

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley December 8, 2022

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley held a board meeting on December 8, 2022 at PICO in Los Alamos. Chairman Linda Johansen called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Board members present included Chairman Linda Johansen, Secretary Stormie Strickland, Kathleen Cochran, Will Henry, Dave Moser and Greer Shull, and Vice Chairman Jonathan Rosenson via phone. Kimberly Walker and Treasurer Jim Flagg 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 Cheryl Shallenberger, Julie Hayek, Philip Grant, Teisha Wheaton, and Tim Snider.

Linda made room introductions.

Kathleen motioned to approve the November 10, 2022 minutes as presented; Will seconded, all in favor. The November 10, 2022 minutes were approved.

Linda noted the board approved salary increases and a bonus structure for staff.

Shelby Sim presented the current financials.

Tim Snider, President of Fess Parker Winery, presented an update on behalf of the Santa Barbara Vintners Association as the president of their board. They've recently hired a director of events, are wrapping up a promotional grant for tourism in California and have shifted their membership and budget from calendar to fiscal. Shelby and the board expressed their thanks for Tim opening the door to communication and future opportunities.

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

- 2023 Destination Guide Reception
 - Thursday, December 15th, Brave & Maiden, 5pm – 7pm
 - Will be catered by Cailloux Cheese
 - We'll reveal the cover and have guides available for members to take.
- Restaurant Weeks 2023 Update
 - January 16 – 31st
 - 3 Courses for \$30, \$40, \$50
- First Quarter Travel – Shelby shared tentative plans for Q1 travel, much of which will take place in March. Travel will include a Copenhagen tradeshow, a wine and spirits tradeshow in France, and Visit California's Outlook Forum. Linda suggested based on the busy March schedule, we do not hold a March 2023 board meeting.
- Activity Report for month of November

Shelby presented the 2023 budget for approval which has been preapproved and recommended by the budget committee; Kathleen made note that we will be adding some of our savings to the budget to spend on new initiatives and Linda also made note that we've increased our charitable donations. After no further discussion, Linda made a motion to approve the 2023 budget as presented; Will seconded, all in favor. The 2023 budget was approved.

Danielle presented reports on VisitSYV.com website trends and updates, the status of DVA ad campaigns, Verdin Marketing, and an update on the upcoming 2023 Santa Ynez Valley Restaurant Weeks promotion.

In Old Business & New Business, the board formed the following committees for 2023:

- Marketing Committee: Linda Johansen, Greer Shull, Will Henry
- Grant Matrix Committee: Kathleen Cochran, Stormie Strickland, Jim Flagg

Executive staff will schedule meetings with these committees in January.

Shelby thanked Will Henry for hosting our meetings for the past year in Los Alamos and noted we will be transitioning to Alisal Ranch in 2023. He poured a celebratory bottle of bubbles and raised a toast to the board, and Danielle presented the promotional recap video of Taste of the Santa Ynez Valley from November 2022. The dates for next year's event is tentatively scheduled for September 28 – October 1st.

Board Comments:

Dave shared after 4 ½ years of Sunstone, he's moving on and his last day will be next Thursday the 15th. He'll continue to do some consulting and advising for a couple months. Linda thanked Dave for his service, he's been a great contributor. Dave will do marketing and business consulting in the interim. Stormie shared she has had a lot of fun on the board with everyone and looks forward to seeing what's going to happen in 2023. Q1 is shaping up nicely for Hotel Corque. The Hadsten is one month behind and they're looking at a March opening. Greer shared gratitude for being on the board. They're starting renovations at Fess Parker Wine Country Inn in the new year and Epiphany will also see a bit of a refresh. Kathleen shared they recently rebranded Alisal Ranch but are getting ready to launch their new website tomorrow. They are making their push into the luxury dude ranch market strongly. Their rates have tripled in the last 3 years and they'll finish room renovations by March 15th. Will shared November was a great month at PICO, they sold out of a traditional Thanksgiving dinner. They have a new series called "Know thy Farmer, Know thy Vintner" which has been a success. They'll continue with it next year. They have two events scheduled for the holidays, a New Year's Eve pre fixe dinner and a Bubble Bash. Jonathan shared First & Oak is doing a formal champagne tasting with appetizers on the 17th from 2-4pm. Jonathan wished everyone happy holidays, noting it's been a great year and a lot of folks came out strong. He loves learning from everyone on the board; everyone has something brilliant to contribute to the final equation. Jonathan is glad we're spending money and seeking other outlets in the marketing world. First & Oak will have a Christmas Eve dinner, a Christmas Day dinner as well as a New Year's Eve dinner. They recently retained their Michelin plate. Danielle shared major gratitude to the board, the members at large, and Brenda for all their wonderful contributions in 2022. Last, she thanked Shelby for his hard work and leadership. Brenda shared she's celebrating her one year anniversary with Visit the Santa Ynez Valley and noted we have two next Christmas blogs live. Shelby shared he has so much gratitude for the work we get to do, and for the teamwork to get it all done. He thanked Danielle for her partnership and Brenda for her great work. Linda directed her thanks to Danielle, Shelby and Brenda, saying they've made the entire SYV and our six communities relevant and each brings expertise to the table. To the board, she thanked them for serving and putting in the extra time, noting it's a team effort and it makes a difference. She thanked the public for attending. If you have ideas, suggestions, concerns, we're happy to listen and discuss. Linda thanked Will for having us and hosting us all year, and thanked Kathleen for stepping up and allowing us to come to Alisal in January for our 2023 meetings. Linda wished Dave the best of luck and thanked him for his time on the board. Kathleen shared she'll miss his wine industry reports. Linda congratulated all 6 of our communities on how beautiful they look with holiday lights and festivities planned. Linda wished everyone a happy and safe new year.

The meeting adjourned at 10:03am to the meeting of January 12, 2023.

Prepared by Danielle Laudon Ruse,
Vice President of Marketing

Approved by Stormie Strickland,
Secretary