

## Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley March 9, 2017

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on March 9, 2017 at The Landsby, 1576 Mission Drive, Solvang. President Linda Johansen opened the meeting to the public at 9:00 a.m. for introductions. Board members present included Linda Johansen, President, Barry Prescott, Vice President, Bion Rice, Treasurer, and Bob Oswaks, Secretary. Shelby Sim, Executive Director, Danielle Laudon, Director of Marketing, and Marisa Yott, Member Services, were present. Members of the public present included Lisa Walter, Jessica Larson, Sarah Brookshier, Julie Hayek, Jill Tweedie, Vickie Carrol, Pam Pilcher, Anna Ferguson-Sparks, and Taylor Reaume.

President Linda Johansen officially called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. when Randy Pace entered the meeting.

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

- LA Travel & Adventure Show Recap: Shelby and Danielle executed the show together and it was a success.
- Visit California Outlook Forum: DMOs from all over CA attended with 600 people present. It was a great opportunity for VisitSYV to expand our brand. Shelby presented on stage with VisitSB's Kathy Janeka-Dykes.
- Brand vision statement: Bob Oswaks suggested we create a brand vision statement so that *our* vision is captured by photographers, not the other way around.
- Marketing Collateral: Shelby would also like to have printed marketing collateral after Randy's suggestions at the last meeting; Danielle will take lead with the existing marketing committee to come up with printed collateral.
- Spirit of the Valley: Our next workshop is Wednesday, March 22nd at K'Syrah in Solvang.
- Hotelier reception: The reception will be held March 14th at Alisal Guest Ranch & Resort. This event is for hoteliers only; Shelby encouraged the board to bring front desk staff as well.
- Board elections reminder: Elections are coming up in June, and Linda, Bion, Cammy and Barry will be up for re-election.
- TBID review: 2017 is the year we would decide whether we go from 2.50 to 3.00; Shelby advised that we do not increase, and we stick with 2.50. It will come up in June, but we will continue to discuss this. Linda and Barry also believe we should keep it at 2.50.
- VisitSYV received a community award from the Solvang Chamber of Commerce.
- LOBO update: The Los Olivos Business Organization is changing their current structure and becoming a chamber, now referred to as the Los Olivos Chamber of Commerce.

Bob made a motion to approve the February 16, 2017 minutes as presented; Barry seconded, all in favor. The February 16, 2017 minutes were approved.

The board reviewed a grant request for the Taste of Solvang presented by the Solvang Conference & Visitors Bureau, March 17-19, 2017; the requested amount is \$4,000. VisitSYV staff processed the grant, and the recommended amount came out to \$3,000. Linda addressed the timing of the request, stating that the grant came in very late, and when that happens, the advertising opportunity for the SYV brand is exceptionally limited. Linda addressed those who are requesting grants, stating we need you to make sure you follow the requirements we set forth in our grants program; we are trying to brand this area as the Santa Ynez Valley, and if we don't have that opportunity, it takes away from part of what we are providing the grant for. Barry also stated the grant is for advertising, and we should be doing this at least a month earlier. Shelby reminded the board that the grant is supposed to be a reimbursement, but that the Solvang CVB should have also planned for that money as part of their media buy. Bob asked about their media plan. Danielle shared that Pinterest, Facebook and Instagram ad buys were part of the additional advertising that Sarah Brookshier sent to VisitSYV on Monday. After no further discussion, Barry made a motion to approve a \$3,000 grant, Randy seconded, all in favor. A \$3,000 grant was approved.

The board reviewed a grant request for the Garagiste Festival presented by Garagiste, Inc., March 31- April 2, 2017; the requested amount is \$4,000, and the recommended amount is \$3,000. Shelby noted that we've provided a grant for multiple Garagiste festivals; last year they requested more funds and we lowered the grant to \$2,000 due to the timing of their event; since it's no longer scheduled for a three day weekend, the request scored higher via our grants matrix. Bob made a motion to approve the \$3,000 grant, Randy seconded, all in favor. A \$3,000 grant was approved.

The board reviewed a grant request for a Riders in the Sky concert presented by Solvang Festival Theater, May 5, 2017; the requested amount is \$1,000, and the recommended amount is \$1,000. Pam Pilcher presented on behalf of the event, and shared that the theater has already added VisitSYV to their promotional poster which has been distributed. Randy made a motion to approve \$1,000, Barry seconded, all in favor. A \$1,000 grant was approved.

Bion Rice presented the current financials.

Shelby noted that when we drafted our annual report, we saw that we pulled in more TBID money than expected and have underspent. Because we do not want to keep too large of a reserve, Shelby would propose that we move \$100,000 into this year's budget. We are recommending it go into marketing. The marketing committee is currently made up of Bob and Linda, so another thing to consider is that we could welcome another board member to the marketing committee. Randy made a motion to move the \$100k into the current budget under marketing and have the marketing committee make a recommendation for how to further allocate those funds; 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: Barry shared The Landsby is in the middle of construction and will be at 50 rooms by May; they're adding a hospitality suite, the courtyard will be redeveloped into a Danish/European courtyard for people to relax in, and the bar will be expanded after they complete the courtyard development. Bion shared that recent rain flooded the parking lot; because the tasting room was closed they did a rainy day sale which was a huge hit; Sunstone was also featured in Robert Parker's Wine Advocate under "Grape Escapes". Randy shared that construction continues at Sideways Inn but things are looking great and every rentable room is booked this week; they hosted WOPN and used over 20 rooms; the venue was great for them and worked out well; Randy also introduced Nick Pugliese who is going to be the new GM at Flying Flags; Dan Baumann has accepted a position in Hawaii and will be moving. Bob said that in spite of the rains, they've had excellent business this year; rain has caused Los Alamos to lose power a few times this year, but since the power went out after baking, they sold goods for cash when none of the other restaurants were able to open; Bob is adding a wood fired oven to the property which should be open in about 3-4 weeks. Linda relayed a message from Jim Colvin; Jim is no longer at Hotel Corque and is retiring from the board, though he has enjoyed working with us for so long; Linda believes Shelby undersold the award that VisitSYV received from the Solvang Chamber and wanted to further commend VisitSYV for this honor; this was the tourism business of the year award, which was voted on by the members of the chamber and the community at-large; Shelby represented us well that night, as well as Danielle; Linda recently had the pleasure of meeting Kathleen, the new GM of the Alisal; she's going to be fantastic for the community and we are looking forward to having her be a part of a lot of things; Linda congratulated Barry who has spent a lot of time reinventing Solvang Third Wednesday; she has had guests that come for 3rd Wednesday, especially during the summer with the music in the park. Barry shared that it was something out there that even his hotel didn't understand until now, and they're going to offer a three course meal for \$25++ as a part of 3rd Wednesday; Linda added that the Visit California event reaffirms that we have the two most perfect people employed for VisitSYV; Shelby and Danielle's networking skills are superb; they're very good at what they do, and Shelby is getting to be a wonderful speaker; Linda also commended the annual report and she appreciates the effort Shelby and Danielle put into that; Linda wants to make sure we add a retreat to the agenda, as we need to have a board retreat for new members so we can put goals on paper. Linda thanked the public for coming and learning what this organization does; with that, she has no further comments.

Randy made a motion to adjourn. Bob seconded. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:49 a.m. to the meeting of April 13, 2017, 9:00 a.m., The Landsby.

Prepared by Danielle Laudon,  
Director of Marketing

Approved by Bob Oswaks,  
Secretary