

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley July 14, 2022

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held the annual meeting on July 14, 2022 at Pico, 458 Bell St, Los Alamos, CA. 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, Will Henry, and Greer Shull, with Dave Moser and Kathleen Cochran present via phone. Treasurer Jim Flagg and Kimberly Walker 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 Philip Grant, Debra Eagle, Vivian Olsen Kaslow, Vashti Wilson, and Anna Ferguson Sparks.

Linda welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted we will have an in-person annual meeting on Thursday, September 8th at Alisal Ranch, 5pm – 7:30pm. Linda noted that without any new bids for board positions, we did not have an election and the current slate of VisitSYV board of directors will remain the same for a two-year term. Board officers who serve a one-year term in their position will be voted on at the general board meeting to follow. The annual meeting closed at 9:01am.

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on July 14, 2022 at Pico, 458 Bell St, Los Alamos, CA immediately following the annual meeting.

Linda made room introductions.

Debra Eagle, Vivian Olsen Kaslow, and Vashti Wilson spoke at public comment. Debra shared information on Alma Rosa's upcoming vineyard walk which will benefit mental health services in Santa Barbara County. Vivian Olsen Kaslow introduced herself, noting she is the daughter of Suzy and Bent Olsen and will be managing operations at the Solvang Inn & Cottages and Olsen's Bakery. Vashti Wilson reported on the success of the SYV Juneteenth celebration and thanked VisitSYV and its board for the grant support. Shelby noted during public comment that VisitSYV will be supporting the Solvang Chamber of Commerce State of the City with a \$1,000 event sponsorship.

Board Officer positions were ratified as follows to serve a one-year term:

- Nomination and ratification of 22-23 Board Chairman
 - Jonathan Rosenson motioned for Linda Johansen to serve; Will Henry seconded; all in favor.
- Nomination and ratification of 22-23 Board Vice Chairman
 - Linda Johansen motioned for Jonathan Rosenson to serve; Will Henry seconded; all in favor.
- Nomination and ratification of 22-23 Board Treasurer
 - Stormie Strickland motioned for Jim Flagg to serve; Jonathan Rosenson seconded; all in favor.
- Nomination and ratification of 22-23 Board Secretary
 - Greer Shull motioned for Stormie Strickland to serve; Jonathan Rosenson seconded; all in favor.

Will motioned to approve the May 12, 2022 minutes as presented; Jonathan seconded; all in favor; the May 12, 2022 minutes were approved.

Shelby Sim presented the current financials.

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

- IPW Recap
- Discover The Santa Ynez Valley Season 2 is complete
- Telluride Recap: Staff poured wine and educated Telluride visitors (qualified buyers) on Santa Barbara County and Santa Ynez Valley wines.
- DMA West CEO Summit recap: Shelby learned about the importance of active shooter training; also

discussed creating additional benefits for residents in addition to visitors as part of destination management and goodwill.

- Destinations International, 7/18 – 7/22 in Toronto
- ESTO by U.S. Travel, 8/6 – 8/10 in Grand Rapids
- Next board meeting will be 8/18 due to travel (ESTO)
- Board retreat, August 25th, The Inn at Mattei's Tavern, 11:30am – 3:30pm
- Annual meeting, Thursday, 9/8, Alisal Ranch, 5:00pm – 7:30pm
- Potential R&D trip to Bend, Oregon to meet with DVA staff
- Zartico Update: The company that tracks the cell phone and credit card spend 3rd party data is having a difficult time processing data for our townships.
- Activity Report for months of May & June

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 months of May and June.

In new business, Shelby shared that printing costs continue to rise, and we will need to supplement the printing costs for the 2023 Destination Guide by \$10,000 to account for the increase.

Board Comments:

Greer reported business picked up towards the end of June for Fess Parker with short booking windows. Stormie shared Craft Corque House is now open for breakfast and lunch, outdoors only for now. The tentative open date for The Hadsten is December. Hotel Corque has been busy with steady summer bookings. Jonathan noted midweek business is doing okay while weekends are very strong. They are seeing a dip on the retail side, noting it feels like less people are traveling than last year, and it could be gas prices or based on international travel. Shelby shared travel sentiment reports are showing that inflation is hurting travel. Danielle thanked everyone for being here and spending the time serving on the board, knowing how busy everyone is with their summer schedule. Will noted Pico's relationship with local farms is driving the quality of their restaurant higher. They just launched brunch and have an excellent cocktail program to go with it. Shelby thanked the board for being here and also shared how impressed he is with Danielle; even though she came down with covid, she still pushed through while quarantined to make sure VisitSYV had everything needed. Shelby thanked Brenda for her drive and competitive spirit; everything she's doing with the website and SEO is amazing. Brenda shared an SEO tip for everyone to implement on their websites. Linda reported travel is a challenge everywhere right now; prices are high for airfare and services are low. Those that are doing that trip to Europe right now will eventually slow because of how challenging it is. Linda does believe the drive market will come back strong after people get tired of the costs and poor services of air travel right now. Linda thanked Will for having us here at Pico and thanked the public attendees for coming, noting we welcome suggestions and comments always. On the morning news, she saw that SLO is doing another midweek promotion during summer season. Linda congratulated Santa Ynez Days for a great event. Linda encouraged people to attend Solvang's discussion on whether Solvang should develop a pedestrian center coming up. Danielle will share the details with the board via email so they may attend. Kathleen apologized for not being there in person, she just received her vaccine booster. At Alisal, they're experiencing short cancellations related to covid but filling them well. They're finding group business still coming but short term. On the meeting side, people appear to be in a wait and see mode. Dave reported the wine industry consensus for tasting rooms is it has been a challenging month and a half. Sunstone had an industry party a few weeks ago and got a great sense of where everyone is. Roughly tasting rooms are down 10-20% in visitation. Some are down as high as 30-40%. He encouraged everyone to support the smaller tasting rooms who are seeing the largest decrease. Santa Barbara County has been nominated in the USA Today contest as best wine region and Dave encouraged everyone to vote. Sunstone is open every Friday until sunset with live music through Labor Day. They added a new stage and have outdoor movie nights coming out as well.

Linda thanked the board for continuing to serve and officers for continuing as well.

The meeting adjourned at 10:07 am to the meeting of June 16, 2022

Prepared by Danielle Laudon Ruse,
Vice President of Marketing

Approved by Stormie Strickland,
Secretary