

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

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on October 8, 2015 at SYV Marriott, 555 McMurray Road, Buellton. The meeting was called to order by President Jessy Osehan at 9:00 a.m. Board members present included Jessy Osehan, President, Linda Johansen, Vice President, Bion Rice, Treasurer, Barry Prescott, Cammy Pinoli, James Colvin, and Tonya Davis. Shelby Sim, Executive Director, and Danielle Laudon, Marketing & Communications Manager, were present. Members of the public present included Dr. Kenneth Harwood, Stacey Otte and Laura Carloni of Wildling Museum, Tracy Farhad of Solvang Conference & Visitors Bureau, Kathy Vreeland of Buellton Chamber & Visitors Bureau, Karen Steinwachs and Nicole Carnevale of Buttonwood Winery, Dave Pollock of The Carlton Group and Dave Henrey of Hot Shots Extreme Run.

Public comment was made by Kathy Vreeland & Dr. Harwood; Kathy thanked the board for VisitSYV's Wine & Chili Festival grant, and announced they are still looking for cooks for the October 25th event; she also thanked board members and Shelby for supporting the bowling alley to be built in Buellton, and announced that although the planning commission has approved the bowling alley, there are two neighbors who are appealing the ruling. Dr. Harwood presented an economic report.

The board reviewed the Santa Ynez Valley Historical Museum's grant application submitted for the 31st Annual Vaquero Show & Sale taking place in November 2015. The requested amount was \$4,000, while the recommended amount was \$3,500. Linda made a motion to provide the \$3,500 as suggested; Bion seconded; all in favor. A \$3,500 grant was approved.

The board reviewed Dave Henrey's grant application submitted for the Hot Shots Extreme Run taking place in November 2015. The requested amount was \$4,000, while the recommended amount was \$1,500. Dave Henrey spoke on behalf of the event, and asked how they can do better in the future to receive more support from VisitSYV. Shelby noted that non-profits who create events and apply for grants directly receive more support for their events per the VisitSYV Grants Program. Dave Henrey will be taking over the non-profit, Simply Aloha, next year, so the non-profit itself will be able to run the event in the future with Dave at the helm. Though they expect 1,200 attendees, the bulk of the people come from Santa Barbara. The event is marketed to firefighters, and they do have a large group that comes from San Francisco for the weekend. Shelby advised that increasing the number of room nights and extended outreach beyond Santa Barbara County will get Dave a better grant recommendation in the future. Linda made a motion to support the Hot Shots Extreme Run with a \$1,500.00 grant and encouraged growth for next year for more support; Cammy seconded. James Colvin asked about the location of the event, and whether it was an easily accessible location. This year's event is at Camp 4, with a large after party planned at the Maverick in Santa Ynez; in prior years it was at Chamberlin ranch. After no further discussion, all in favor, except Bion Rice who momentarily recused himself for a work matter. A \$1,500 grant was approved.

The board reviewed Solvang Conference & Visitors Bureau's grant application submitted for Solvang Julefest Celebration, taking place December 4th, 2015 – January 8th, 2016. The requested amount was \$4,000, while the recommended amount was \$3,500. Tracy Farhad spoke on behalf of the CVB about the event. Both local and out of market advertising will take place. The event has become a family tradition for out of towners. Linda noted she has clients who come to her hotel year after year for the event. Bion returned during the discussion. Linda made a motion to support Julefest with a \$3,500 grant; James seconded; All in favor. A \$3,500 grant was approved. Tracy thanked the board and noted that as of last year's promotion, the month of December now has an occupancy rate in the high 70s.

Dave Pollock provided a presentation on the Spirit of the Valley Education Program, to debut in January 2016. The program is designed to educate the frontline staff of all Santa Ynez Valley businesses, ensuring visitors have a great time while here, and then return for future visits. The seminar will take place 5 times a year in 3 hour sessions (one seminar

per town, except Los Olivos and Ballard will have one joint seminar). A 50 page manual will be provided for each participant along with a best practices pocket card and a register/front desk card. Each attendee will be eligible for the Spirit of the Valley award; VisitSYV will ask managers to nominate their employees who have attended; an awards ceremony will follow next November.

Kady Fleckenstein stepped into the meeting at 9:20am during Pollock's presentation. There will be a marketing kick-off and registration drive. The seminars will be held in the months of January, March, May, June, and September. Bion commended Dave for creating the program, and Jessy thanked all education subcommittee members for their contributions.

Linda Johansen made a motion to approve the September 10th Board Meeting Minutes; Barry seconded. All in favor, except Kady and Tonya, who abstained due to absence at the September 10th meeting; the September 10th minutes were approved. After the September 10th board meeting, the meeting minutes for June 11th, July 16th and August 13th were sent to board members by Shelby Sim individually for an electronic vote. Jessy announced the results of the electronic vote; all minutes were approved.

Bion Rice provided the financial report, which included review of the September 2015 financials and projections for the remainder of 2015. Shelby will send the 2016 draft budget that the budget subcommittee has worked on to the board in two weeks for independent review; then the board can vote to adopt or make changes to the budget at the November 12th board meeting.

