

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley Board Meeting, Jan. 11, 2024

Time: 9:01 a.m. - 9:46 a.m.

Location: The Winston

Introductions

Shelby Sim called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Board members present included Secretary Stormie Strickland, Treasurer Jim Flagg, Vice Chairman Jonathan Rosenson via phone, Will Henry, Greer Shull via phone, and Michael Brughelli. Chairman Linda Johansen and Kathleen Cochran were absent. President & CEO Shelby Sim and Vice President of Marketing Danielle Ruse were present. Website & Membership Administrator Brenda Ball was present via phone. Members of the public included Jennifer Nelson, Hannah Burchardi-Bowersox, Don Connor, Michelle Boss, Anthony Pena, Candace Libera, Phil Carpenter, Anna Ferguson, Elizabeth Devine, Pam Roberts, Kristopher McLaughlin, Philip Grant, Will Adams, and Debra Eagle.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

Members of the public were given the opportunity to provide comments, limited to three minutes. The following public comments were made:

- Debra Eagle announced Alma Rosa's annual mental health fundraiser will be held Saturday, May 18th this year.
- Danielle provided an economic report on behalf of Dr. Harwood.

Approval of Board Meeting Minutes (December 14, 2023)

Jim motioned to approve the board meeting minutes of December 14, 2023. Michael seconded, all in favor. The December 14, 2023 minutes were approved.

Financial Report

Jim Flagg presented a review of the current financials.

Staff Report

Shelby Sim provided updates on various topics, including:

- Restaurant Weeks, January 21 – February 3, 2024
- Midweek Promotion underway through April 4, 2024
- 2024 Q1 Travel
 - IMM North America, January 25-26, New York
 - Copenhagen/Berlin, February 27 – March 9
 - Outlook Forum, March 10 – 13
- California Cup 2025 host destination
- IPW 24 Activation – Visit the Santa Ynez Valley, Visit Santa Barbara, Chumash Enterprises
- Billboard update
- Trademark
- Activity Report for December

ACTION ITEM: Revise 2024 Board Meeting Schedule

Shelby proposed we cancel the March 2024 board meeting and move the May meeting to Thursday, May 16th. Both changes will accommodate staff traveling to conferences. Will made a motion to approve the revised meeting schedule; Michael seconded, all in favor. The revised schedule was approved.

Marketing Update

Danielle provided a review of VisitSYV's current media approach, social channels, website updates, ad campaigns, SEO, data tracking, and 2024 SYV Restaurant Weeks.

Board comments

Stormie shared December was great for Hotel Corque and The Hadsten; January has been slower. She is optimistic about a good spring season. The first week of January was positive, especially since kids were still out of school. Jonathan shared he just opened a new restaurant, the Mullholland. First & Oak is closed for the week to recuperate from the holidays. He wishes everyone a happy new year and expressed anticipation for a strong 2024. Greer noted January is a bit quiet for Fess Parker Wine Country Inn, but the winery is busy celebrating its 35th anniversary. Greer is also excited about the prospects for 2024. Brenda is currently working on blogs for 2024; the Valentine's blog is already live, and Brenda requested content contributions. She's also working on content for Spring Break, Easter, Mother's Day, and beyond. Jim shared December was strong for Hampton Inn & Suites but not as strong as 2022. The first half of January has been a bit slow, typical for this time of year. They are still actively seeking project business, especially midweek. Michael noted traffic is down at Folded Hills, but wine club is strong and both tasting rooms are doing well. Michael is working on a Valentine's Day promotion featuring sparkling wines. Will shared PICO closed out a strong December with a NYE buyout for a Hollywood wedding. Danielle shared an update on Verdin marketing, mentioning new blog content and taking advantage of a "ski week" promotion. Shelby shared on behalf of Linda a big congratulations to the Julefest organizers. On a separate note, she noticed a lot of hotel guests were disappointed in finding dining after hours. Shelby expressed excitement about the current year and is enthusiastic about upcoming travel plans. He hopes everyone who went to Europe last year will make California and the Santa Ynez Valley their destination vacation this year.

The meeting closed at 9:46 a.m. The next board meeting will be held February 8, 2024, 9:00 a.m., Alisal Ranch

Prepared by Danielle Ruse
Vice President of Marketing

Approved by Stormie Strickland
Secretary