

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley May 14, 2015

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on May 14, 2015 at SYV Marriott, 555 McMurray Road, Buellton. The meeting began in closed session at 8:30am to review the Executive Director. The meeting was called to order and opened to the public at 9:05am by President Mike Hendrick. Board members present included Mike Hendrick, President, Linda Johansen, Vice President, Jessy Osehan, Secretary, Christine Forsyth, Sandra Hallmann, James Colvin, and Kady Fleckenstein. Shelby Sim, Executive Director, and Danielle Laudon, Marketing & Communications Manager, were present. Morgen McLaughlin of the Santa Barbara County Vintners Association, Holly Cline of the SYV Artists Guild, and Dr. Kenneth Harwood were present for public comment.

During closed session, the board reviewed Executive Director, Shelby Sim. The board approved a 5% increase in fiscal year for 2015, and also approved a retreat dinner to celebrate the TBID renewal.

Public comment was made by Morgen McLaughlin, who thanked the board for grant provided for the Vintners Festival. Nearly 2,000 people were in attendance, and grant money was used for a new media buy with LA Weekly. Vintners sent a consumer survey and asked attendees where they stayed; 70% of the survey responded, which was 120 people. Nearly 70% of the attendees who responded to the survey stayed in the Santa Ynez Valley. The Santa Barbara Vintners Foundation has a new event called the Vintners 5 miler, taking place Saturday, July 25th. The next Celebration of Harvest will take place Oct 9 – 12th at the Santa Ines Mission. Morgen commended the SpeedRFP enterprise form on VisitSYV.com, stating they secured stays for sommeliers at both Hamlet Inn & Royal Copenhagen thanks to the form. They will be hosting sommeliers again in April 2016. Morgen also reminded the board their website has a classified section with 20 openings, both in tasting room & administrative roles. Affiliated business partners can also post in Vintners' classified section. Dr. Harwood also provided an economic report. Most notable was that direct sales for wine are up significantly.

Minutes of the April 9, 2015 board meeting were approved (Linda made a motion, Sandra seconded, all in favor except Jessy who abstained due to absence at April meeting).

The board did not review a grant application for the Macaroni & Cheese Festival, as the event moved to a new venue outside the parameters of the Santa Ynez Valley, and the request no longer qualified.

The board reviewed the grant application submitted for The Los Olivos Quick Draw Festival taking place August 2015. The requested amount was \$3,500, while the recommended amount was \$2,000. Holly Cline was present on behalf of the SYV Artists Guild and talked about how funds are used to reach an audience outside of Santa Barbara County. Cammy Pinoli entered the meeting at 9:26am. Christine and Cammy both noted they have received hotel stays from this event. Jessy made a motion to award a grant of \$2,000; Christine seconded. Jessy amended the motion to award them the grant plus a link on VisitSYV.com to help raise awareness and traffic for the event. All in favor. A \$2,000 grant and link was approved.

Shelby Sim provided the Director Report which included:

- Publication Update, Spring Networking Reception Recap, Grow Your Community Expo Recap
- Shelby thanked the board for taking time to review him in the executive session, and looks forward to working on any improvements.
- We have cut costs on publication in the budget by eliminating Oxnard and Pismo centers from distribution, which were not displaying our materials; we also cut down to 70k copies instead of 90k copies to reduce cost.
- Community Expo recap: Shelby, Danielle, Sandra and James all had a lot of fun running our VisitSYV booth. There were great vendors and entertainment, but we did not see much public attendance.

Jessy Osehan provided an update on Brown Act Training. She's currently looking into finding a course so that we can get certification. She's also currently in communication with the City of Solvang to find out what training resources they have.

Mike Hendrick provided a financial report update since Bion Rice, Treasurer, could not make today's meeting.

Shelby Sim proposed a revised membership structure in which VisitSYV does not charge for membership, arguing that VisitSYV should be the only comprehensive valley website. Danielle shared concerns about the time, labor and added cost of doing so, as well as concern for a reduced quality of web content. Sandra asked how much time it would free up. The consensus was that it would take up more time and that VisitSYV cannot spend TBID funds to put other businesses on the website. Shelby and Danielle will instead review and propose a new membership price that will cover the cost of time and labor for website maintenance for non-TBID/at-large VisitSYV members.

VisitSYV staff proposed a digital display buy at Santa Barbara Airport. Shelby and Danielle recommended VisitSYV purchase ad space on 5 screens at \$403.75*/ month, which reflects a 15% discount off the promotional rate for VisitSYV's non-profit status. Jessy made a motion we purchase the 5 screens at 403.75/month. Sandra asked if we could up to more screens at the introductory rate if we choose to at a later time. Linda seconded. All in favor. A one year agreement with the SB Airport for a digital ad buy at \$403.75/month was approved.

The Logo Subcommittee, consisting of James Colvin, Kady Fleckenstein and Christine Forsyth, provided an update on brand packaging quotes from Croff Creative and Blind Tiger. The subcommittee recommended VisitSYV proceed with Croff Creative for a logo and brand redesign. Linda made a motion to go with Croff Creative at the \$7,500 quote; Jessy seconded. All in favor.

Danielle Laudon provided a website, analytics, DVA, marketing & CCTC update. Since the website has now been running for a full year, Danielle was able to provide a year over year comparison. Traffic has continued to increase and organic search traffic has increased most significantly, pointing to improved Google Ranking authority and SEO. Danielle will attend the IPW travel show in Orlando, Florida in early June as part of the CCTC booth.

Danielle Laudon, Jessy Osehan, and Kady Fleckenstein provided a Craft Beer Subcommittee update. In place of a May 2015 SYV Craft Beer Month campaign, Danielle has been working with DVA on crafting a media invite for a Craft Beer Tour of the Santa Ynez Valley. The subcommittee sees huge potential for increased spending and overnight stays from the Craft Beer crowd. The subcommittee recommends hotels team up with Casa Dumetz, Figueroa Mountain Brewing Co and Barrelworks to create packages. Santa Barbara hotels are doing tasting packages & having a bottle in the room upon arrival. The committee also discussed bringing on a craft beer panel with an educational component. Beer in wine country is a niche they don't have in San Diego or Napa, and something the committee will continue to pursue.

Board comments:

Sandra announced Wine Valley Inn was on the UP channel recently. Kady is very excited about the Craft Beer Committee ideas because it's a great niche we can fill. Cammy announced Fess Parker Wine Country Inn & Spa had a garden party in their new renovated space. There will be an industry event. Jessy announced her loan was approved for a building on Atterdag, and will be a new hotel in June. Mike Hendrick provided his deep thanks for support, and announced his last day on the board and as president will be on June 11th. The board can elect a president at the June 11th board meeting. Mike will be supporting Jessy for that position. Marriott is about to go through 9 month renovation, half the hotel will be closed, and Mike can be gone for months at a time. Linda saved her comment for last, and wanted to thank Mike for his leadership, determination, professionalism, and sheer guts. It was a privilege and pleasure to serve with Mike and

promote the valley that we love. Jessy will have Linda's support for her vote, and agrees that Mike has earned the right to step away for a while.

Christine made a motion to adjourn, Jessy seconded. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:32am to the meeting of June 11, 2015, 9:00 a.m., SYV Marriott

Prepared by Danielle Laudon,
Marketing & Communications Manager

Approved by Jessy Osehan,
Secretary