

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley August 17, 2017

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on August 17, 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, Sherrie FitzGerald, Andrew Economon, Bryan Maroun and Jim Rice. Board members Felipe Murcia and Bob Oswaks were absent. Shelby Sim, Executive Director, Danielle Laudon, Director of Marketing, and Marisa Yott, Member Services, were present. Members of the public present included Anna Ferguson-Sparks, Tracy Farhad, Liz Dodder, Katie Smith-Adair, Sue Turner-Cray, Juliet Kingston, Fran Clow, Budi Kazali, Kris Kazali, Karla Azahar and Sonja Walker.

Tracy Farhad provided public comment, sharing an update on the Solvang CVB mobile-based Solvang Heritage Walk audio tour.

Randolph Pace has stepped off of the board, as he is no longer with Sideways Inn and cannot represent a Buellton hotelier. To replace this position, Bryan made a motion to ratify Karla Azahar of Santa Ynez Valley Marriott as a new VisitSYV board member, representing a Buellton hotelier; Sherrie seconded, all in favor. Karla Azahar is now an active board member.

Jim made a motion to elect Bryan Maroun as VisitSYV Board Treasurer; Barry seconded, all in favor. Bryan Maroun is now VisitSYV Board Treasurer.

Sherrie made a motion to approve the July 13, 2017 minutes as presented. Bryan seconded; all in favor except Jim and Karla, who abstained. The July 13, 2017 minutes were approved.

Linda requested the board revise subcommittees as Karla has now replaced Randolph Pace. On the budget committee, Bryan will replace Randolph. On the data collection committee, Karla will replace Randolph, and Barry will step down from this committee. On the education committee, Karla will replace Randolph.

The board reviewed a grant request for Day in the Country, presented by the Los Olivos Chamber, to be held Saturday, October 21, 2017; the requested amount is \$4,000. VisitSYV staff processed the grant, and the recommended amount came out to \$3,000. Liz Dodder and Sue Turner-Cray presented and spoke on behalf of the event, presenting postcards to the board and noting changes the chamber plans to make to increase PR and expand the event. Shelby and Andrew are on the Los Olivos Chamber Board and are unable to comment. Sue discussed that with an increase in the grant amount they would be able to provide additional portable toilets to relieve some of Los Olivos' septic issues. Liz explained that with an increase in the grant amount they would be able to in turn increase their marketing and advertising budget for the event. Jim commented on the value of the event to the community and inquired about rewriting the grant amount. Linda made a motion to increase the proposed grant amount to \$3,500; Jim seconded; all in favor. A \$3,500 grant was approved for Day in the Country. Barry commented on the importance of the matrix.

The board reviewed a grant request for Celebration of Harvest presented by Santa Barbara County Vintners, to be held September 29 -October 2, 2017; the requested amount is \$4,000. VisitSYV staff processed the grant, and the recommended amount came out to \$2,000. Fran Clow presented and spoke on behalf of the event. Shelby commented that VisitSYV only considers grants for events that take place in the Santa Ynez Valley and noted that Harvest Festival's main event is taking place in Santa Barbara, which is why the recommended amount is less than normal. Fran commented that the SBVA is struggling with their two annual events. They moved the main ticketed event to Santa Barbara because of the lack of indoor event venues. Barry and Andrew commented that the valley has indoor venues that could accommodate the event. Fran discussed how they are changing the Harvest event to be promoted as a weekend 4-day ticketed event, including a wine tasting passport; the weekend tasting passport has sold on average

between 200-500 passes in years prior. Jim agrees that the SBVA needs help. Sherrie made a motion to accept the proposed \$2,000 grant; Bryan seconded; all in favor. A \$2,000 grant was approved for Celebration of Harvest.

Barry made a motion to approve the payroll budget increase and related expenses for Member Services employee; Andrew seconded, all in favor.

Shelby Sim reviewed the current financials.

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

- Sundance NextFest recap
- DMA West CEO Summit recap
- NYCWFF update
- VisitSYValley.com
- Economic Alliance wine forum recap
- PBS travel series opportunity
- Fall Networking Reception date
- New Board Retreat date
- Activity Report for month of July

Shelby proposed the Fall Networking Reception to take place in Los Alamos either October 24th or 25th and the Board Retreat on October 4th at 10:30 am.

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

Board comments:

Andrew commented on having a successful summer but Solvang has seen a small drop in occupancy. Barry touched on the success of Solvang Third Wednesday and the increase in Wine Walk ticket sales. Karla remarked that the SYV Marriot had a record year with 90% occupancy over the last three months. The SYV Marriot hired a new executive chef from Bacara. Sherrie commented that the Alisal also had an incredible summer; they also hired a new executive chef, Anthony Endy. Alisal is hosting a golf tournament September 22-24. Bryan commented that Sunstone visitation is up and they also had a busy summer. Jim agrees that Santa Ynez Inn also had a good summer, renovations are complete, and a press release has just been written on the new remodel. Danielle discussed the new ads with SYV Star. Shelby announced he is cohosting a radio/digital broadcast show later today in Santa Barbara that will be live on the radio and then distributed worldwide.

The meeting adjourned at 10:33 a.m. to the meeting of September 14, 2017, 9:00 a.m., The Landsby.

Prepared by Marisa Yott,
Member Services
and
Danielle Laudon,
Director of Marketing

Approved by Barry Prescott,
Vice President