

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley October 19, 2017

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on October 19, 2017 at The Landsby, 1576 Mission Drive, Solvang. Vice President Barry Prescott called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Board members present included Barry Prescott, Vice President, Sherrie FitzGerald, Andrew Economon, Bryan Maroun, Felipe Murcia, and Karla Azahar. President Linda Johansen was 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, Taylor Reaume, Skip Abed, Arianna Kamp, Scott Gold, Budi Kazali and Luca Crestanelli.

Dr. Harwood provided public comment, sharing an economic report. Tracy Farhad provided public comment, sharing an update on the Solvang CVB mobile-based Solvang Heritage Walk audio tour and 2nd Annual Strategic Marketing launch. Skip Abed introduced the SB Sailing Center and invited the board to experience their excursions. Andrew introduced Scott Gold as the new manager of Hotel Corque.

Andrew made a motion to approve the September 14, 2017 minutes as presented. Karla seconded; all in favor. The September 14, 2017 minutes were approved.

Jim Rice has stepped off of the board. To replace this position, Andrew made a motion to ratify Budi Kazali of the Ballard Inn as a new VisitSYV board member, representing an unincorporated hotelier; Bryan seconded, all in favor. Budi Kazali is now an active board member.

Bob Oswaks has stepped off of the board. To replace this position, Felipe made a motion to ratify Luca Crestanelli of S.Y. Kitchen as a new VisitSYV board member, representing an at-large member; Andrew seconded, all in favor. Luca Crestanelli is now an active board member.

Budi made a motion to elect Sherrie FitzGerald as VisitSYV Board Secretary; Felipe seconded, all in favor. Sherrie FitzGerald is now VisitSYV Board Secretary.

The board reviewed a grant request for Olde Fashioned Christmas, presented by the Los Olivos Chamber, to be held Saturday, December 2, 2017; the requested amount is \$3,000. VisitSYV staff processed the grant, and the recommended amount came out to \$3,000. Liz Dodder presented and spoke on behalf of the event, expecting 3,000 - 5,000 event attendees; grant money will be spent on marketing including radio ads. Andrew made a motion to accept the proposed \$3,000 grant. Sherrie seconded; all in favor. A \$3,000 grant was approved for Olde Fashioned Christmas.

The board reviewed a grant request for Julefest, presented by the Solvang Conference & Visitors Bureau, to be held December 1-2, 9-10, 16, 2017 & January 5, 2018; the requested amount is \$4,000. VisitSYV staff processed the grant, and the recommended amount came out to \$4,000. Tracy Farhad presented and spoke on behalf of the event, expecting an increase in ticket sales, adding new events including Candlelight Historic Walk, a Nisse Adventure featuring Danish Elves hidden around town, and enhanced music around town. Shelby commented that Julefest has tons of potential. Tracy disclosed that the term, "Christmas Show", was the top SEO search in December. Sherrie made a motion to accept the proposed \$4,000 grant; Bryan seconded; all in favor. A \$4,000 grant was approved for Julefest.

Bryan presented the September 2017 financials.

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

- Spirit of the Valley September 26th Recap

- NYCWFF & Media Visit Report
- Board Retreat Recap
- Data Collection update
- PBS travel series opportunity update
- Reminder: Networking Reception, October 25, 2017
- Activity Report for month of September

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. Andrew requested reports on click-to-book data in next marketing update.

Board comments:

Andrew mentioned looking forward to Fall season, occupancy looks strong, and optimistic about the upcoming Christmas season. Sherrie commented that Alisal had the best September season in years attributing this to group business and noted that October sales were also strong. Karla concurs that September was the best month all year and that the forecast for the fourth quarter looks great, also attributing this to group business. Bryan agreed that September was a strong month for wineries. Felipe mentioned that September/October occupancy rate is up; Fess Parker Wine Country Inn introduced movie nights on Thursdays and live music on Friday nights. Budi mentioned that September/October months are strong for restaurants as well. Luca concedes that October is looking good for the restaurant. Danielle touched on the SYV publication update and also mentioned that Visit Santa Barbara's 2018 Destination Guide will allow SYV hotels to participate in co-op advertising in their publication this year. Shelby welcomed Budi & Luca to board also thanking Sherrie for accepting the position as Board Secretary. Barry briefly recapped on the Solvang Third Wednesday special 25++ menu, thanking Anna Ferguson-Sparks for all her PR efforts. Shelby also thanked Anna for all her freelance PR work. Barry commented that we should start using the term "village" to describe Solvang; the Santa Ynez Valley needs a concierge service to recommend business to each other.

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 a.m. to the meeting of November 9, 2017, 9:00 a.m., The Landsby.

Prepared by Marisa Yott,
Member Services

Approved by Sherrie FitzGerald,
Secretary