

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley May 13, 2021

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on May 13, 2021 remotely via Zoom. Chairman Linda Johansen called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Board members present included Linda Johansen, Chairman, Jonathan Rosenson, Treasurer, Stormie Strickland, Kimberly Walker, Louise Smith, and Will Henry. Shelby Sim, President & CEO, and Danielle Laudon Ruse, Vice President of Marketing, were present. Board Members Sherrie FitzGerald, Vice Chairman, Karla Azahar, Treasurer, and Budi Kazali were absent. Members of the public who RSVP'd included Will Adams, Philip Grant, Brenda Ball, Phil Carpenter, Jim Flagg, Debra Eagle, Channing Jones, and Anna Ferguson Sparks.

Stormie motioned to approve the April 8, 2021 minutes as presented; Louise seconded; All in favor. The April 8, 2021 minutes were approved.

Jonathan Rosenson presented the current financials.

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

- COVID-19 Update: We anticipate moving to the Yellow Tier soon. On June 15th, restrictions including social distancing will be removed for the entire state of California.
- Midweek Promotion recap: the promotion ended April 30th and we are proud of how well it performed in such a short period of time. Danielle will provide a complete recap in her report.
- Board Elections: There have been no applicants for board positions.
- Board Retreat: Scheduled for Thursday, May 20, 11:45am – 2:30pm, Nella Kitchen. At the retreat, the board and staff will discuss TasteSYV 2021, Annual Meeting plans, and a North County Co-Op opportunity.
- Part time contractor – social media and admin: Staff is in the beginning stages of seeking a part time contractor for admin work, which will include membership/website updates and social media.
- Activity Report for month of April

Shelby presented the proposed 5-year contract for renewal with Griffin Publishing for the annual Santa Ynez Valley Destination Guide. The 5-year contract would be \$35,000 paid annually and reflects a \$7,000 per year discount; it includes printing of up to 70,000 copies annually. Kimberly motioned to accept the contract as presented; Stormie seconded; all in favor. The 5-year contract with Griffin Publishing was approved.

Shelby presented the proposal for Season 2: Discover the Santa Ynez Valley with Hellcat Productions. The cost of production is \$2,000 per episode with 13 episodes, for a total of \$26,000 in production costs; this would be reimbursed by participants, and partially subsidized by VisitSYV to include nonprofits and more outdoor activities. The broadcast distribution cost is \$4,550, and there's an additional \$2,000 budgeted for miscellaneous production costs (i.e. drone operator). Jonathan made a motion to approve; Louise seconded; all in favor. Season 2 of Discover the Santa Ynez Valley was approved.

Staff recommends a single, shared 10x10 booth for IPW 2021 scheduled for September 18-22nd in Las Vegas. Due to safety protocols and social distancing requirements, the 10x10 booth will be staffed by Danielle representing VisitSYV, and Kathy Vreeland representing Discover Buellton, while Shelby staffs the media marketplace. In 2022, staff anticipates returning to a double shared booth and inviting hoteliers to participate once more. Stormie voiced how important it is that we be present at this show and keep building momentum and noted that we will likely see an increase in domestic buyers at the show this year. Stormie made a motion to approve the 10x10 single shared booth; Kimberly seconded; all in favor. The IPW VisitSYV booth was approved.

Danielle presented the monthly report on VisitSYV.com web trends, ad campaigns with DVA, a Visit Widget update, SEO with Madden Media, and a final review of the Midweek Promotion.

In new business, Shelby shared with the board that Sherrie FitzGerald is retiring from Alisal Guest Ranch & Resort and her last day is Friday. She has been a great contributor to Visit the Santa Ynez Valley and we plan to thank her for her service at the retreat next week.

Board Comments:

Kimberly shared an update on Hotel Ynez and Skyview; both are performing very well; she sees the Santa Ynez Valley as the drive destination for Los Angeles and believes we are competing strongly against Palm Springs. Will Henry shared an update on behalf of PICO, where they are debuting a new summer menu; they kicked off a new winemaker pairing series featuring a local winemaker each month which runs through the end of the year. Stormie is back to business travel in June, which will be a busy and exciting month; Hotel Corque and Hadsten House are still facing the same problem with hiring to meet the travel demand. Jonathan is excited about Visit Widget and its debut on VisitSYV.com and the mobile app. Jonathan also shared an update on the Feed the Valley program First & Oak is participating in which supports the local community by fighting food insecurity; it is completely funded locally. Danielle shared that she and Shelby have registered for ESTO, the educational summit for tourism organizations, which takes place this August in Los Angeles. The show also has an awards program which we will be submitting towards. Shelby shared that he will be taking a week vacation in June which will be the first time in two years he and the family have taken time off. Shelby gave Danielle accolades for the launch of Visit Widget and the engagement she has implemented on social. Shelby thanked the board for approving the initiatives we have in place, noting we are motivated and appreciative of the work we are able to accomplish with the board's active support and contributions. Linda congratulated Sherrie on her 20+ years of work promoting Alisal, Solvang and the Santa Ynez Valley. Linda extended our sympathies and respect to the chairman of Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, Kenneth Kahn, whose mother passed away. Linda thanked all our local businesses for their flexibility and ability to adapt for the last year and a half. She appreciates all they do and is proud of our community. Linda has been appointed by Solvang City Council to the subcommittee for their general plan. She sees how important it is that infrastructure is in place for tourism and that visitors have the best experience possible, balanced with care and responsibility to residents. Linda will not be at the June board meeting as she will be traveling for the first time since the pandemic out of state. Linda thanked all guests for attending today's meeting virtually.

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 am to the meeting of June 10, 2021, 9:00 a.m.. Due to COVID safety precautions, the meeting is tentatively scheduled remotely via Zoom.

Prepared by Danielle Laudon Ruse,
Vice President of Marketing

Approved by Linda Johansen,
Chairman