

## **Visit the Santa Ynez Valley Board Meeting**

**April 10, 2025 – 9:00 a.m. – The Landsby**

### **Call to order and reordering of agenda (if necessary)**

Jonathan Rosenson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

### **Board Members Present:**

Jeff Hartman, Kathleen Cochran, Jonathan Rosenson, Stormie Strickland, Jim Flagg, Will Henry (via phone)

### **Board Members Absent:**

Linda Johansen, Kristopher McLaughlin, Greer Araujo

### **Staff Present:**

Shelby Sim, Danielle Laudon Ruse, Cynthia Gonzalez

### **Public Present:**

Melissa Kramer, Amanda Holder, Holly Holliday, Anna Ferguson, Candice Libera, Marlene McCollim, Philip Grant, Michelle Boss, Will Adams, Phil Carpenter, Don Connor, David Modelo, Pam Roberts, Erica Flores

### **Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items**

Melissa Kramer introduced NACE Central Coast, a local chapter of the national association for catering and events. Amanda Holder expanded on their focus on education and networking for the catering and events community. Holly Holliday noted her focus on corporate events and mentioned monthly educational seminars offered by the group.

---

### **Action Item: Approval of the Board Meeting Minutes of March 13, 2025**

Jim Flagg motioned to approve the minutes with one correction—Don Connor was a public attendee, not a board member. Jonathan Rosenson seconded. All in favor. Minutes approved with this correction.

---

### **Financial Report – Kristopher McLaughlin**

- Review of recent financials
- 

### **Staff Report**

- Website update
- Employee Handbook

- California Cup update
  - IPW update
  - Los Alamos Theater Group ad, \$100
  - Upcoming Travel: IPW, Chicago – June 14–19 (Shelby & Cynthia)
  - March Activity Report
- 

### **Marketing Update – Danielle Laudon Ruse**

- Review of media approach, social channels, website updates, ad campaigns
- 

### **Sales Update – Cynthia Gonzalez**

- Updates on California Cup, IPW, and follow-ups from Go West appointments
  - BrandUSA London travel show: Shelby's media and Cynthia's trade applications both accepted
- 

### **Old Business & New Business**

Shelby proposed holding the annual meeting on June 5, 2025, with a brunch from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The board approved the date by consensus. Shelby also shared that Visit California may host an episode of a special series in the Santa Ynez Valley highlighting accessibility while traveling.

---

### **Board Comments**

**Jim:** Q1 performed very well compared to last year. Weather was a positive factor. Seeing increased short trips from drive markets. Q2 also looks promising.

**Stormie:** Transitioning Hotel Corque into a Marriott portfolio beginning in May. Chumash Museum opening soon. Spring Breaks have helped stretch demand.

**Kathleen:** Spring Break brought strong family travel with short booking windows. Some summer availability remains.

**Jeff:** March started slowly but picked up and exceeded last year by the end. Spring Break/Easter timing was unusual. Expanding adventure park to include more kids (up to age 12). New website launched.

**Cynthia:** Celebrated her 1-year anniversary at VisitSYV. Preparing for IPW and will be reaching out for updated assets.

**Shelby:** Thanked The Landsby. Acknowledged Danielle's work on the website. Expressed concerns about international travel uncertainty, particularly from Canada.

**Danielle:** Echoed Shelby's comments but noted California remains well-positioned to welcome international visitors.

**Will:** Pico is very busy. Hosted a wine fest on the patio. Planning a special Mother's Day lunch. Bottling an estate white pinot noir.

**Jonathan:** Thanked the board and public for their support. Congratulated Cynthia on her 1-year anniversary. Mirabelle and First & Oak are steady. Entering wedding season with upcoming catering events. Seeing increased local, short-term stays.

---

**Next Board Meeting:**

May 8, 2025 – 9:00 a.m. – The Landsby

---

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

*Prepared by Danielle Laudon Ruse  
Vice President & Chief Marketing Officer*

*Approved by Stormie Strickland  
Secretary*