

## Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley January 8, 2015

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on January 8, 2015 at SYV Marriott, 555 McMurray Road, Buellton. The meeting was called to order by President Mike Hendrick at 9:02 a.m. Board members present included Mike Hendrick, President, Linda Johansen, Vice President, Jessy Osehan, Secretary, Bion Rice, Treasurer, Sandra Hallmann, James Colvin and Kady Fleckenstein. Shelby Sim, Executive Director, and Danielle Laudon, Marketing & Communications Manager, were present. Dr. Kenneth Harwood, Susan Williams, Mayor Jim Richardson, Morgen McLaughlin, Kathy Vreeland, and Tracy Farhad were also present from the public.

Public comment was made; Mayor Richardson reported that Solvang should have more weight and significance in the Santa Ynez Valley Destination Guide. Richardson recommended the board put significance of Solvang in our literature in 2016. Dr. Harwood provided an economic report. Susan Williams, speaking as a resident and business owner in Solvang, reported that she does not feel Solvang was slighted in the 2015 Santa Ynez Valley Destination Guide. There were some things she would like improved upon, but that was not one of them. Tracy Farhad provided an updated report on the success of Solvang Julefest.

Minutes of the December 11<sup>th</sup> board meeting were approved (Linda made a motion, Jessy seconded, Sandra abstained, all others in favor).

Shelby Sim presented his Director's Report, and covered the following:

- VisitSYV staff is in the process of reviewing current billing and total cash flow for starting 2015. We are anticipating grant money from the county; Danielle Laudon has submitted all of the paperwork. We are also anticipating funds from Custom Media/SB Seasons for advertising sales from the 2014 Visitors Guide.
- Destination guide update: It has been very well received. Not all VisitSYV members were given the opportunity to advertise. Wandering Dog Wine Bar and The Good Life were both mentioned in two places in the guide, but not on the map. Jody from Wandering Dog Wine Bar provided feedback for having not been included on the map. Shelby would like to have membership fee waived for 2015 to make up for being left off of Solvang section and map. Kady Fleckenstein provided her feedback and recommended VisitSYV proceed with membership fees waived for the year for both Wandering Dog Wine Bar and The Good Life. James Colvin recommended using these locations for mixers as well. Sandra Hallman proposed an apology letter detailing how we plan to compensate for this year, and how we plan to correct for next year.
- DVA update: Solvang Conference and Visitors Bureau has committed for \$25k, Buellton has committed for \$25k, and Santa Barbara County Vintners Association has committed for \$10k, therefore we have a \$210k allotted budget for 2015 SYV Marketing Cooperative with DVA.
- TBID petition went out on January 7<sup>th</sup>. Shelby is confident we will overcome current obstacles. Many hotels who said no prior are on board now. Meeting with Doreen Farr again next week. She is fully aware of everything we have planned.
- Dave Pollock chose not to attend today's board meeting due to the 4 hour drive. Tim Snyder had to decline as his replacement, but would have loved to come on next year. Shelby has recommended Fess Parker's GM come on board in the meantime.

Bion Rice provided the financial report, and gave an update on the 2015 Budget Subcommittee. The subcommittee reviewed 2014 actuals and prior year, and thought out what changes we would like made for 2015. Putting \$20k into the 2015 budget for education has been made a priority. Shelby and Danielle will be providing the board with a revised budget for review. The board will have until the next meeting to review the budget and come up with questions or recommendations before voting to approve the 2015 budget at the February 12<sup>th</sup> board meeting.

The board reviewed the revised grant application from Solvang Conference and Visitors Bureau for the 2015 Taste of Solvang. Tracy Farhad handed out a new revised online marketing strategy. Web and social media is a 3 month campaign. They will invest depending upon how much they have in their budget. Solvang CVB sends e-blasts to groups that previously attended events like Taste of Solvang. Linda recommended that we should support this event more than \$3,000 because there is a new company that's been hired to make a difference and bring the event to the next level. Linda made a motion that we provide a \$4,000 grant and requested that Solvang CVB look into a push notification app which Mike Hendrick has recommended. James seconded. Sandra asked if mobile is incorporated in digital; the answer is yes. Jessy commented that we still need to make sure we have enough to support other upcoming events, like the Garagiste Festival. All in favor to grant \$4,000 to Solvang CVB for Taste of Solvang.

Shelby Sim presented the by-laws revision with staggered terms. Jessy made a motion to approve the changes in the by-laws. Sandra seconded, all in favor. Changes will be submitted to the state.

Danielle Laudon presented an update on Restaurant Week, noting we have over 20 restaurants across the Santa Ynez Valley participating and are also incorporating local wineries and tasting rooms into the program. The advertising campaign includes digital advertising via Facebook, targeting key demographics for overnight stays including the LADMA and greater San Francisco area, as well as printed advertising via posters, postcards, and a print ad running for 3 weeks in The Independent.

Danielle Laudon presented the website, analytics and DVA update. After seeing the Interests data via Google Analytics, Kady recommended we create a "movie buff" movie map, so that visitors may take self-guided tours of famous locations in the Santa Ynez Valley.

Board comments: Jessy is excited for 2015, and happy that Shelby and Danielle are part of drafting the 2015 budget, as they brought to the table plans in store for advertising and trade shows in 2015. Linda is thrilled we were able to survive and progress in 2014, noting that the level of professionalism attained is remarkable. Sandra is looking forward to 2015. Kady says it's exciting to see the many subcommittees forming, and that having the hoteliers so involved with promoting the valley is so important. She commented that the digital data and how it changes each month gets us excited and motivated for the year. Danielle noted we have started our partnership with Touring & Tasting for 2015 and there is a beautiful 4 page spread in the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary issue touring each of our six communities that make up the Santa Ynez Valley. Shelby noted we need to have a way to distribute the 2015 SYV Destination Guide for those who request it on the website. We'll look at how we can make that happen with the 2015 budget. Mike noted that Dave Pollock has helped change the organization over the last year and a half. He made good points and brought a lot of important change to the organization. Mike also wanted to encourage the board and all of our supporters to rally hoteliers and VRBOs to pay attention to the TBID renewal, learn about our progress and support the TBID.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30am to the meeting of February 12, 9:00 a.m., SYV Marriott

Prepared by Danielle Laudon,  
Marketing & Communications Manager

Approved by Jessy Osehan,  
Secretary