

## Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley January 12th, 2017

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on January 12th, 2017 at The Landsby, 1576 Mission Drive, Solvang. Vice President Barry Prescott opened the meeting to public comment only at 9:02 a.m. Board members present included Barry Prescott, Vice President, Bion Rice, Treasurer, and Cammy Pinoli. Shelby Sim, Executive Director, and Danielle Laudon, Director of Marketing, were present. Members of the public present included Dr. Kenneth Harwood, Vincent Solario, Marisa Yott, Bill Henderson, Kathy Vreeland, Taylor Reaume, Didiayer Snyder, Tracy Farhad, Anna Ferguson-Sparks, and Sherrie FitzGerald.

Public comment was made by Dr. Harwood, Tracy Farhad and Kathy Vreeland. Dr. Harwood presented an economic report. Tracy Farhad provided a report on the success of Julefest, and announced an upcoming intro class to the Chinese language at Allan Hancock College's Solvang campus. Kathy Vreeland announced that the Buellton Visitors Bureau promoted SYV Restaurant Week via their billboard off Highway 101, and shared new business developments in Buellton. Board members Randy Pace and Jim Rice entered during public comment.

Barry officially called the meeting to order at 9:12am.

To fill the opening for a Solvang board member position, Cammy made a motion to ratify and welcome Sherrie FitzGerald of Alisal Guest Ranch & Resort to the board; Randy seconded, all in favor. Sherrie joined the meeting as an official board member.

Randy Pace made a motion to approve the December 8, 2016 minutes as presented; Jim Rice seconded; all in favor. The December 8, 2016 minutes were approved.

The board reviewed a grant request and glass sponsorship for the Wine & Chili Fest presented by the Buellton Visitors Bureau & Chamber of Commerce, March 19, 2017; the requested amount is \$3,000. VisitSYV staff processed the grant, and the recommended amount came out to \$3,000. Kathy Vreeland presented on behalf of the Buellton Visitors Bureau and described improvements they will make to this year's layout. The festival will have wine, beer and chili vendors all intermingled instead of sectioned off. Jim made a motion to approve a \$3,000 grant and glass sponsorship; Cammy seconded. Bion asked if this was the same grant amount we provided last year, which Danielle confirmed. All in favor. The \$3,000 Wine & Chili Fest grant and glass sponsorship was approved. Kathy thanked the board for their support.

Bion Rice presented the current financials.

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

- Staffing: Danielle Laudon has been promoted from Marketing & Communications Manager to Director of Marketing; we have also hired a new part-time employee, Marisa Yott.
- Data Collection Project: we are still in the implementation phase of this project.
- Jackrabbit update: The team at Jackrabbit has supplied VisitSYV with the first steps. The project is temporarily on hold as we complete the SYV Restaurant Week promotion on our website.
- Interview for Restaurant Week: Shelby was interviewed by Mary Ann Norbom at SYV News for Restaurant Week. The interview lasted over an hour, and she may be covering far more than the promotion. We also purchased a "sticky" from SYV News to promote Restaurant Week.
- Solvang map: The Solvang CVB has been printing a Solvang map from the Destination Guide as opposed to handing out the complete publication. Our guide committee previously agreed not to print the maps separately because our advertisers in the guide do not benefit and Griffin Publishing is concerned. Solvang CVB is asking for original files to hand out quality maps instead. Tracy spoke on behalf of the CVB to explain why, and noted they printed and distributed maps this summer as well. They are printing 80,000 copies. Shelby wanted to get a feel for the board's thoughts on this.

- Activity Report for month of December

Shelby presented an overview of our sponsorship of the Santa Barbara International Film Festival (SBIFF), including the opportunities VisitSYV has for brand awareness and a detailed list of benefits. Shelby said he'd like to get the board down to the festival more often this year to experience it firsthand. Shelby has requested that if board members do attend and stay for a celebrity tribute, they will have reserved seats. Some of the benefits include a full screen ad before all screenings including the tributes, and a 30 second commercial to play before each screening at the world cinema film sidebar series. VisitSYV has already placed \$50,000 in the 2017 budget for this event. Shelby would like to have the board approve a \$25,000 level sponsorship, with the remaining \$25,000 going towards the cost of outfitting the VisitSYV lounge. Jim made a motion to approve the \$50,000 budget plan, Cammy seconded; all in favor after no further discussion. The outlined \$50,000 budget was approved.

Shelby requested the February board meeting take place February 16<sup>th</sup> in order to avoid conflict with SBIFF. Sherrie made a motion to approve the new date; Randy seconded, all in favor. The next VisitSYV Board Meeting will take place Thursday, February 16, 2017.

