

## Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley December 10, 2015

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on December 10, 2015 at SYV Marriott, 555 McMurray Road, Buellton. The meeting began at 8:30am in a closed Executive Session to review the Executive Director, Shelby Sim. Board members present for the closed Executive Session included Jessy Osehan, President, Linda Johansen, Vice President, Bion Rice, Treasurer, Christine Forsyth, Secretary, Barry Prescott, James Colvin, Kady Fleckenstein and Tonya Davis. Linda Johansen stepped out momentarily after the Execution Session ended.

The meeting was opened to the public and called to order by President Jessy Osehan at 9:08 a.m. Jessy announced the review of Executive Director, Shelby Sim, was positive. Board members present included Jessy Osehan, President, Bion Rice, Treasurer, Christine Forsyth, Secretary, Barry Prescott, James Colvin, Kady Fleckenstein and Tonya Davis. Shelby Sim, Executive Director, and Danielle Laudon, Marketing & Communications Manager, were present. Members of the public present included Dr. Kenneth Harwood, Tracy Lavery Beard of the Solvang Chamber of Commerce, Tracy Farhad of Solvang Conference & Visitors Bureau, Amanda McBride of Grapeline, Phil Janney of Griffin Publishing, and Pamela Childs and Karen Davis of The Santa Ynez Valley Menu Guide.

Public comment was made by Dr. Harwood & Tracy Farhad; Dr. Harwood presented an economic report; Tracy Farhad thanked the VisitSYV board once more for supporting Julefest and gave an update on attendance during the promotion which began earlier in the month. Linda Johansen, Vice President, reentered the meeting during public comment at 9:12am.

Linda Johansen made a motion to approve the November 12<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting Minutes; Barry seconded. All in favor, except Kady Fleckenstein, who abstained due to absence at the November 12<sup>th</sup> meeting; the November 12<sup>th</sup> minutes were approved.

The board reviewed a grant request for the 2016 Garagiste Festival to be held February 12–15, 2016, which is a three day weekend. VisitSYV staff processed the grant through our matrix, and the recommended amount came out to \$3,000. Hoteliers on the board voiced that this weekend is an automatic sell out regardless of whether an event occurs in the valley. Linda made a motion that we approve the \$3,000 grant with the stipulation that they move it to a different weekend in 2017, otherwise VisitSYV will not provide further funding; Kady seconded, all in favor. A \$3,000 grant was approved for the Garagiste Festival.

Bion Rice provided the financial report, which included review of the November 2015 financials and projections for the remainder of 2015. We are on target to finish out the year in line with the 2015 budget, and Bion is delighted to have a blueprint and target budget for 2016 already in place.

Shelby Sim provided the Director Report, which included the following:

- Shelby provided a recap for the Wine Tourism Conference held in Loudon County, Virginia, where he was a speaker on a panel representing VisitSYV. Attending the conference, Shelby saw that we are moving in the right direction and doing well among other wine regions.
- Shelby provided a recap of the Destination Guide Launch at Buttonwood. The launch went well; delivery of guides was smooth; direct mailing has been completed; the guide is already on VisitSYV.com and overall feedback and reception has been fantastic.
- Shelby provided his activity report, which included updates on the Saturday Shuttle Service committee meetings; The county has reported they've used up all their funds on gas and rider attendance has been very low. Tracy Farhad commented that she still very much believes in the program, but it takes time for things like this to take off. Barry asked how the service has been advertised to date, and suggested more be done to promote the program. Kady commented that the pickup and drop-off hours don't work for many people and asked if we can expand the time; Shelby and Tracy noted we are at the mercy of the shuttle and the hours they can afford to run.

Shelby Sim presented a proposal to reallocate specific funds in the 2016 budget to allow for specific hotel tier promotions and also allow us to sponsor the Santa Barbara International Film Festival; specifically, Shelby requested to reduce VisitSYV's DVA Marketing Budget from \$250k to \$200k, moving \$30k to a hotel-tier-specific marketing budget, and \$20k to a sponsorship of the Santa Barbara International Film Festival. Creating a separate budget for hotel –tier-specific marketing would better allow all 35 TBID properties to benefit from a variety of marketing programs, as a one-size-fits-all model does not work for all properties; we have a range of properties, from budget, to midscale, to luxury. Kady made a motion to approve this reallocation; Christine seconded; all in favor. The motion was approved to reallocate funds.

Shelby Sim presented a proposal to become a sponsor of the Santa Barbara International Film Festival (SBIFF) at the \$15,000 level. As a sponsor, VisitSYV would furnish the VIP lounge at The Lobero Theater, where happy hours and seminars are presented to elite guests throughout the duration of the Festival. The SBIFF brings in over 90k attendees and this is a great opportunity to educate attendees and show them the Santa Ynez Valley is right over the hill and an excellent destination in itself. VisitSYV will also receive an on-screen ad to play before all screenings during the festival, and can promote the destination in the VIP Lobero Theater lounge. Linda made a motion that we provide \$15,000 for the sponsorship, and approve a \$5,000 budget to assist with additional merchandise giveaways and branding; Bion left during the discussion and was unable to vote on the motion; Kady seconded; all in favor, except Bion who was absent. The motion was approved to sponsor SBIFF for \$15,000 and allocate an additional \$5,000 in funds for giveaways at the festival.

Shelby Sim provided an update on VisitSYV's involvement with the Santa Ynez Valley Star, a new valley-wide print publication. VisitSYV will sponsor the event page in the print publication for \$400/month for a six month commitment. Aside from sponsoring the event page and having our logo in the paper, Shelby will also have an article and they will upload events onto our site.

Danielle Laudon announced the launch of a consumer email campaign. Last week, VisitSYV sent out a questionnaire to our email list to over 2,000 email addresses. This allowed us to re-introduce ourselves to a market of people who have requested information but may have never heard from us in the past. Initiating the process with a questionnaire allows us to gain insight into our visitors and improve the communications they receive from us. The official start of the consumer email campaign will begin in January.

Danielle Laudon presented the Website, DVA, and Marketing Update, and shared a preview of the SYV Restaurant Week 2016 Campaign creative.

Board comments: Shelby began board comments by wishing all a Merry Christmas and distributing gifts to the board, thanking them all for their contributions to VisitSYV. Shelby thanked Danielle for her organization and execution of the meetings. Christine and Kady both wished everyone a happy holiday. Barry noted he'd like to discuss promoting the Shuttle Service more; Karen from the SYV Menu Guide suggested the publication may be able to assist with the promotion. Danielle shared that she is proud to have had an excellent year with VisitSYV and is excited to launch new initiatives in 2016. James expressed gratitude for everyone's hard work for the year and commended the launch of the destination guide, noting the reception was packed. Tonya shared that Flying Flags will be having an "industry sleep-over" at the Resort on Saturday, allowing locals from the industry to experience the new Safari tents and the vintage trailers. Linda expressed her excitement for 2016, saying VisitSYV is on a roll and also reminded everyone to cherish time with family and friends during the holiday. Jessy is proud to have completed the year which had many unexpected events, commended VisitSYV staff for working well together and doing an amazing job for the brand in 2015.

Linda made a motion to adjourn, Barry seconded. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:02 am to the meeting of January 14, 2016, 9:00 a.m., SYV Marriott

Prepared by Danielle Laudon,  
Marketing & Communications Manager

Approved by Christine Forsyth,  
Secretary