

Minutes of the Board of Directors of Visit the Santa Ynez Valley Board Meeting

November 14, 2024, 9:07 a.m. – 9:40 a.m.

Alisal Ranch

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:07 a.m. by Chairman Linda Johansen.

Introductions

Board Member presents: Chairman Linda Johansen, Vice Chairman Johnathan Rosenson (on the phone), Treasurer Jim Flagg (on the phone), Will Henry, Greer Araujo, Kristopher McLaughlin, Jeff Hartman. Secretary Stormie Strickland and Kathleen Cochran were absent. Staff present: Shelby Sim and Cynthia Gonzalez. Danielle Laudon Ruse and Brenda Ball were absent.

Public present: Don Connor, Michelle Boss, Terri Simmons, Ashley Esdaile, Anna Ferguson-Sparks, Brian Allard, and Calisse Courtney

Kristopher McLaughlin stated: Lost phone connection with Vice Chairman Johnathan Rosenson

Action Item: Approval of the Board Meeting Minutes (October 10, 2024)

Jeff motioned to approve the October 10th board meeting minutes, Will seconded, all in favor. October 10, 2024, board meeting minutes were approved.

Chairman Linda Johansen Public Statement

Linda made a statement that they had a closed meeting this morning to address salaries; changes have been approved for 2025.

Financial Report

Jim presented the current financials via phone

Chairman Linda Johansen thanked Jim for the tremendous amount of time and research he has done on compensation.

Staff Report

Shelby presented the staff report, which included updates on the following:

- Annual planning meeting recap
- BrandUSA Travel week in London recap
- Visit California LA Media Recap
- Destination guide 2025 launch – December 5, Roblar Winery, 5 – 7pm
- Budget Committee update
- Restaurant Weeks 2025, January 19 – February 1
- Midweek Membership Club Promotion 2025, January 12 – April 30
- Website update
- Upcoming Travel
 - Go West Summit, January 6 – 9 (Cynthia)
 - IMM New York, January 21 – 24 (Shelby & Danielle)
 - VisitCA reverse Canada mission in San Diego, February 10 – 12 (Cynthia)
 - USA Travel show in Copenhagen, February 26 – 28 (Shelby)
 - Swanson Consumer show in Sweden, March 1 (Shelby)

- VisitCA outlook forum in Los Angeles, March 2 – 5 (Shelby, Danielle, Cynthia)
- Activity Report for October

Marketing Update

Shelby reviewed media strategy, social channels, website updates, ad campaigns, SEO efforts, and data tracking.

New Business

Shelby noted Taste of the Santa Ynez Valley 2025 will be Oct 2-5, 2025.

Board Comments

- Jeff: Shared they have been a little slow for November but looking forward to seeing things pick up for the Thanksgiving holiday and going into December.
- Greer: Shared her new last name “Araujo” and thanked the board for the lovely wedding gift/goodies and card that she received
- Kristopher: October was a great month from an occupancy standpoint, Victor is exceeding expectations, which is great, and catering has been off the charts. Q3 was very good. Q4 is pacing very well, and December is going to be the highest occupancy levels for the Genevieve and the Landsby.
- Will: Good solid October for Pico, slow November, looking forward to the pickup in late November/early December.
- Cynthia: Working on follow-up on all the Brand USA Travel Week appointments and the survey/questionnaire to the hotels as requested by the board at the retreat.
- Shelby: Thanked the board regardless of what happened during the closed meeting, he expressed his gratitude for his job and thanked his staff for all they do. Thanked the Alisal for hosting us and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.
- Linda: Wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, shared gratitude for the board and thanked Cynthia for being part of the team, grateful for the entire team’s efforts, hard work, and time.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m. The next meeting will be held December 12, 2024, at 9:00 a.m., Alisal Ranch.

Prepared by: Cynthia Gonzalez, Director of Sales