

## Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley November 10, 2022

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on November 10, 2022 at PICO in Los Alamos. Chairman Linda Johansen called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Board members present included Chairman Linda Johansen, Treasurer Jim Flagg, Secretary Stormie Strickland, Dave Moser and Greer Shull, and Vice Chairman Jonathan Rosenson and Will Henry via phone. Kathleen Cochran and Kimberly Walker were absent. Shelby Sim, President & CEO and Danielle Laudon Ruse, Vice President of Marketing were present. Brenda Ball, Website & Membership Administrator, was absent. Members of the public present included Cheryl Shallanberger, Chelsea Rushing, Stephen Villa, Mayra Terrazas, Teisha Wheaton, Anna Ferguson Sparks, and Phil Carpenter.

Linda made room introductions and opened the meeting by congratulating Shelby, Danielle, Brenda, and everyone involved in creating a successful Taste of the Santa Ynez Valley this year.

Jim motioned to approve the October 13, 2022 minutes as presented; Greer seconded, all in favor except Linda who abstained due to her absence at the October meeting. The October 13, 2022 minutes were approved.

Jim Flagg presented the current financials.

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

- Taste of the Santa Ynez Valley recap, 11/3 – 11/6
  - Dave Moser attended the Los Olivos event and noted he met attendees from Long Beach, Orange County and other drive markets. Since many attendees were already fans of the Santa Ynez Valley, he suggested targeting new audiences next year. Danielle noted that we can add geo-conquesting to our TasteSYV 2023 campaign next year. Staff also recommended changing Sunday's grand finale event next year to a daytime event.
- 2023 Destination Guide Update
  - We will not increase our number of print in 2023 and will plan for 70k copies.
- Budget Committee Update
  - Executive staff is aiming for a November 21<sup>st</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting with the budget committee.
- Activity Report for month of October

Shelby and Linda presented the following action item:

Approve Westways Discover Co-Op, Two-page spread in Aug/Sept/Oct. 2023 issue for \$6,667

- The Co-Op is shared with the City of Solvang and Buellton Visitors Bureau and targets 500,000 AAA member households in Southern California with active and affluent travelers and consumers. VisitSYV would leverage the advertorial to promote 2023's Taste of the Santa Ynez Valley and additional fall and winter events.
- Linda introduced the action item and noted the co-op provides our members an opportunity to advertise for an affordable price in the travel publication. Anna Ferguson Sparks noted they're also being very kind to us editorially leading up to this issue with coverage in the works.
- Linda made a motion to approve the Westways co-op; Greer seconded. All in favor except Dave who abstained. The Westways Co-Op was approved.

Danielle presented reports on VisitSYV.com website trends and updates, the status of DVA ad campaigns, Verdin Marketing, and a recap of Taste of the Santa Ynez Valley promotion, coverage, and attendance. The majority of TasteSYV attendees came from overnight drive markets in California along with 12 different states and 4 countries. Staff and board discussed opening ticket sales earlier in 2023 and considering earlier dates in the season.

In Old Business & New Business, Shelby shared Visit California has partnered with Michelin with a \$600k investment to expand the Michelin Guide on the west coast. We're proud to share two restaurants have been recognized by Michelin this year: Peasants FEAST in Solvang and Bar le Cote in Los Olivos. These two restaurants have an opportunity for more recognition which will be announced in early December. During new business, Linda asked the board to keep an eye out for an email regarding staff salaries for next year and bonuses.

#### Board Comments:

Dave shared now is a fantastic time for people to visit the wineries as it's perfect fall season for the changing of the colors and to see post-harvest activities; he noted both Veterans weekend and black Friday weekend are coming up and these are traditionally some of the top weekends for wineries before we get into the winter season. Stormie shared The Hadsten is set to open Jan 23<sup>rd</sup>, and the Chumash Cultural Center has a target open date of April 15<sup>th</sup>. Hotel Corque is busy. She attended Smart Meetings in Oxnard and it went really well. Greer shared they're coming off a busy October at Fess Parker Wine Country Inn and November is looking really strong; renovations will take place at the end of February. Jonathan apologized for not being here in person, he's heading to New York for a natural wine fair. He's echoed the sentiment that Taste of the Santa Ynez Valley went incredibly well; he saw some great photos from the events he was unable to attend. Mirabelle Inn has been steady. They just did a launch party at Coquelicot for their new garden; things are going well at the restaurant too. They're ready for the holidays and will be open for all of them. A New Year's Eve menu will come out later this week. Shelby thanked Jonathan for donating his space for the Los Olivos dinner, it was the perfect setting. Jim shared business remains very good at Hampton Inn, occupancy is strong, and rates are good. He's looking forward to 2023; from his knowledge it looks like launches at Vandenberg will be down. Danielle commended Shelby on his leadership for Taste of the Santa Ynez Valley and thanked all of our partners for their major contributions to the success of the four-day festival. She shared on a personal note that she and her husband are expecting and will be adding a member to their family in Q2 of 2023. Shelby shared Taste of the Santa Ynez Valley was a dream come true and he's so proud of the execution. He shared gratitude to Danielle for being a great partner for Taste. Linda shared her love and gratitude for Shelby and Danielle and all the hard work they've put in. Taste was spectacular and will continue to grow. She thanked Danielle for sharing her exciting news with us and is so thrilled for her. In the last 2 months, Linda has been to 4 countries, traveling via 8 airlines to over 30 hotels, and what it boils down to and why visitors want to go back to places is the experience they have and the people they meet along the way who give you the best customer service possible. Linda believes we are so blessed to have the perfect combination here, with all these wineries, restaurants, hotels, all within 15-30 minutes of each other. She believes we can always be better, upping our level of hospitality while also reaching out to new audiences to continue to grow and excel. She congratulated all the individuals and local businesses who worked together on Taste, and once again congratulated our staff and shared the highest respect to them. Shelby added a plug for the Los Alamos Theater Group which is performing this weekend and the following: they're doing 8 performances this round, and the play opens Friday night.

The meeting adjourned at 9:58am to the meeting of December 8, 2022.

Prepared by Danielle Laudon Ruse,  
Vice President of Marketing

Approved by Stormie Strickland,  
Secretary