

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley June 10, 2021

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on June 10, 2021 at Chumash Casino Resort. President & CEO Shelby Sim called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Board members present included Stormie Strickland, Will Henry, Budi Kazali, Kathleen Cochran, and Jim Flagg. Shelby Sim, President & CEO, and Danielle Laudon Ruse, Vice President of Marketing, were present. Board Members Linda Johansen, Chairman, Jonathan Rosenson, Treasurer, Kimberly Walker and Louise Smith were absent. Members of the public present included Debra Eagle, Julio Penuela, Matt Wright, Anna Ferguson Sparks, Phil Carpenter, Xenia Bradford and Devon Defazio.

Debra Eagle spoke at public comment; on behalf of Alma Rosa, Debra shared the mental health programs the winery has been supporting for the last year; they are hosting a walk fundraiser on July 24th at the vineyard, with funds going directly to beneficiaries supporting mental health; Alma Rosa's owners will match the first \$70k in donations.

Shelby Sim began the meeting by welcoming incoming board members Kathleen Cochran of Alisal Guest Ranch & Resort (replacing Sherrie FitzGerald, a Solvang hotelier) and James (Jim) Flagg, of Hampton Inn & Suites (replacing Karla Azahar, a Buellton hotelier).

Stormie motioned to approve the May 13, 2021 minutes as presented; Kathleen seconded; All in favor. The May 13, 2021 minutes were approved.

Shelby Sim presented the current financials.

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

- COVID-19 Update: We are in yellow tier for a brief period before all restrictions to the public will be lifted on June 15th. Cal/OSHA plans to keep masks in place for all hospitality employees through July 31st.
- Board Officers: Board Officers will be voted on at the July 8 meeting; the proposed officers are Linda Johansen, Chairman, Jonathan Rosenson, Vice Chairman, Jim Flagg, Treasurer, Stormie Strickland, Secretary; Shelby encouraged any board members who have feedback or questions prior to the July 8th meeting to reach out to him.
- Fall Reception/Annual Meeting Presentation: The reception/annual meeting presentation is tentatively scheduled for September 29th, 4-7pm at Alisal Guest Ranch. There will be an outdoor reception and indoor presentation on the past year and plans for the future.
- Upcoming travel conferences & tradeshow:
 - Destinations International, Baltimore, July 13-15
 - ESTO, Los Angeles, August 15-17
 - IPW, Las Vegas, September 18-22
 - Telluride Wine Festival, Telluride, September 23-26 (tentative)
- DiscoverSYV Update: Season 2 will begin filming in July and already has a strong lineup of participants.
- North County Co-Op Update: Staff has met with Santa Maria Valley's DMO to discuss a north county co-op and will be meeting with Lompoc's DMO today to discuss the opportunity.
- Board Retreat Recap: Shelby reviewed the retreat agenda and discussion items.
- TasteSYV Update: Staff is in the process of scheduling the kickoff meeting with representatives from each town.
- Activity Report for month of May

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

In old business, Shelby shared on behalf of Linda her concerns about traffic in Solvang, which was noticeably challenging over the 3-day Memorial Weekend.

Board Comments:

Budi shared that the Ballard Inn & Gathering Table has been exceptionally busy, and things are going well; Jim shared April and May have been their best ever at Hampton Inn & Suites, and they are seeing good midweek traffic; comparing the valley to his properties in Carmel – he sees an even greater labor shortage up north from residents moving out of the area. Will shared business is going extremely well in Los Alamos; he is curious if this is due to post pandemic travel, or if Los Alamos is coming into its own with its reputation; Pico's numbers are almost double what they were in 2019 and he expects it to be a great summer. Kathleen shared Alisal is sold out through Labor Day and sold out every weekend through the end of year; demand is huge; group business is back and is helping fill their midweek; they held their first wedding this weekend. Stormie attended Destination West in Denver, her first tradeshow since prior to COVID-19; the show was on a much smaller scale but great to get back into it; where they normally would have had about 25 appointments, they received 17 this year. Danielle shared her enthusiasm for heading back out on the road to promote the Santa Ynez Valley; she thanked each board member and member of the public for being present today in person, knowing it's a challenge right now to leave their respective businesses. Shelby shared on behalf of the Los Alamos Theater Group they are back in business and have a play running July 2,3,9 and 10th at their permanent theater at The Depot; he is thrilled to be a part of it, and this will be his third production with the theater group.

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 am.

The annual meeting directly followed and opened at 9:49 am. Shelby announced the board slate for June 2021 to June 2022, which includes Linda Johansen, Jonathan Rosenson, Budi Kazali, Jim Flagg, Kathleen Cochran, Stormie Strickland, Kimberly Walker, Will Henry and Louise Smith.

VisitSYV's 2020 annual report to the cities and county was distributed as required; an annual marketing report was also distributed to our membership via newsletter; VisitSYV will hold a formal presentation at our Fall Networking Reception.

The annual meeting closed at 9:50am to the meeting of July 8, 2021 to be held at Chumash Casino Resort.

Prepared by Danielle Laudon Ruse,
Vice President of Marketing

Approved by Stormie Strickland