

**Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley Board Meeting,**  
February. 8, 2024 Time: 9:00 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.  
Location: Alisal Ranch

Linda Johansen called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Board members present included Chairman Linda Johansen, Will Henry, Kathleen Cochran, Michael Brughelli, Vice Chairman Jonathan Rosenson, and Greer Shull via phone. Secretary Stormie Strickland, and Treasurer Jim Flagg were absent.

President & CEO Shelby Sim and Website & Membership Administrator Brenda Ball were present. Vice President of Marketing Danielle Ruse was absent due to Covid.

Members of the public attending, include: Debbie Holmes, Jesse Srgo, Debra Eagle, Don Connor, Michelle Boss, Candace Libera, Phil Carpenter, Anna Sparks, Cheryl from city of Solvang, Peter Wright, Erica Flores, Chris Bashforth, Leslie Gonzalez and Michelle Vautier.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items - Members of the public were given the opportunity to provide comments, limited to three minutes. The following public comment was made:

- John Hooten, college advancement program, hospitality management new program to recognize the need for hospitality jobs in the area.
- Debra Eagle announced the Alma Rosa Winery fifth annual **Peace of Mind—10,000 Steps in the Right Direction** fundraiser for two the charities, **One Mind**, and **Mental Wellness Center**.
- Alma Rosa - doubling the first 25k donated, February 18, walk through the estate and lunch.
- Erica Flores from People Helping People thanked VSYV for the donation from Taste of the Valley. They were able to provide turkeys and hams for families in need and it also helped provide mental health assistance.
- Peter Wright, Board President of Santa Ynez Valley School spoke regarding a fundraiser.

Room Introductions – Linda Johansen

Approval of the board meeting minutes of January 11, 2024. Ratified Kristopher McLaughlin, GM of The Genevieve, Unincorporated Hotelier, to the Board of Directors. Financial report –to be reviewed at the next BOD meeting.

**Marketing Update – Shelby**

Review of media approach, social channels, website, updates, ad campaigns, SEO *visits up over 19%*, data tracking, Restaurant Weeks, Midweek Promotion and IMM.

- Trade Show: Visit SB, Chumash, VSYV food and wine booth, opening Sunday
- SYV Makers Valley Project began with Baker’s Table
- Taste of SYV September 26-29, Thursday – Saturday
- Sideways 20<sup>th</sup> year planning an event at Solvang festival theater
- Pride: “Love Above All Ball”, planned for Feb 17, at Vega Vineyards
- Dr. Harwood, provided a report about travel and hospitality for the previous month.

Shelby presented report: Website traffic is up 19% for January, 6.3% above last year. Publications, @colorful foodie, Sunset Magazine wrote about 10 of Santa Ynez Valley hotels of the 20 hotels mentioned.

Midweek Promotion continues to run January 7 – April 4, so far 59 overnight stays.

IMM North America, Shelby spoke as a sponsor for 2 minutes and he and Danielle hosted 20 one-on-one appointments. They also participated in Visit California's Influencer networking event where they also pitched media. He mentioned that "Everybody wants to come to the Santa Ynez Valley".

SB Film festival started February 7 and runs for two weeks.

### **Action items**

Staff Report, included, Grant Requests:

- Women Winemakers & Culinarisians Celebration, March 7 - 10, 2024, requested amount: \$5,000, recommended amount: \$5,000
  - In its sixth year, last year it sold out immediately. The event to be held at 27 Vines ranch vineyard between Roblar and Baseline. Younger winemakers, Fess Parker ticketing special, Bubble bash at Mattei's on Saturday, just some of the details. They are hoping to raise \$ 20,000, for women veterans. Several comedians are generously providing their time.
  - Linda recommends and Kathleen seconds the full amount \$5,000. All in favor. A \$5,000 grant was approved.
- Santa Ynez Valley Rotary, 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks Show & Festival, Thursday, July 4, 2024, requested amount: \$4,000, recommended amount: \$4,000.
  - 4<sup>th</sup> of July festival rotary celebration
  - Linda recommended \$4,000, Michael and Will Henry, first and seconded the motion; all in favor. A \$4,000 grant was approved.

### **Old Business & New Business and Board comments**

Old business Shelby mentioned the active shooter workshop: plans are developing to schedule for an evening in March.

- Kathleen mentioned Alisal Ranch was evacuated for four days. Will Henry talked about strong January vineyard challenges.
- Michael said a tree fell on their winery, only minor damage occurred.
- Jonathan's mentioned the new baby, extending the menu, and looking forward to Valentine's Day.
- Greer said Fess Parker properties suffered a down powerline, but they are doing very well.

Linda offers thanks to Shelby and team for their great work.

The meeting **closed at 9:44 a.m.**

The next board meeting will be held April 11, 2024, 9:00 a.m., at Alisal Ranch.

Prepared by Brenda Ball, Website & Membership Administrator