

## Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley October 8, 2020

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on October 8, 2020 remotely via Zoom. Chairman Linda Johansen called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Board members present included Linda Johansen, Chairman, Sherrie FitzGerald, Vice Chairman, Karla Azahar, Secretary, Jonathan Rosenson, Treasurer, Budi Kazali, Will Henry, Louise Smith and Stormie Strickland. Board members absent included Kimberly Walker. Shelby Sim, President & CEO, and Danielle Laudon Ruse, Vice President of Marketing, were present. Members of the public who RSVP'd included Dr. Harwood, Phil Carpenter, Channing Jones, Maria Centrella, Golzar Meamar, Jefferson Woeste, Correna Moreno, Kevin Patterson, Anna Ferguson Sparks, Scott Schumake and Stephen Janes.

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

Sherrie motioned to approve the September 10, 2020 minutes as presented; Louise seconded. All in favor. The September 10, 2020 minutes were approved.

Shelby Sim presented the current financials.

Shelby Sim provided the staff report, which included updates on the following:

- WineRam videos: Board members received first look at the new longform promotional video and the feedback has been resoundingly positive.
- TBID Renewal update: The SYVTBID renewal process has begun. Shelby provided staff's plan for collecting the signed petitions and working with City of Solvang, City of Buellton, and the County to schedule the necessary meetings for renewal.
- Visitor Center update: City of Solvang is currently working with Brenda Ball on a plan to manage the Visitor Center.
- Westways 2021: Staff recommends placing a 2021 Co-Op advertorial with Buellton Visitors Bureau and IDK on behalf of SolvangUSA. Staff will proceed with the plan and it will be placed as an action item on the November board meeting agenda.
- IPW, September 2021: Registration for 2021 opens in November 2020.
- COVID-19 and recovery: Local COVID-19 cases remain low, and safe travel from our drive markets has helped keep tourism strong.
- Activity Report for month of September

Danielle presented the monthly report on VisitSYV.com web trends, ad campaigns with DVA and Madden Media, and phased marketing efforts. Highlights showed September web traffic and clicks-to-book up year over year, and PR was up 80% year over year with media visits and interest in future visits ramping up in the coming months.

Jonathan Rosenson joined the meeting during Old Business/New Business and shared additional insights on the financial report. In new business, Shelby shared that for future board meetings we would like to have a registration form for RSVP sign-ups to the board meeting, which would apply to board members and attending public. Staff plans to implement this starting in November. In other news, Shelby shared that we may be able to hold next month's meeting at Chumash Casino Resort. He will update the board when we receive confirmation.

### Board Comments:

Linda kicked off the board comments by congratulating Sherrie FitzGerald on Alisal's recent accolades in Conde Nast, where they were named one of the Top 10 Best Southern California Resorts. Sherrie is honored by the recognition. Louise expressed gratitude for being on the board and thanked Shelby and Danielle for their hard work; things are going well with takeout at To Go at the Castle, and catering is picking up again as well; Louise is

looking at expanding days and hours to include lunches again. Karla shared Marriott has been steady; there will be a launch at Vandenburg in the coming months and government travel is returning slowly; Marriott has an annual Thanksgiving brunch at the hotel and they typically have 350-500 people come through for it; in its place this year, they are planning a Thanksgiving to-go with all the fixings; Karla shared that the new Place to Be commercial had great emotional impact and brought happy tears to her eyes. Stormie shared that Hotel Corque has been doing well and recently had some incentive business come through; they are also receiving calls for later this year. Will commended the marketing team on taking advantage of the opportunities presented for outdoor-focused promotions and midweek travel; we're fortunate to be where we are and have everything the traveler is looking for during this time; PICO and Los Alamos is seeing the reward. The challenge currently is trying to figure out what comes next; Will's main concern is outdoor dining in the colder winter months. Jonathan agreed with Will, things have been steady at Mirabelle and First & Oak; it's nice to see the valley being patronized and visitors being so respectful; last minute travel seems to be the trend; Jonathan congratulated Sherrie on the Conde Nast honor, and the entire board for doing what they do best and holding it all together. Shelby shared that the Santa Ynez Chamber requested VisitSYV sponsor an installation project in their downtown area; they have painted horses to create a sense of place and businesses can sponsor the horses to be displayed around town. Because VisitSYV sponsored the project, the chamber shared our logo onscreen at their recent Drive-In pop-up in Santa Ynez. They will host two more Drive-In movie screenings in 2020. In preparation of the upcoming TBID renewal, Shelby has a lunch planned later this month with Third District Supervisor Joan Hartman, Buellton Mayor Holly Sierra, Solvang Mayor Ryan Toussaint, and Chumash Tribal Chairman Kenny Kahn; the plan is the chat about the renewal and how the Santa Ynez Valley is doing as a whole. Shelby thanked Danielle for her hard work, and the board for their support. Danielle thanked Shelby for the partnership, and the board for all their support and volunteer hours; since we will not be promoting specific events this year due to COVID-19, VisitSYV will be leaning into marketing the seasonal atmosphere and how to spend a relaxed holiday season in the Santa Ynez Valley. Linda shared how businesses has been picking up for Pea Soup Andersen's Inn and King Frederik Inn, and then closed the meeting with the following sentiments of gratitude: Linda thanked Danielle and Shelby for all they do; she thanked Karla for recently hosting the board officers for a subcommittee meeting to review the TBID renewal process; she thanked Xenia, the Solvang City Manager, for her time working with staff on the renewal process; Linda thanked the Solvang Chamber of Commerce and Tracy Beard for hosting candidate forums for the upcoming Solvang election; she thanked Buellton for their efforts in the Buellton election; she thanked Scott Shuemake and Anna Ferguson Sparks for their efforts promoting Solvang, and last, she thanked everyone for their great passion in showcasing the Santa Ynez Valley.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 am to the meeting of November 12, 2020, 9:00 a.m.. Due to COVID safety precautions, the meeting is tentatively scheduled in-person for VisitSYV Board of Directors and staff at Chumash Casino & Resort, and remotely via Zoom for the public.

Prepared by Danielle Laudon Ruse,  
Vice President of Marketing

Approved by Karla Azahar,  
Secretary