

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley April 13, 2017

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on April 13, 2017 at The Landsby, 1576 Mission Drive, Solvang. President Linda Johansen called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Board members present included Linda Johansen, President, Barry Prescott, Vice President, Sherrie FitzGerald, Cammy Pinoli, Jim Rice, and Randy Pace. Shelby Sim, Executive Director, Danielle Laudon, Director of Marketing, and Marisa Yott, Member Services, were present. Members of the public present included John Martino, Morgen McLaughlin, Lisa Walter, Anna Ferguson-Sparks, Kris Kersten, Kathy Vreeland, Dr. Kenneth Harwood, Pete Robbins, and Juliet Kingston.

Dr. Harwood, Kathy Vreeland, and John Martino provided public comment. Dr. Harwood provided an economic report; Kathy Vreeland provided an update on the success of the Wine & Chili Fest and thanked the board for their support; Kathy also noted the Buellton Brewfest is coming up on May 6th; John Martino spoke on behalf of the Solvang Chamber of Commerce and thanked VisitSYV for supporting the new Solvang walking map by purchasing an ad on the back cover, noting there will be 10,000 copies printed; distribution begins before Mother's Day weekend.

Cammy made a motion to ratify Andrew Economon as a new VisitSYV board member representing Solvang; Jim seconded, all in favor. Andrew Economon is now an active board member.

Randy made a motion to approve the March 9, 2017 minutes as presented; Barry seconded, all in favor except Cammy, who abstained due to her absence at the last meeting. The March 9, 2017 minutes were approved.

The board reviewed a grant request for the Santa Barbara Vintners Spring Festival, presented by Santa Barbara Vintners, April 20-23, 2017; the requested amount is \$4,000. VisitSYV staff processed the grant, and the recommended amount came out to \$3,500. Morgen McLaughlin presented on behalf of the request. Linda believes this is a worthy event which we should support, but noted the timing of the request was late; it's important the request is received by VisitSYV by our deadline requirements, as our organization needs to take full advantage of these opportunities and receive exposure as well. Requests must come in at least 90 days ahead of time. Sherrie made a motion to approve the recommended amount of \$3,500; Randy seconded. All in favor after no further discussion. A \$3,500 grant was approved.

The board reviewed a grant request for the Jazz & Olive Festival, presented by the Los Olivos Rotary Club Foundation, June 3, 2017; the requested amount is \$2,500. VisitSYV staff processed the grant, and the recommended amount came out to \$2,500. Pete Robbins presented on behalf of the request; Los Olivos Rotary prints postcards and mails flyers to ticket buyers with VisitSYV.com listed as a resource. Linda asked that our VisitSYV logo be printed on the poster/postcards as it's a requirement for grant recipients. Jim made a motion to approve; Cammy seconded, all in favor. A \$2,500 grant was approved.

The board reviewed a grant request for the Santa Ynez Valley Fireworks Show and Festival, presented by the Rotary Club of the Santa Ynez Valley, July 4, 2017; the requested amount is \$4,000. VisitSYV staff processed the grant, and the recommended amount came out to \$3,500. Kris Kersten presented on behalf of the request, and noted they're using drone footage to shoot a commercial this year. Jim made a motion to approve a \$3,500 grant; Cammy seconded; all in favor. A \$3,500 grant was approved.

The current financials were not reviewed in Treasurer Bion Rice's absence.

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

- Brand vision statement: Drafting a vision statement will be on the agenda for the board retreat in June.
- Marketing collateral: The Marketing Committee will meet this coming Monday to discuss creating printed marketing collateral.

