

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley July 11, 2019

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on July 11, 2019 at Hotel Corque, 400 Alisal Rd, Solvang. CEO Shelby Sim called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Board members present included John Richardson, Treasurer, Sherrie FitzGerald, Secretary, Jonathan Rosenson, Karla Azahar, Budi Kazali, Will Henry, and Louise Smith. Members absent included, Linda Johansen, Chairman and Andrew Economon, Vice Chairman. Shelby Sim, CEO, Danielle Laudon-Ruse, Vice President of Marketing, and Marisa Yott, Digital Coordinator & Member Services, were present. Members of the public present included Sue Eisaguirre, MaryAnn Norbome, Thomas Hagstrom, Andrew Howie Anna Jacobson, Jaime Baker, Barry Prescott, Alison Laslette, Bent Olsen, John Martino, Jaime Nuestro, Scott Gold, Jim Flagg, Nick Janes, Mary Richardson, Maria Arroyo, John Traller, and Melissa Rogers.

John Martino, Bent Olsen, and Sue Eisaguirre provided public comment. John Martino shared an update on the Solvang's Christmas Tree Project. Bent Olsen sought financial support from Visit the Santa Ynez Valley for the Christmas Tree Project. Sue Eisaguirre gave a recap of the 2019 Nature Track Film Festival and thanked the board for their support.

Karla made a motion to approve the June 13, 2019 minutes as presented; Jonathan seconded. All in favor. Louise abstained. The June 13, 2019 minutes were approved.

Sherrie made a motion to ratify Louise Smith as a board member representing At Large Member. John seconded, all in favor. Louise joined the board as an active member.

The board reviewed a grant request for Los Alamos Valley Men's Club, Los Alamos Old Days, September 27-29, 2019; the requested amount is \$4,000. VisitSYV staff processed the grant, and the recommended amount came out to \$3,000. John Traller presented and spoke on behalf of the event, he thanked the board for previous year's support, and noted that grant money would be used for new PR, advertising and promoting the event to a wider audience including new hotels and restaurants in the area. Sherrie asked if they had found a new PR firm yet. John said that they were still looking. Sherrie recommended approving the full requested amount of \$4,000 as PR is vital and the event needs to be promoted properly. Will brought up his concerns with the event's current coordination and event expenditures. John offered up the financial accounting report after the event. Karla specified that the board needs to see more data on these events. Shelby concurred that the board needs to see more measurable data, they need to make sure that the grant money is going towards advertising, and that VisitSYV needs to be put out on the forefront of these events. Karla made a motion to amend the recommended amount of \$3,000 to \$3,500; Sherrie seconded. All in favor. A \$3,500 grant was approved.

The board reviewed a grant request for Los Olivos Chamber & Business Organization, Los Olivos Day in the Country, Saturday, October 19, 2019; the requested amount is \$4,000. VisitSYV staff processed the grant, and the recommended amount came out to \$3,250. Shelby mentioned that Jonathan is on the Los Olivos Chamber Board and his vote would be recused. Sherrie made a

motion to approve the recommended amount of \$3,250; Will seconded. All in favor. Jonathan abstained. A \$3,250 grant was approved.

The board reviewed a grant request for Solvang Festival Theater, Clint Black Concert, Thursday, October 3, 2019; the requested amount is \$2,500. VisitSYV staff processed the grant, and the recommended amount came out to \$2,500. Mary Ann Norbom presented and spoke on behalf of the event. She mentioned that 33% of ticket sales so far have been made from visitors outside of the Santa Ynez Valley. Jonathan made a motion to approve the recommended amount of \$2,500; Karla seconded. All in favor. A \$2,500 grant was approved.

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

- Taste of the SYV update
- Annual Meeting recap
- WOPN sponsorship
- Symposium to be held at Alisal Guest Ranch & Resort
- 3 days, midweek, March 2020, \$1,000
- Report on county planning ag tourism meeting
- Report for month of June

John Richardson presented the June 2019 financials.

Danielle presented June VisitSYV.com web trends, DVA PR and Marketing Efforts update

Board Comments:

Will mentioned that business in Los Alamos has been good and reiterated his concerns regarding the Los Alamos Old Days weekend event. Jonathan shared that First & Oak just launched their new Wine Lounge concept focused on targeting locals, open Mon- Thursday, featuring 40 different wines by the glass including special “Unicorn Wines” and a vegetable-centric appetizer menu. Louise said that she was happy to be a new member of the board; she just launched a new program, To Go at the Window in Solvang, a local chef’s collaboration in the way of takeout food which includes: breakfast & lunch (Tue. - Fri.) and pop-up themed dinners (Wed. - Fri.). John revealed that demolition has been started on the old Vineyard House restaurant and they hope to open by the first of the year; June sales were strong, and July started off strong. Karla commented that leisure business has been growing and shared Santa Ynez Valley Marriott’s Movie Night held every other Saturday night through the summer. Sherrie remarked that the Alisal Guest Ranch & Resort has been sold out through the summer and is set to break records in September and October with their group business. She also announced The Alisal River Grill’s Blue Plate Special Happy Hour \$9.99 dinner where you can enjoy live music and beautiful views (Wed – Fri, 5pm – 7pm). Budi noted the interesting comparison between Ballard and Solvang

tourism. For him, Ballard business has been good, and that Solvang is busy with visitors but not so much with sales. Danielle thanked Shelby for all his passion and hard work with creating the new Taste of the Santa Ynez Valley event. Marisa introduced the new social platforms for Taste of the Santa Ynez Valley (Instagram: @TasteSYV, Twitter: @TasteSYV, FB: Taste of the Santa Ynez Valley). Shelby gave an update on Utrip and then closed by thanking the Chumash Casino Resort for hosting the board meeting and thanked the audience for attending the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 10:25a.m. to the meeting of August 8, 2019, 9:00 a.m., Chumash Casino, Santa Ynez.

Prepared by Marisa Yott,
Digital Coordinator & Member Services

Approved by Sherrie FitzGerald,
Secretary