

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley October 14, 2021

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on October 14, 2021 at Chumash Casino Resort. President & CEO Shelby Sim called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Board members present included Vice Chairman Jonathan Rosenson (via conference line), Treasurer Jim Flagg, Secretary Stormie Strickland, Will Henry, Kimberly Walker, and Louise Smith. Shelby Sim, President & CEO, and Danielle Laudon Ruse, Vice President of Marketing, were present. Board Members Kathleen Cochran and Chairman Linda Johansen were absent. Members of the public present included Anna Ferguson Sparks, Philip Grant, Will Adams, Jennifer Nelson, and Greer Shull.

Kimberly motioned to ratify Greer Shull of Fess Parker Wine Country Inn to the board as an unincorporated hotelier, filling the opening left by Budi Kazali after he sold The Ballard Inn. Louise seconded, all in favor. Greer joined the board as an active, serving member.

Kimberly motioned to approve the September 9, 2021 minutes as presented; Jim seconded; Louise and Greer abstained. Without a quorum of votes from the September meeting, the September 9, 2021 minutes could not be approved.

Jim Flagg presented the current financials.

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

- COVID-19 Update
- Travel conferences & tradeshow
 - IPW, Las Vegas Recap
 - Telluride Wine Festival, Telluride, Recap
 - Cal-Travel, Huntington Beach, Recap
- Solvang Tourism Committee: Shelby and Danielle will speak with the advisory committee this afternoon.
- DiscoverSYV filming underway
- 2022 Destination Guide Launch
 - The board agreed on a January 2022 launch date.
 - Our publisher suggested using glossy cardstock this year based on current trends. Kimberly noted that the Santa Ynez Valley brand is more rustic, and glossy paper has more of a metro/city vibe; the board agreed that matte and the weight of the paper feels more luxurious and we'd like to continue with matte cardstock.
 - Printing costs have risen significantly, and our publisher has requested we split the additional print cost; the board provided an informal "yes" vote to pay \$7,500 for additional print cost (with Griffin also paying \$7,500); this will appear as a formal action item on the next board meeting.
- Restaurant Weeks 2022 Committee formed: Kimberly, Jonathan, Louise
- 2022 Budget Update: A draft has been completed by staff; meetings are scheduled with Linda and the remainder of the budget committee to finetune it.
- Sunset & TasteSYV Opportunity: DVA brought us an opportunity to partner with Sunset for next year's TasteSYV.
- 2022/23 Website Hosting: Staff brought in bids from other companies; FirstStreet Creative/Day After Day Marketing has agreed to match them. We'll formally vote to accept FSC's revised contract at the next meeting.
- SYV Podcast update: staff is holding off on executing the SYV video podcast series until 2022.
- Second quarter report

- SB Golf Invitational recap
- Activity Report for month of September

Staff presented a proposal to utilize Bandwango to digitize our Midweek Promotion to run the entire 1st quarter of 2022. There is a \$9,500 licensing fee that includes setup and will be annual. Kimberly made a motion to approve; Jonathan seconded, all in favor.

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

In new business, Shelby shared that staff is going to purchase STR reports and will be sending our hoteliers information on how they can sign up for free to get basic reporting from STR. This will also flesh out the reports we receive from STR.

Board Comments:

Stormie shared they have a solid lead for someone to move into Root 246; it's been extremely busy for Chumash properties. Jim shared things were good in September at Hampton Inn & Suites and rate was up. October is going well; they currently have fire crews in working the Alisal fire, with about 40 rooms for firefighters; they haven't had many cancellations yet; weekends have been very strong. Kimberly has been traveling out of the country; it felt safe and organized and she has a new appreciation for a national plan after experiencing it in France, where everywhere she visited they received the same messaging; they've seen some cancellations for the weekend from the fire; Hotel Ynez/Skyview was getting a lot of texts from current and former guests regarding the fire; they've also seen pickup that took care of those cancellations; they're getting ready for the holiday season and Hotel Ynez will have a winter wonderland, featuring mulled wine, hot chocolate, and holiday cookies. Jonathan wished everyone a beautiful weekend and hopes to see people at Day in the Country in Los Olivos. Louise has done several catering gigs in the last month and has ramped up takeout at To Go at the Castle; they are doing Friday and Saturday night takeout, and for locals they're opening for breakfast and lunch on Mondays and Tuesdays. Greer shared they're experiencing fire anxiety as well at Fess Parker Wine Country Inn and received some cancellations; they've been busy midweek as well but have seen a slight traffic decline. Danielle shared she's happy with the results of our recent conferences and tradeshow and will be back out there starting this coming Sunday for the Central Coast Tourism Council's annual workshop. Shelby is grateful and thankful for the work we do; Day in the Country is coming this weekend and they've sold more wine passports than ever before; we will film a segment for DiscoverSYV there on Saturday.

The meeting adjourned at 10:04am to the meeting of November 18, 2021 to be held at Chumash Casino Resort.

Prepared by Danielle Laudon Ruse,
Vice President of Marketing

Approved by Stormie Strickland,
Secretary