

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley August 12, 2021

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on August 12, 2021 at Chumash Casino Resort. Chairman Linda Johansen called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Board members present included Chairman Linda Johansen, Vice Chairman Jonathan Rosenson, Secretary Stormie Strickland, Treasurer Jim Flagg, Will Henry, Louise Smith and Kimberly Walker via conference line. Shelby Sim, President & CEO, and Danielle Laudon Ruse, Vice President of Marketing, were present. Board Members Budi Kazali and Kathleen Cochran were absent. Members of the public present included Anna Ferguson Sparks.

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

Jim Flagg presented the current financials.

Before the staff report, Shelby requested Stormie speak to the conference she just attended and the travel trends that were discussed.

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

- COVID-19 Update
- Fall Reception/Annual Meeting Presentation: We will revisit for a new date in October or November.
- Travel conferences & tradeshow
 - Destinations International recap, Baltimore, July 13-15
 - ESTO, Los Angeles, August 15-17, 5 award applications submitted; we are a finalist for Digital Campaign “The Place to Be”. The winner is set to be announced at an awards dinner during conference.
 - CH&LA Crystal Ball Conference, Napa, August 26th
 - IPW, Las Vegas, September 18-22
 - Telluride Wine Festival, Telluride, September 23-26
- DiscoverSYV Update, filming underway
- North County Co-Op Update
- TasteSYV Update
- Occupancy Project: Brenda Ball sent over a document that the Solvang Visitors Center used to track occupancy; Jonathan will share it with Shelby; Danielle suggested we look into purchasing STR reports for all of our hotels.
- Ventura Wine & Waves co-op: Staff is in talks with Ventura to create a co-op ad campaign utilizing Visit California newsletters and a social media paid campaign.
- Activity Report for month of July

Linda presented the revised expense policy which was pre-approved by the executive committee (Linda, Jonathan, Jim), explaining why the changes were necessary; Stormie made a motion to approve the new policy; Jonathan seconded; all in favor. The revised expense policy was approved.

Linda presented a request to make a \$1,000 donation to the Los Alamos Theater Group, which would help the new theater location develop infrastructure and equipment. Jonathan made a motion to approve; Will seconded; all in favor. The \$1,000 donation was approved.

Shelby and Danielle presented the SYV Podcast & Video Series action item. The Marketing Committee (Kimberly, Stormie, Will) and staff recommend “Package A”, a 5 episodes video/audio SYV podcast series and brand partnership with Krista Simmons, for a total of \$27,890. The package includes all production

costs, ownership of all video and audio assets, and promotion through Krista Simmons' owned channels. After discussion, Linda made a motion to approve "Package A" for the podcast. Kimberly seconded; all in favor. The visual and audio podcast was approved, and staff will begin working with Krista on development.

Danielle presented reports on VisitSYV.com web trends, ad campaigns with DVA, a Visit Widget update, and SEO with Madden Media for both Q2 and the month of July.

In new business, Shelby let the board know that Budi has put The Ballard Inn up for sale and it is currently in escrow.

Board Comments:

Kimberly is thankful they did not receive a wave of cancellations with the new mask mandate; they received a few, but they've really seen people go back to booking at the last minute; Kimberly thanked Stormie for the thorough insights/reporting from her conference. Jonathan noted the town is busy and he's thankful for that; he shared it's great to see our numbers continue to climb, and he loves to see the clicks to book and SEO improvements to our website; they are feeling the labor shortage and it has limited some restaurant operations. Will shared that Pico and Los Alamos have been going steady; Pico did have to close Tuesday nights due to staffing; as a result, Wednesday nights are extraordinarily busy; Will and Kali are opening a new business and will offer a farm and vineyard tour called The Dirt Shephard; in conjunction, there's going to be a retail space in Los Alamos and they'll open a new boutique with Chris and Karla Malloy, owners of Elderflat Farm. Louise shared that catering is coming back and she has many private bookings; they put a hold on To-Go at the Castle in mid-June as they saw restaurants opening back up, and plan to restart in September. Jim shared business is good at the Hampton Inn & Suites; they are setting revenue record breaking numbers which is coming mostly through rate; they are also experiencing limited labor; August is right on track and September and October are looking strong; they are also seeing last minute bookings trending. Stormie returned from Smart Meetings in San Diego, where she met primarily with California meeting planners but some from out of state as well; she has 2 site visits set up from this event; Stormie shared that she uses VisitSYV's Instagram account to showcase the area during her appointments. Danielle feels inspired by the Destinations International conference she and Shelby attended and is looking forward to the additional insights they'll receive at ESTO in LA coming up and anticipates finding vendors for data and insights at this conference. Shelby thanked the board for all their efforts; he knows it's the dog days of summer; he just dropped his son off at Cal Poly and cannot believe we are moving into September; Shelby said one of our goals is to work on getting administrative help. Linda thanked the team and entire board for their efforts; she shared that Solvang has approached her to be on a tourism advisory board for Solvang, and she's excited at the prospect of contributing and making Solvang a better experience for our visitors.

The meeting closed at 10:15am to the meeting of September 9, 2021 to be held at Chumash Casino Resort.

Prepared by Danielle Laudon Ruse,
Vice President of Marketing

Approved by Stormie Strickland,
Secretary