

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley May 11, 2017

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on May 11, 2017 at The Landsby, 1576 Mission Drive, Solvang. President Linda Johansen called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Board members present included Linda Johansen, President, Barry Prescott, Vice President, Bob Oswaks, Secretary, Bion Rice, Treasurer, Sherrie FitzGerald, Cammy Pinoli, Andrew Economon and Randy Pace. Board member Jim Rice was absent. Shelby Sim, Executive Director, Danielle Laudon, Director of Marketing, and Marisa Yott, Member Services, were present. Members of the public present included John Martino, Anna Ferguson-Sparks, Bryan Maroun, Tracy Farhad, Lisa Walter, Dr. Kenneth Harwood, Chris Candelaria, Taylor Reaume, Paige Anderson, Zack Hall and Mary Angelo.

Dr. Harwood provided public comment, sharing an economic report.

In reviewing the April 13 minutes, Linda requested that for all future minutes, Danielle list which, if any, board members are absent in addition to listing those who are present. Randy made a motion to approve the April 13 minutes as presented; Barry seconded, all in favor except Andrew, who abstained due to his absence at the last meeting.

Bion Rice reviewed the current financials. Randy asked that we make sure personnel costs and the addition of new staff is reflected in the current budget.

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

- LA Bowl: This is a food and wine show that began Wednesday evening in downtown LA; 20,000 attendees are anticipated each night and VisitSYV will be attending with Santa Barbara Vintners as a co-op. Shelby is driving down this afternoon and Danielle will arrive to work the show Friday through Sunday. We will be there to sell the Santa Ynez Valley while pouring Santa Barbara County wines.
- Budget Allocation: The marketing committee met and chose to allocate the \$100k reserve re-allocation as follows: \$10,000 will go into marketing research, \$20,000 into print collateral, \$5,000 into design and writing, \$20,000 into digital and video assets, and \$45,000 will go towards the TBID shortfall as Q1 is proving that occupancy is down in comparison to 2016.
- May 16th Networking Reception: We put an email out to our winery members asking to pour at the upcoming event and we are at capacity with 6 wineries pouring; two caterers are also working the event in addition to SYV Marriott providing small bites.
- June 1st Board Meeting: The June meeting will take place in the ballroom at Hotel Corque prior to the annual meeting.
- Board Elections: VisitSYV members can still apply up to May 18th for a position on the board. So far we only have interest and candidates in the at-large position. The election will take place via email, May 22 - May 29th; the results will be announced at the next meeting.
- Spirit of the Valley Awards: The awards will take place at the Annual Meeting.
- IPW: Danielle presented an overview of IPW. Danielle and Shelby will work the media marketplace at IPW together on Monday, June 5th and then Danielle will join Kathy Vreeland and Tracy Farhad for travel buyer appointments on Tuesday and Wednesday, June 6th and 7th.
- Board Retreat: We'll have our retreat at Roblar on June 21st from 5:30 – 8:30pm. We'll discuss the brand vision statement, 2018 budget, and where we see ourselves in the future.
- Vintners 5 Miler on July 22nd: VisitSYV is sponsoring this event at the \$1,500 level. We will be the official destination sponsor and our logo will be on the race shirts. They expect 500 runners, who also bring their families to the event. The Vintners Foundation would like to do their registration pick-up party in the valley on the Friday evening before the race. Shelby would like to speak to Pea Soup Andersen's Inn and Sideways Inn about offering some packages with the foundation.
- DMA West CEO Summit: Shelby will be attending this DMO summit, July 31st – August 2nd.
- Activity Report for month of April

VisitSYV staff recommends purchasing a two year airport advertising contract at \$300/month for a 10 second spot in rotation on 82 inch LCD screen at the brochure area in baggage claim; this has visibility throughout the room. Currently there are no other advertisers. Linda would like to know the number of repeat locals vs. visitors/out of town guests arriving in the airport, and the board would like to know the max number of advertisers allotted to this space. Sherrie made a motion to move forward with additional information forthcoming; Bob seconded. All in favor.

Linda introduced our advertising agency, DVA to the board, and shared how the original committee came to approve DVA as the association's Ad and PR agency many years ago. Mary Angelo provided an overview of DVA and VisitSYV's successes and a forecast of 2017 activities. The newest member of DVA and their digital strategist, Paige has already been brimming with ideas for content marketing strategies for the valley and shared upcoming plans for digital advertising. Zack has been working to build itineraries for visiting media and works directly with our local stakeholders to make arrangements, and thus Zack provided an overview of our PR successes and future plans. Barry commended the work that DVA has been doing and also wanted to bring up what a key ingredient Solvang is to bringing visitors, especially the international market, to the valley. Andrew asked to learn more about who our target audience is for the Facebook advertising placements, and how/if we are trying to reach feeder markets, including Phoenix, Denver and Las Vegas. This brought up a good point about our DVA recaps; the marketing committee reads and reviews the recaps every month, but these recaps have previously not been disseminated to the entire board. Danielle will now send the recaps out to the entire board each month.

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:

Danielle was excited to share that she and Marisa have been working on an updated tri-fold lodging guide which will be distributed to travel buyers at IPW. Bob shared that they inaugurated a new wood burning oven on the patio at Bob's Well Bread this week, and the restaurant has a big Mother's Day brunch promotion this weekend. Sherrie noted that April and May are busy PR months for Alisal and they've hosted multiple FAMS. Shelby thanked Andrew for joining the board and welcomed him once more; Shelby also thanked Sherrie for inviting him out to meet with media that have been coming to the Alisal FAM tours. Randy noted that renovations are still underway at Sideways Inn, and they now have 99 completed rooms online. Cammy had enthusiastic updates about The Bear and Star, noting what an incredible team they've built; they're also doing a Mother's Day brunch with reservations recommended. Bion shared that the wine industry is doing well across the board, and the direct to consumer market is still growing leaps and bounds; after overseeing the merge of SYVVA and SYVHA and being a part of VisitSYV for 4 years, Bion is so proud of what the organization has achieved and is ready to step down from the board; Bion's general manager at Sunstone, Bryan Maroun, will be running for the at-large position on the board. Shelby noted that with Bion's departure, we will be in need of a treasurer, and Randy would be happy to accept the position. The vote will take place in July for board officer positions. Bion welcomed Andrew onto the board. Barry thanked Bion for all of his work for VisitSYV, and reminded the board and attending public that Solvang 3rd Wednesday is coming up again next week. Andrew is thrilled to be on the board and believes the opportunities for the valley and our future is spectacular; the Chumash Resort will be hosting a "pool party" for some local DMCs on their deck today with refreshments and food and invited the board to attend. Linda thanked the public for attending our monthly board meetings and Dr. Harwood especially for the reports he provides each month; Linda thanked Andrew once again for joining the board and providing his input, and reminded everyone to attend our May 16th networking reception and our June 1st annual meeting; she congratulated Chris Candelaria for his new role as general manager at King Frederik Inn; she shared that Pea Soup Andersen's Inn now has a shuttle service for their guests. Linda appreciates Bion's dedication to VisitSYV, thanked him for putting VisitSYV on the right financial track and acknowledged the Spirit of the Valley program as his brainchild; she will miss his friendship and hugs. With that, Linda called the meeting to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 10:33 a.m. to the meeting of June 1, 2017, 9:00 a.m., Hotel Corque.

Prepared by Danielle Laudon,
Director of Marketing

Approved by Bob Oswaks,
Secretary