chair Quincy region. Karen states that we need to get a press release together for the newest Microzone RFP but we really need to get some procedures in place first. We did receive a detailed report from Quincy Chamber with the results from Sparkle and Groundhog Fever Fest, and what they found out was that it helped no lodging providers. So that's not what we wanted, but it's good to know that. She wants to give them credit for spending a lot of time talking to lodging providers to get that information. Susan said the same thing happened to Chili Cook off and we can report it at our next meeting. Riccardo attests that the Chamber has not contacted him about lodging providing. He knows that they do fill up, not as much Groundhogs but for Sparkle. Janice said they contacted her three times about it.

Sharon clarifies that Karen, Janice, and Susan will come up with policies and procedures for Microzones. Karen agrees that we should get something out pretty soon because we have people waiting.

Susan adds that the nationwide Apex Wild West Bass tournament is coming to the Almanor area May 11-13 and it's going to bring a lot of people up there (staff are coming up on the 10th). They're going to have a 15 member video staff and we're going to get the videos from it, so they're asking us to help put those people up. So if we can't convince our lodging providers to comp some rooms, we might want to throw some money at it, because it's a really important one. We have a long recovery coming up, and we have the Grebe Festival and Indian Valley has a Plumas Arts event.

Karen is going to Ireland on Thursday and can't commit to having that done by then, but feels these three events are really important, so she would hope we can pass those before we get all the procedures in place, and she would try to get it done in the next couple of weeks, but she knows these people don't want to wait. Susan adds that we also have the Loggers Jamboree coming up in June and the Plumas Arts event in the next six months. Karen said they turned that one in at the last RFP. Sharon directs to cut a check to Plumas Arts because they need to start marketing the event. Josie just met with them and knows that the \$1,000 is absolutely intended for marketing. Susan will get the contract out and get Robin to cut the check ASAP.

Karen wants to move forward with the Grebe Festival and the Bass Tournament since we have the applications, contracts, and guidelines. We just need to outline the reporting soon. Sharon asks if the application is open on the website. Susan reopened it.

Sharon says lodging providers are requesting that the Drunk Brush apply for a grant for the free concert series. Riccardo's assistant is working on that, and there are two other organizations involved in the series that could also be on it (Higher Elevation and Quincy Courtyard Suites). His assistant will apply ASAP as the Event Coordinator for the FreQuincy Music Series. Sharon sent her an email with the link to submit events on our website and gave her a link to the Shasta Cascade website for events. Riccardo says these events do bring people staying for the weekend, and he does book people to places like the Feather Bed and Pine Hill Motel.

Sharon says May 4th is Shasta Cascade Summit. Susan says to make sure you read the report that she submitted from the Visit California Summit. There was a lot of good stuff in there and Lauri Baker said she'll try to bring a lot of that to the Shasta Cascade Summit. Susan isn't sure if they are going to change their tagline from "California Dream Big" to "California, the Ultimate Playground" because she never saw any follow up about that. Her report is linked in the agenda, and some key takeaways were:

- Don't forget baby boomers because they're still a huge portion of those who are traveling with money, and they still use print advertising.
- The top trip motivators were really interesting, the yellow and the recharge being really important domestically.
- Visit Native California is becoming, and we have some unique opportunities because of our association with the Maidu here, and really trying to continue our collaboration with them is super important. The Loggers Jamboree is being put on by the Maidu Consortium for the second year in a row.
- Sustainable travel, which was inspiring.

Katherine adds that she's in touch with Visit California at least once a week, sending them updates. She had a conversation about some of the articles and the Maidu was one of the big ones, and she's on the committee for that event. Susan said Lauri Baker is excited that we're going to be taking part in Shasta Cascade. They talked about our representation from Plumas County and Lauri said to keep talking to them, because it's very possible a board seat will open up, and usually they offer board seats to those who have contributed money. Susan did a lot of networking at the Summit. She met Matthew Stone from Chico State, Associate Professor of Marketing and Fulbright scholar. He works for the World Food and Travel association, so thinks Katherine should get in contact with him. about. You know anything else we can do with food and travel.

The next board meeting is set for Monday, May 8th at either Plumas Bank in Greenville or the FRTA office at Quincy Collective.

Sharon motions to adjourn the meeting, Susan seconds. All in favor.

11:53