

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley November 18, 2021

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on November 18, 2021 at Chumash Casino Resort. Chairman Linda Johansen called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and thanked Chumash for hosting our meetings, and thanked Chef Peter for taking such excellent care of the board, staff, and guests. Board members present included Chairman Linda Johansen, Vice Chairman Jonathan Rosenson, Treasurer Jim Flagg, Secretary Stormie Strickland, Kathleen Cochran, Greer Shull, Will Henry (via conference line), and Louise Smith. Shelby Sim, President & CEO, and Danielle Laudon Ruse, Vice President of Marketing, were present. Board Member Kimberly Walker was absent. Members of the public present included Brenda Ball, Philip Grant, Anna Ferguson Sparks, Dan Johansen, Will Adams, Debra Eagle, and Don Conner.

Kathleen motioned to approve the September 9, 2021 minutes as presented; Jonathan seconded; all in favor, the September 9, 2021 minutes were approved.

Louise motioned to approve the October 14, 2021 minutes as presented; Jim seconded; Linda abstained due to her absence at the October meeting, all others in favor. The October 14, 2021 minutes were approved.

Jim Flagg presented the current financials.

Linda announced that the board reviewed staff performance and the bonus structure for 2021, voting unanimously on the information Linda presented to them. Linda shared the board appreciates Shelby's leadership and the hard work of our staff, stating they are well deserving of the recognition.

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

- COVID-19 Update
- Solvang Tourism Committee – October 14th meeting recap
- DiscoverSYV filming underway
- 2022 Destination Guide Paper update: Matte paper is not available due to shortages in the supply chain. The binding will be matte, the inside will be glossy. Launch Date: January 13th
- Restaurant Weeks 2022 update: The dates are January 17-31st and format is 3 course meals for \$30, \$40, \$50.
- Sunset & TasteSYV update: The working title for next year's event is Sunset Presents Taste of the Santa Ynez Valley; Sunset asked if we would do a media buy; we're proposing a \$15k media spend for \$30k worth of advertising buy. This will be a future action item.
- Membership renewals & member appreciation reception: The member event will take place Thursday, December 9th at Coquelicot, and be catered by All Purpose Flower from 5 – 7pm; members must commit to renew in order to attend.
- Midweek Promotion update: Staff is in process with Bandwango initiating the program; we have over 25 participants so far.
- KEYT seasonal ad buy: We are renewing our KEYT annual ad buy for the holiday season. We'll air our 15 second segments bookending the morning news shows.
- Holiday décor sponsorships: We are decorating the Solvang Alisal windmill, and supplementing and sponsoring lighting/décor plans for each town.
- STR reports
- Activity Report for month of October

Due to supply chain shortages, the cost of printing for the 2022 destination guide costs has increased significantly. At last month's meeting, staff received verbal confirmation from the board that we should share half the cost of this increase with our publisher, Griffin Publishing, but it would require a formal

vote as an action item at the November meeting. With the formal action item noted on this month's agenda, Kathleen made a motion to approve \$7,500 in additional print costs for the annual guide; Jonathan seconded. The \$7,500 print cost was approved.

Shelby presented the draft 2022 budget, which staff drafted with budget committee members Jim Flagg, Linda Johansen, and Jonathan Rosenson. Linda made a motion to approve the budget as presented; Louise seconded, all in favor. The 2022 budget was approved.

Shelby presented the 2022 DVA spend and strategy as a separate action item. Danielle worked with DVA to finetune and adjust the marketing strategy, taking into account the successes of 2021's spend, while making adjustments to incorporate new strategies that will include geo-conquesting, native advertising and connected tv. Marketing committee members Stormie Strickland, Will Henry, and Kimberly Walker reviewed and preapproved the \$245,000 DVA budget. Stormie made a motion to formally approve the \$245,000 spend with DVA; Jonathan seconded, all in favor. The DVA \$245,000 allocation for 2022 was approved.

Shelby presented a two-year web maintenance contract with Day After Day Marketing dba First Street Creative (FSC), in the amount of \$14,400 annually. This is over a 50% savings on the previous contract, which was negotiated after Shelby received BIDs in this amount from other providers. Jonathan motioned to approve the new contract; Louise seconded, all in favor. Staff will work with FSC on the new two-year contract.