- Spirit of the Valley: Our next workshop is set for Tuesday, 4/25 at Sideways Inn, Buellton. The Solvang workshop turnout was excellent; we continue to receive positive feedback for the curriculum and for Dave Pollock's presentation.
- Hotelier reception recap: The hotelier networking reception was another great success for VisitSYV; thank you to Sherrie and Alisal for having us.
- Board elections in June: Next week VisitSYV will put out the call for board nominations. We'll have an election during the month of May. Anyone who does not receive nominations against their open seat can remain on board without an election.
- 2017 Board Retreat: We will have a retreat at Roblar during the last 2 weeks of June. Roblar will provide food. Linda suggests we do it in the evening from 5:30-7:30pm. Shelby will present dates for the board to select from.
- Sweepstakes winner: the selected sweepstakes winner has not responded to our emails to receive their prize. We will give them another few days and move on to another winner.
- Santa Barbara Airport advertising opportunity: Shelby presented the board with a display advertising opportunity at the airport. The production cost to create a banner in the luggage area would be around \$5,000. Then for five years, it's a \$1,000/month contract. Barry believes it's worthwhile to negotiate to shorter terms. Linda would like to see statistics on how many of those arrivals are tourism related entries into Santa Barbara versus business travelers returning home. Linda asked whether it could be negotiated down to a 2 year contract. This is Clear Channel advertising. Jim also likes the idea of airport advertising, as it's good visibility and if a traveler is flying in and out of Santa Barbara, they're affluent. Shelby will investigate further.
- Pivot: Pivot is a professional sporting events marketing company. Linda's son approached her concerning a marketing opportunity for VisitSYV and is employed by Pivot. As this would be a conflict of interest for Linda, she recused herself from the board meeting for the board to discuss. Pivot's offerings are between a \$300,000 - \$500,000 buy-in, but to begin, they offer a \$10,000 branding case study. Shelby would not recommend we do a \$300,000 - \$500,000 sporting sponsorship, but is interested in researching a case study purchase. Shelby recommends he and Danielle look at other firms who offer case studies, and compare it to what Pivot is offering. Since Pivot is narrowly focused to sports and festival marketing, the board sees more value in VisitSYV researching other case studies. Shelby can chat with other DMO colleagues like Visit Santa Barbara and Visit Sonoma to see what sponsorships and case studies they've done. Danielle also has great relationships with other Central Coast DMOs and Visit California and can explore other options as well. After no further discussion, Linda was called to re-enter the meeting.
- Gran Fondo Sponsorship: This cycling event will be in the end of October; it's an international bike race from Santa Ynez to the top of Figueroa Mountain, and is the type of event we want to do in the valley. It will bring cyclists of all ages. Shelby has chosen to proceed with a \$5,000 custom sponsorship VisitSYV has handcrafted with the organizers.
- County Update: Danielle and Shelby attended the county's most recent meeting; Joan Hartmann reached out with questions before the meeting, and the supervisors accepted our report.
- Activity Report for month of March.

The board discussed whether or not to increase the TBID for the remainder of VisitSYV's current contract ending in 2021. The board discussed staying at \$2.50 per room as opposed to increasing to \$3 per room. 2022 would be the next opportunity to decide whether or not to increase the TBID in the future. Linda would not be in favor of increasing the TBID, as we are gaining the confidence of our hoteliers and want to keep it. Randy made a motion to keep our TBID at \$2.50 per room for the remainder of our contract; Barry seconded, all in favor.

Danielle Laudon presented the Website, DVA, and Marketing Update which included updates on the DVA ad campaign, status of SEO, and recent PR successes.

Board comments:

Shelby shared that SYV Marriott is happy to host us for our next networking reception, and we are looking at Tuesday, May 9th; Randy would not be available; May 10th is possible but May 9th is preferable. Shelby will email the board to

confirm dates; we are also looking to be innovative and different at our annual meeting and celebrate it as a brunch from 10:30am – 1pm; we would like to have our board meeting before the annual meeting on June 1st and see if we can do it at Hotel Corque. Jim Rice shared that Santa Ynez Inn is finishing up room renovations and should be complete by summer. Randy presented his new Sideways Inn uniform which features a “Sideways” tie, showcasing the property’s consistent new branding; renovations continue at Sideways Inn and the lobby is currently being remodeled. Danielle is grateful to have Marisa on board as our part-time staff, noting that she has been doing an excellent job at keeping our social media presence consistent and ever present; Danielle is gearing up for IPW and is excited to share that Shelby will be joining her to execute the media marketplace. Barry provided apologies for the noise, as The Landsby is under major construction this week building an ADA ramp out front and putting in a whole new drainage system in the courtyard; Barry is the chair of Solvang 3rd Wednesday and showcased the promotion’s new rack cards and poster; Barry encouraged all to share this with guests and promote the event. Sherrie shared Alisal had 9 media for a FAM tour and they took them offsite to experience the local wine region; in two weeks, they have another FAM tour, but it’s strictly golf and will stay on property; after spring break, Alisal will gear up for corporate groups and then head into summer which is nearly completely booked. Cammy brought pastries from the pastry chef at The Bear and Star for everyone to enjoy; the gardens on property are already growing, and it’s an incredibly passionate team they have at the restaurant and inn; the restaurant would like the board to come to lunch later this month to enjoy a meal before they officially open May 1st. Linda complimented the pastry from The Bear and Star; Linda just heard that Mr. Towbes of Montecito Bank & Trust passed away; he will be missed, and is one of the finest people Linda has ever known. Linda congratulated VisitSYV on the Spirit of the Valley; the recent seminar was excellent and K ‘Syrah was the perfect venue; Linda is excited about Andrew Economon joining the board, and thanked the entire board for all of their contributions, efforts and putting the time in; this organization is doing amazing things and Linda is proud to be a part of it; Linda is also excited that Bob has asked for a brand vision statement, and is writing down key words for inclusion; she’s looking forward to our board retreat to put goals down on paper; we continue to make huge strides and she’s proud of all of us for what we do; last, Linda thanked the public for attending.

Randy made a motion to adjourn. Sherrie seconded. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:32 a.m. to the meeting of May 11, 2017, 9:00 a.m., The Landsby.

Prepared by Danielle Laudon,
Director of Marketing

Approved by Barry Prescott,
Vice President