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

- VisitSYV has committed to a KEYT holiday seasonal ad buy after the success of our 2014 thirty second commercial campaign.
- Shelby provided a destination guide update, and announced ad sales are going well for Griffin Publishing. We were going to do 70k copies of the 2016 guide, but since we are partnering with Solvang and will have a greater need for distribution and a larger audience, we are back to 90k copies.
- Update on trade memberships: VisitSYV has wine in the office which is being used for raffles for Chamber Mixers, along with other special events. We are also donating 6 bottles as a sponsorship for the upcoming Central Coast Tourism Council membership mixer and workshop.
- SYV Merchandise: We will be putting our new logo on merchandise and giveaway items, including hats, t-shirts, and more.
- SEO & FSC Update: VisitSYV contacted FSC about SEO recommendations; FSC was concerned VisitSYV was in breach of contract; VisitSYV confirmed with legal counsel that VisitSYV is not in breach of contract. VisitSYV and FSC will work together to find a resolution.
- TBID Update: VisitSYV now receives monthly TBID payments, which will help with our cash flow.

Jessy Osehan provided a 10 minute tutorial on basic Brown Act procedures. Jessy's tutorial provided an overview of some important points, including limits on email exchanges, rules for special meetings, and the rules against chain conversations. Tracy Farhad commented on the difference between standing committees and ad-hoc committees, noting that ad-hoc committees must have a start and end date, while standing committees must be open and post agendas. End dates for current Ad-hoc committees will be announced at the November 12th board meeting.

VisitSYV staff made a recommendation for a 4 page spread in the 2016 Visit Santa Barbara Visitors Guide for \$12,000. Last year VisitSYV purchased 7 pages for \$20,000. We have worked with VisitSB to confirm there will be a clear SYV section in 2016 rather than having a separate Santa Barbara Wine Country section, which included Santa Ynez Valley tasting rooms last year. VisitSYV staff recommended we be listed as "The Santa Ynez Valley in Santa Barbara Wine Country". Linda made a motion to approve \$12,000 for the Santa Ynez Valley four page spread; James seconded. Karen Steinwachs made public comment and suggested we use the phrase "the heart of Santa Barbara Wine Country". All in favor of the \$12,000 advertorial buy. The ad purchase was approved for the 2016 Visit Santa Barbara Visitors Guide.

VisitSYV staff recommended a 2 page advertorial in both the Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter issues of Touring & Tasting. The total buy would be \$16,500.00, with 50% paid in November 2015 and 50% paid in January 2016.

Last year, VisitSYV committed to a 4 page spread in a single issue. This year, we decided it would be better to do a 2 page spread in each issue. Shelby has heard from some hoteliers that they believe VisitSYV only takes care of certain hotel segments. VisitSYV currently advertises as a "catch all" for all TBID paying properties. Shelby suggested in the coming year we do specific hotel segment advertising to better serve the different types of properties (i.e. boutique properties will be promoted in one advertorial, while discount properties will be promoted in another advertorial or coupon advertisement). Touring & Tasting would be a nice fit for our premier B&B and smaller boutique hotels. Linda made a motion to approve the \$16,500 for 2 separate 2 page advertorial spreads; Barry seconded; all in favor. A \$16,500.00 advertorial agreement with Touring & Tasting for 2 issues was approved.

Danielle Laudon presented the Website, DVA, and Marketing Update, which included review of the DVA Campaign & a marketing update. Danielle did not review SEO or web trends as improvements via SEO are currently on hold.

Board comments: Bion is thrilled to roll out the education program; it's been a long time coming and we're very proud of what we have to present. Cammy is also grateful for the education program and feels it will be an asset to the community. James noted this Spirit of the Valley program could be the best thing VisitSYV has ever provided to the community. Barry commented that while there has been a lot of turnover in our community, these employees usually go from one business to the next, so if they go through our Education program, we're still educating a member of our frontline which will be a long lasting contribution to the valley. Kady would like to meet with Shelby and Danielle about marketing for 2016. Tonya is looking forward to the education program and wants to see the excitement sustained. As a charter board member, Linda is proud of how far the organization has come, and is grateful to have both Shelby and Danielle's individual strengths in addition to working together as a team. Kady added that she is thrilled VisitSYV staff is making business decisions based on best practices. Shelby announced he will be attending and speaking on a panel at the Wine Tourism Council, and also announced we have a Co-Op opportunity in Westways magazine which we will be offering up to our members. Danielle announced she will be attending the Central Coast Tourism Council Mixer and Workshop next week, and is excited to contribute to the council's website subcommittee and take what she learns from that organization back to VisitSYV. Bion added that we have tied up a lot of our loose ends with subcommittees this year; we have finished up with the education project, the new logo, and will be done shortly with the budget subcommittee. Bion asked that we close these committees officially at the next board meeting. Jessy added some final words, commending Shelby's ability to find ad space and bargains, thanking the logo subcommittee for a beautiful new logo, and commenting on how professional the organization has become.

Linda made a motion to adjourn, Cammy seconded; all in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:39am to the meeting of November 12, 2015, 9:00 a.m., SYV Marriott

Prepared by Danielle Laudon,
Marketing & Communications Manager

Approved by Linda Johansen,
Vice President