

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

October 10, 2024, 9:00 a.m. – 9:56 a.m.

Alisal Ranch

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chair Jonathan Rosenson.

Introductions

Board Member presents: Vice Chairman Jonathan Rosenson, Treasurer Jim Flagg, Secretary Stormie Strickland, Will Henry, Greer Shull, Kristopher McLaughlin, Jeff Hartman, and Kathleen Cochran via phone. Linda Johansen was absent. Staff present: Shelby Sim, Danielle Laudon Ruse, Cynthia Gonzalez, and Brenda Ball. Public present: Candice Libera, Michelle Boss, Nicole Carnevale, Chantel Green, Terri Simmons, Ashley Esdaile, Matthew Negrete, Julie Hayek, Eva Powers, and Derek Glas.

Action Item: Approval of the Board Meeting Minutes (September 19, 2024)

Jim motioned to approve the September 19th board meeting minutes, Jeff seconded, all in favor. September 19, 2024 board meeting minutes were approved.

Financial Report

Jim presented the current financials.

Staff Report

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

- Taste of the Santa Ynez Valley recap
- Annual retreat, Chumash Casino, October 16th, 11am – 2pm
- Compensation Study update
- City of Solvang Annual Report Presentation – October 14th
- Destination guide 2025 launch – December 5th
- Budget Committee Formed:
 - Jim, Kristopher, Stormie
- Upcoming Travel
 - Visit California Los Angeles Media Reception – October 10
 - Brand USA Travel week in London – October 21-23
- Activity Report for September

Action Item: Website Proposal

Staff recommended Madden Media for website development after presenting a comparison of the Madden Media and Tempest proposals. After some discussion, Jeff motioned to approve, Stormie seconded, all in favor. Staff will contract Madden Media for the new website.

Marketing Update

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

Old Business

A Compensation Study has taken place, and a closed meeting will be held to finalize the direction at 8:30 a.m. on November 14, 2024.

Shelby provided an update on the billboard in Buellton off Highway 101 Visit the Santa Ynez Valley planned to take on. There have been some challenges and Shelby will provide another update after he confers with the Buellton Chamber of Commerce.

New Business

Derek Glaas and Eva Powers from SYV Botanic Garden presented updates on the December SYV Holiday Lights Festival. They requested marketing support and wine sponsorship. Shelby offered to assist with winery partnerships.

Board Comments

- Stormie: Shared insights on Chumash properties' performance and Hadsten's success.
- Greer: Highlighted the upcoming Los Olivos Day in the Country.
- Jeff: Shared success in September and Halloween-themed tours for October.
- Will: Noted vineyard and restaurant successes, including a new menu at Pico.
- Kristopher: Reported strong Q4 performance and the launch of Victor's fall menu.
- Jim: Provided steady projections for Hampton's performance.
- Cynthia: Preparing for Brand USA Travel Week with extensive appointments and SYV wine sponsorships.
- Shelby: Expressed pride in Taste of the Santa Ynez Valley and thanked Danielle and staff for their hard work.
- Danielle: Shared gratitude for Taste efforts and Shelby's leadership.
- Brenda: Excited about managing the website project.
- Kathleen: Announced new guest room amenities and marketing adjustments due to California regulations.
- Jonathan: Congratulated staff on Taste success and noted the potential for event growth. He noted the growing trend of visitors booking last-minute accommodations. First & Oak has been busy with a lot of events. Jonathan thanked the team for letting him lead the meeting today, noting that Linda was missed.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:56 a.m. The next meeting will be held November 14, 2024, at 9:00 a.m., Alisal Ranch. A closed meeting on the Compensation Report will precede the session at 8:30 a.m.

Prepared by: Danielle Laudon Ruse, Vice President

Approved by: Stormie Strickland, Secretary