



VisitSYV.com

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley Meeting, July 16, 2015

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley (VisitSYV) held a board meeting on July 16, 2015 at SYV Marriott, 555 McMurray Road, Buellton. The meeting was called to order by President Jessy Osehan at 9:01 a.m. Board members present included Jessy Osehan, President, Linda Johansen, Vice President, Christine Forsyth, Barry Prescott, and Tonya Davis for Dan Baumann. Shelby Sim, Executive Director, and Danielle Laudon, Marketing & Communications Manager, were present. Dr. Kenneth Harwood, Tracy Farhad, Kathy Vreeland, and Carole Bloom were present for public comment.

Jessy re-ordered the agenda and moved the request to approve June minutes above the line item calling for a vote for a new VisitSYV Secretary.

Dr. Harwood provided an economic report. Kathy Vreeland announced the recent ground breaking ceremony for the new hotel moving into Buellton. The new property is hopeful to open by Labor Day of next Year. Kathy thanked VisitSYV for contributing to and attending the Buellton Chamber mixer on Wednesday evening. The Wine & Chili Fest is coming up in October and Kathy hopes to have VisitSYV as a glass sponsor. Tracy Farhad thanked VisitSYV for being part of the Clean Air Express partnership and launch. Tracy thanked the VisitSYV Board for allowing the Solvang Conference & Visitors Bureau to purchase the back cover of the 2016 Destination Guide and have a special Solvang section by the back cover in lieu of their own separate visitors guide. Tracy is thrilled there will be one visitors guide for the year, and thanked both Shelby and Linda for their work on making this happen. Tracy also thanked Danielle for her work on behalf of VisitSYV at the 2015 IPW trade show in Orlando, noting she was a great booth partner and it was a pleasure working with her. The Special Olympics World Games is coming and Solvang will be the host town for the Denmark delegation next week. We are all invited to the picnic in the park on Wednesday with the entire delegation.

Jessy welcomed both Barry Prescott & Tonya Davis for Dan Baumann to the board.

Approval of the June 11th Annual and Regular Board Meetings was postponed to the meeting of August 13, 2015.

The Board of Directors must vote to fill the open seat of VisitSYV Secretary. Linda made a motion to nominate Christine Forsyth; Barry seconded. Jessy called for a roll call vote: Linda: Yes; Christine Yes; Barry: Yes; Tonya: Yes; Jessy: Yes. The motion passed. Christine Forsyth is the new VisitSYV Secretary.

The board reviewed the Los Alamos Valley Men's Club's grant application submitted for Los Alamos Old Days taking place in September 2015. The requested amount was \$4,000, while the recommended amount was \$3,000. Carole Bloom spoke on behalf of the Los Alamos Valley Men's Club. Carole's goal is to reach out to our 5 additional communities and add links to their new website [LosAlamosValleyOldDays.com](http://LosAlamosValleyOldDays.com), inviting visitors to find additional hotels in the Santa Ynez Valley to stay overnight. Carol also presented new creative and posters, highlighting the upcoming changes to the annual event. Linda made a motion to approve the recommended grant amount of \$3,000; Christine seconded. All in favor. A \$3,000 grant was approved.

The board reviewed a revised grant application from the Solvang Festival Theater for the Jazz Series & fundraising concert. VisitSYV originally reviewed and provided a grant to Solvang Festival Theater in the amount of \$2,000 based on the original concert dates provided. The fundraising concert has now secured an off-season, midweek date of Thursday, October 8th, which would increase the recommended amount by \$1,000. Linda made a motion to provide an additional \$1,000.00 grant to the Solvang Festival Theater. Christine seconded. All in favor. A \$1,000.00 grant was approved.

In the absence of Treasurer, Bion Rice, Shelby provided the financial report, which included review of the June financials and projections for the remainder of the year.

