

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley May 12, 2022

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on May 12, 2022 at Pico, 458 Bell St, Los Alamos, CA. Chairman Linda Johansen called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Board members present included Chairman Linda Johansen, Treasurer Jim Flagg, Will Henry, and Dave Moser, with Greer Shull, Kimberly Walker, and Vice Chairman Jonathan Rosenson present via phone. Secretary Stormie Strickland and Kathleen Cochran were absent. Shelby Sim, President & CEO, Danielle Laudon Ruse, Vice President of Marketing, and Brenda Ball, Website & Membership Administrator, were present. Members of the public present included Anna Ferguson Sparks, Brandon Monteleone, Jennifer Nelson, Channing Jones, Philip Grant, Vashti Wilson, Denise El Amin, Erica Flores, and Eva Powers.

Linda made room introductions.

Will motioned to approve the April 14, 2022 minutes as presented; Jim seconded; all in favor; the April 14, 2022 minutes were approved.

Jim presented the current financials.

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

- Retained over 93% of membership since reintroducing dues
 - Including 4 new members in the last month
- DiscoverSYV filming underway
- Annual meeting, Thursday, 9/8
- Board Elections, May 2022
- Shelby asked if the board would like to push the June board meeting back a week to June 16th due to travel; the consensus was the meeting could be moved to this date.
- IPW, June 5 – 8th, Orlando, FL
- Telluride Wine Festival, June 23 – 26, Telluride, CO
- Donating \$2,500 to the Santa Innes Mission Fundraising event for general upkeep
- Donating \$1,500 to SYV Botanic Garden to help build Nature Trail for students and visitors to enjoy
 - Eva Powers spoke to the board about the garden. It's a 2 ½ acre property and was previously a dump site. It's now a lush landscape with native plants to Santa Barbara County and Santa Ynez Valley. The Santa Barbara cruise ships have recently contacted the gardens and are interested in bringing groups out to enjoy them. The Botanic Garden offers events and classes and will be available as a venue coming soon.
- Activity Report for month of April

Danielle presented reports on VisitSYV.com website trends, updates, and SEO, the progress of our ad campaigns with DVA, Verdin Marketing, and Visit Widget for the month of April.

The board reviewed the following grant request:

- Madi's Treasure Box, SYV Juneteenth, Saturday, June 18, 2022, requested amount: \$4,000, recommended amount: \$2,000
 - Vashti Wilson presented on behalf of the event, detailing the history of the event and the updates they're planning to make this year. Linda made a motion to support the \$4,000 request in full; Will seconded, all in favor. A \$4,000 grant was approved.

In new business, Shelby mentioned staff is researching a Bend trip to meet in person with the entire DVA team. Shelby is also looking into attending the DMA West CEO Summit which would immediately follow the Telluride Wine Festival.

Dave shared an update on behalf of our local wine region, noting the sentiment amongst tasting rooms in April was slightly down. The first half of the month was strong while the second half was lower than the prior year. However, as we're about to hit summer and Memorial Day weekend, things should start to pick up again.

Board Comments:

Jonathan shared Coquelicot's garden is nearing close of its renovations; things are looking good and there's not much to report otherwise. Greer shared that May is looking strong for Fess Parker while June is still a bit light particularly midweek. Jim shared April was very good from a revenue standpoint; it was the second strongest month ever at the inn. Occupancy is down but rate is strong, and labor is still a challenge. Dave noted Sunstone has a lot of events scheduled for the year, which he'll share with Brenda for our website. Sunsets at Sunstone will return Memorial Day weekend and Dave will be in touch with the hotels to ensure their guests know about the promotion. Will shared they had an exciting month at PICO with the addition of the new chef who has put together a fabulous locally sourced menu. April was good but not great, and he's hopeful it will pick up in May. Danielle shared she attended the Central Coast Tourism Council planning session and there are some collaboration opportunities that may arise from it. Shelby noted we're planning the annual meeting at Alisal, in September, it will be an evening event from 5pm -7:30pm. Brenda expressed that our website is gradually moving upward; looking back 2.5 years to compare to pre-covid, we're seeing a solid increase. Brenda reminded everyone there's a form on the website where folks can add their events. Linda thanked the staff for their incredible hard work. She understands how hard they're working to prepare for the next convention (IPW). Linda encouraged the attending public to reach out and communicate with staff and the board. She thanked them for listening and attending the meetings to find out how they can get involved. Linda's son got married at the Alisal this weekend and she expressed how it was important for him to showcase his community to his friends. Linda encouraged everyone to go out and vote in the 10best categories that Los Alamos and Solvang were recently nominated in.

The meeting adjourned at 10:02 am to the meeting of June 16, 2022

Prepared by Danielle Laudon Ruse,
Vice President of Marketing

~~Approved by Linda Johansen,~~
Chairman