VisitSYV has been given the opportunity to expand on Visit Santa Barbara's \$15,000 sponsorship commitment at the 2017 Visit California Travel Outlook. Shelby recommends a \$5,000 sponsorship. The Travel Outlook took place in San Francisco last year, and the fact that it's in Santa Barbara for 2017 is a huge opportunity for VisitSYV. The Buellton Visitors Bureau has already committed to \$2,500. Linda as president has also requested to attend, and it was just shy of \$500 to cover her attendance. Jim rice made a motion to approve VisitSYV's \$5,000 sponsorship, Sherrie seconded. All in favor. The sponsorship was approved.

Last year, VisitSYV discussed hosting a meeting for hotel managers and owners only to work on the disconnect between hoteliers. We'd like to schedule a date for that networking event. VisitSYV would like to host it at Hotel Corque, but if not, Alisal has also offered to host. Shelby suggested a March or April date. It would be a happy hour reception and should not cost more than \$1,500. Randy recommended a March date before the hotels get into the busy season. Shelby will follow-up via email seeking dates.

Danielle Laudon presented the Website, DVA, and Marketing Update which included updates on the DVA ad campaign, restaurant week promotion, status of SEO, and recent PR successes. Danielle will forward the board the new 6 page spread on the Santa Ynez Valley that she secured in Social Life Magazine, along with today's presentation.

Bion presented the January – December 2017 budget in full detail. Randy asked about revenue noting some changes that need to be made, Shelby will review to ensure the total budget is accurate. Randy also pointed out that payroll expenses need to be adjusted to reflect the increases that were agreed upon in December.

Board comments: Jim Rice talked about the current improvements they're making at Santa Ynez Inn, and highlighted a new cycling event called the Gran Fondo which will increase stays in 2017; Shelby added to that, noting this is going to be an incredible racing event and we will be happy to sponsor in November 2017; Jim Rice thinks Solvang CVB printing the maps is a great idea; Jim asked if our guides will be at SBIFF, and Shelby confirmed we will be filling 500 bags with guides and filling 30 VIP bags with swag; Jim also asked if we could have our guides available at WOPN which takes place March 6<sup>th</sup>. Cammy shared that they are in renovation for the restaurant, and are hoping to open by April; Chef John Cox has been great to work with and is going on a BBQ tour through Texas; "The Bear and Star" is the name of the new restaurant and will serve ranch cuisine. Bion noted that Valentine's Day falls on a Tuesday which is splitting up Presidents Day and Valentine's Day weekend. The board is welcome to attend an event he will be hosting at Sunstone the weekend prior to Valentine's Day; regarding Spirit of the Valley, Bion hopes all will be present for the awards ceremony/annual meeting, as we are drumming up excitement and reviving our hospitality industry by acknowledging their professionalism and encouraging them to raise the bar; we've simplified and adjusted the Spirit deck and are digitizing the package for attendees to take home electronically; Bion has had a great year with VisitSYV and is happy to have fresh minds on the board. Danielle is grateful for her promotion and the support from the board and is so excited to be working with Marisa Yott; thanks to the assistance, we have special things planned for the website; Marisa is working on the events calendar and already making improvements. Sherrie is thrilled to serve on the board, and is happy

about the changes they're making at Alisal; they have a new general manager who has high expectations for employees, many of which have been with the property for 15 years; the new general manager is involved with her community and wants to invest in being part of the SYV; the Rivergrill/Rivercourse, their public golf course, is coming up on their 25th anniversary, and will create an annual SYV Golf Championship Tournament scheduled to debut in the Fall of 2017; it will involve both the river and the ranch course. Randy shared that renovations continue at Sideways Inn, and they'll have an outdoor seating area for the bar; they've booked 90+ rooms for a group doing a wine weekend getaway and now have a hard date for renovations; they set the date for May 23rd for a black carpet roll out and are inviting the community to see the hotel. Shelby thanked the board for their time and volunteer work, and for the empowerment and respect; he also thanked the board for allowing Danielle's promotion, and hiring Marisa as our new part time staff. Barry congratulated Danielle and thinks the promotion is fantastic; The Landsby is building 9 more rooms currently, 5 of which will be bi-level with their own outdoor fire pits; they're building on top of the Royal Oaks tasting room, and Barry hopes to have the new rooms online by the end of May. Barry also noted that we were overwhelmed during the holidays; there was a list of restaurants that were said to be open for the holiday, but many were closed and there was not enough for our visitors to do; Shelby noted that the holiday hours is a Solvang-centric issue but VisitSYV can be an influence and voice to membership that there's an opportunity for added businesses; Barry also supports the Solvang map reprints.

Sherrie made a motion to adjourn. Cammy seconded. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:21 a.m. to the meeting of February 16, 2017, 9:00 a.m., The Landsby.

Prepared by Danielle Laudon,  
Director of Marketing

Approved by Bion Rice,  
Treasurer