

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley January 9, 2022

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on January 9, 2022 via Zoom. 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, Kathleen Cochran, Greer Shull, Will Henry, and Kimberly Walker. Shelby Sim, President & CEO and Danielle Laudon Ruse, Vice President of Marketing were present. Members of the public present included Dr. Kenneth Harwood, Jody Williams, Debra Eagle, Anna Ferguson Sparks, and Chris McIntosh.

Dr. Kenneth Harwood shared an economic update during public comment.

Kathleen motioned to approve the December 9, 2021 minutes as presented; Kimberly seconded; all in favor except Jim Flagg who abstained due to his absence; the December 9, 2021 minutes were approved.

Linda made a motion to ratify Dave Moser as a new board member, representing at-large membership and replacing the opening that was left by Louise Smith. Jim seconded, all in favor. Dave Moser was ratified to the board.

Jim presented the current financials.

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

- COVID-19 Update
- DiscoverSYV filming underway
- Membership appreciation reception recap
- 3rd qtr report
- 2022 Destination Guide: Launch Date pushed back due to staffing at printers
- Restaurant Weeks 2022 update
- Sunset & TasteSYV Opportunity update
- Membership renewals update
- Midweek Promotion launched
- STR Reports update
- State of the Industry Event, Orange County: Shelby to speak at a panel, January 24th
- Visit California Outlook Forum: February 14 – 16th, San Francisco
- Activity Report for month of December

Shelby thanked the Chumash Casino & Resort for generously hosting our meetings; we're now looking for a new location and Will Henry has offered the use of PICO. The board unanimously agreed to the new meeting location.

Shelby and Linda introduced Dave Moser, welcoming him onto the board. Dave told the group a little more about himself and his history with the Santa Ynez Valley and Sunstone Winery. Dave apologized for the late entrance after having car trouble on the way to the winery.

Staff recommended a one-year contract with Verdin Marketing for social media services. This would include development of monthly social media content calendars, scheduling of posts, and shared monitoring and engagement with audiences. The contract total is \$24,000. Kimberly motioned to approve the contract, Stormie seconded. All in favor. Staff will proceed with Verdin Marketing and report back on the progress at next month's meeting.

Danielle presented reports on VisitSYV.com web trends, the progress of our ad campaigns with DVA, a

Visit Widget update, Restaurant Weeks update, and SEO with Madden Media for the month of December.

In Old Business, Shelby provided an update and preview of Zartico data. This included a heatmap that shows visitation/traffic trends across the Santa Ynez Valley.

Board Comments:

Jim Flagg shared that 2021 finished very strong for the Hampton Inn & Suites; January is down, and staffing is an issue with people out sick. Jim is seeing the same thing in Carmel and San Francisco. Stormie shared the third party leasing out the old Root 246 has taken over and anticipates opening in April. Hadsten is closed for remodel, set to begin in February with a mid-summer reopening date slated. Hotel Corque did very well during the holidays but is also seeing the January slowdown. Jonathan reported much of the same for Mirabelle Inn and First & Oak; the restaurant closed at the start of the month due to staff being out. They will, however, be ready for Restaurant Weeks! Kathleen shared an update from Alisal, echoing that 2021 was the best year they had. 2022 is looking good. Alisal has been closed for the start of the year and they hope to reopen this coming Sunday. Golf, tennis and the pickle ball courts remain open. Kimberly shared an update from Hotel Ynez and Skyview. Their goal is to get through January without having to close any of their entities due to shortages. Staff has been amazing pulling double shifts and making sure they're able to remain open. Kimberly believes they're on the other side of it now. They're seeing a lot of last-minute bookings. Greer shared an update on behalf of Fess Parker Wine Country Inn; Rick Segovia has come on board as their new general manager, he has a wealth of experience in the Santa Ynez Valley having worked for them in the early 2000's and then onto Santa Ynez Inn and Ballard Inn. They feel lucky to have him. Half the inn is closed currently for roof repairs. Dave shared an update on behalf of Sunstone. They've been dealing with similar challenges but have strong reservations for the weekend. Danielle is excited about the progress being made with Zartico and the additional vendors we've brought on for 2022. Shelby thanked everyone for attending and encouraged everyone to remain vigilante and healthy. He gave Danielle a shoutout for the work she's been doing between the midweek promotion, Restaurant Weeks, and onboarding Brenda as our new website and membership administrator. Shelby added that he'll be speaking on a panel in Orange County moderated by Visit Anaheim, alongside LA Tourism & Convention Board, Long Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau, Visit Newport Beach, and Ventura Visitors & Convention Bureau. Linda thanked Shelby, Danielle and Brenda for their continued efforts and expertise. Linda thanked Stormie and the Chumash for their three years of hosting our meetings; she hopes Stormie will tell Chef Peter how we thoroughly enjoyed his food and attention. Linda welcomed Dave to the board and looks forward to working with him. Linda shared her thoughts on Julefest and what joy it brought to our visitors and community this season. King Frederik and Pea Soup Andersen's Inn had a banner year and they'll be doing some fun updates to their properties. Linda thanked the board for their commitment to the organization. She thanked Dr. Harwood for being here on Zoom and sharing his excellent report, and thanked Will for hosting us starting next month. Linda encouraged everyone to stay safe and is hopeful this surge will ebb in February.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10am to the meeting of February 10, 2022

Prepared by Danielle Laudon Ruse,
Vice President of Marketing

Approved by Stormie Strickland,
Secretary