Shelby Sim provided his Director's Report which included:

- TBID Update: The new TBID contract began on July 1st. We will begin receiving monthly TBID checks, and are now collecting \$2.50 per room, an additional 50 cents.
- Shelby and Danielle have reviewed the current membership structure and benefits and will be keeping the price the same.
- Shelby has found a Brown Act Training webinar and presentation for VisitSYV Staff and Board. Shelby and Jessy will provide training off-site in a 3 hour retreat. We have a tentative date of Thursday, August 20th from 2-5pm at a location to be determined.
- The 1st Annual Vintners 5 Mile takes place next Saturday at Sanford. Linda, Christine, and Jessy may be interested in running the race as part of a VisitSYV team.
- Shuttle Service Update: The launch day was a success. Important town representatives and press attended.
- Scarecrow Fest: Solvang 3rd Wednesday is still managing the Scarecrow Fest. VisitSYV has committed to helping with the towns of Los Alamos, Los Olivos, and Santa Ynez. There are group costs to participate, which will be less than \$500 each.
- We are looking into purchasing reports from Smith Travel & Research as we don't have occupancy rates. Tracy Farhad advised VisitSYV go to the City of Solvang website and look under forms for occupancy rates for Solvang. Kathy Vreeland noted Buellton has between 70-80% occupancy rates and should have them available on their site as well. PKF consulting also provides reports, which Visit Santa Barbara uses.
- LA PR Trip Update: Shelby traveled with Justin Yax of DVA and Morgen McLaughlin of Santa Barbara County Vintners, and cannot emphasize enough how impactful the in-house visits are. They met with LA Times, OC Register, LA Parent, Westways/AAA, and Golf California.
- We will set a Networking Reception date at Fess Parker Winery via an email survey to board members.
- Trip Advisor DigMe LA Digital Seminar recap: Shelby and Danielle attended a seminar sponsored by Trip Advisor in LA, which focused on emerging and alternate forms of paid media.

VisitSYV must decide whether to renew the SpeedRFP enterprise form currently available on VisitSYV.com. The annual renewal cost is \$6,480 to list 27 properties that have currently given VisitSYV permission to be listed. Christine Forsyth noted that Ballard Inn receives a few, but must decline most RFPs instantly as they are not a match. Linda Johansen also echoed these sentiments for King Frederik and Pea Soup Andersens Inn. Barry noted it is not a favorable service for The Landsby. Jessy noted that while the service has a professional look for our website, we need a better way to service weddings and group bookings. Christine would rather see the money being spent to create something else on our website. Tracy Farhad recommended an enhanced listing on Cvent as an alternate. The board agreed to shelf this action item until the next month's board meeting after seeking further input from other hotel properties.

Jessy Osehan and Danielle Laudon created the following proposed revision to the bylaws: proposed revision mandates that all Board of Director positions may only be held by member businesses with a brick and mortar location within the TBID boundaries. Christine made a motion to accept the bylaws revision as stated. Linda seconded. All in favor.

Danielle Laudon provided a presentation and review of current VisitSYV.com web trends, SEO reporting, the DVA campaign & a marketing update. In reviewing upcoming planned PR visits, Jessy recommended we capitalize on these visits and ask hosted writers to do social media takeovers.

Christine presented a logo subcommittee update. The committee has been working with Stephanie Croff and is excited by the direction established after seeing first drafts of a few different logo concepts. The subcommittee will complete another session with Stephanie prior to the next board meeting and share another update.

Board Comments: Linda gave a warm welcome to Barry and Tonya, saying it's an exciting time to be on the board of VisitSYV. Christine mentioned she drove into town at 11pm recently and saw the hotels were full; she'd like to think VisitSYV has a lot to do with that. Barry is happy to be a new board member; he has been in the valley since November, and has been in hotels for 18 years. Tonya has been in the valley a year and a half, and has a deep love for the area; she's very happy to be here and represent Flying Flags and Dan Baumann. Jessy thanked both Barry and Tonya for being here and for what they're doing with their properties. As her first meeting as president, she's very excited and hopes it will be fun from here on out.

Linda moved to adjourn, Christine seconded; all in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:17 am.

Adjournment to meeting of August 13, 2015, 9:00 a.m., SYV Marriott

Prepared by Danielle Laudon,  
Marketing & Communications Manager

Approved by Christine Forsyth,  
Secretary