Shelby presented a one-year contract with data provider, Zartico, which would supply VisitSYV with three years of purchasing and visitation data for the entire Santa Ynez Valley. With this data, VisitSYV will be able to review monthly spend and visitation to the area, down to what visitors are purchasing, and how many visitors are day-trippers vs. overnight stays. Staff will also be able to denote which neighborhoods and cities within our targeted audiences are spending the most during their visits, allowing us to better target visitors for the greatest impact. After discussion, Kathleen made a motion to approve the \$20,000 contract. Greer seconded; Jonathan abstained, while all others approved. Staff will initiate the data process with Zartico.

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 October.

In old business, Shelby shared we will go further down the road with Sunset Magazine on a partnership for Taste of the Santa Ynez Valley in 2022 and will present a future action item regarding the partnership. In new business, Shelby was delighted to announce that we are hiring Brenda Ball as a part time administrator, to begin working with staff in December.

Board Comments:

Danielle thanked the entire board for being here and for the work they do, noting her appreciation. Jonathan is forecasting at Mirabelle Inn to have the best November in their history; he's excited that we have some great promotions in 2022, between our Midweek Promotion and Restaurant Weeks; they are sold out for Thanksgiving next week and he's happy to see the rewards of all the hard work coming through. Stormie shared there's a third party who will be leasing Root 246; Stormie hopes to have more to share next month. Shelby thanked Stormie for her help this morning, and for always assisting us and hosting our meetings at Chumash. Jim shared October at Hampton Inn & Suites was stronger than August, and November looks to be as strong as October; it's a little softer on the weekends and they are not selling out every Saturday night but getting close;

they are starting to see some business return to Vandenberg which will help our midweek; it's hard to find staff again. Stormie reported that people are showing up to their job fairs, though some positions are harder than others to fill. Will shared things have been very good at Pico in Los Alamos with high volume, particularly this time of year; they are working on their new business down the street called The Greenhouse in partnership with Elderflat Farm; they're looking to expand the offerings of Los Alamos beyond food and wine; their new agricultural tourism business The Dirt Shepard is coming along, they've built the website and are getting the right staffing in place; they have partners lined up and a van for the tours. Kathleen said they'll have the best December ever at Alisal Ranch; business is doing extremely well and they won another award from Conde Nast Travel; Alisal is rebranding, shifting further into the luxury category and they have 30 rooms renovated so far; they're reskinning their website now and will do an overhaul next year; they're also changing the name to The Alisal Ranch in the Santa Ynez Valley; they'll have a new logo, new typeface, and new colors, and have just launched Shop Alisal with merchandise available online. Louise noted what a pleasure it is to be here, and announced she has made the tough decision to close To Go at the Castle and catering for now; she's going to take a break and allow herself to regroup until next year; with that, she announced she has offered her resignation to Shelby and expressed what a pleasure it has been to serve on the board. The board and staff will miss Louise greatly. Greer shared things have stayed busy at Fess Parker and they're selling out almost every weekend; they put together a festive package for the holiday season partnering with valley businesses and are promoting the region as a great holiday shopping destination. Shelby thanked the board for their recognition, for appreciating us, and for reading all the materials and coming back to staff with their expertise; he thanked Louise for her service and noted she's always welcome. Linda thanked all guests for being here, for their input, and for caring; she encouraged them to contact the board with anything. Linda thanked Louise for all her work on the board and thanked the entire board for the passion and commitment to the valley; she thanked Danielle and Shelby, noting how they love their jobs, have a vast knowledge and skill, and make great teammates. Linda welcomed Brenda to the team and commended her vast knowledge of tech and the Santa Ynez Valley. She closed the meeting noting we have a lot to be thankful for and wished everyone a wonderful Thanksgiving and holiday season.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10am to the meeting of December 9, 2021 to be held at Chumash Casino Resort.

Prepared by Danielle Laudon Ruse,
Vice President of Marketing

Approved by Stormie Strickland,
Secretary