



# MINUTES

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## Visit SLO CAL Executive Committee

### Visit SLO CAL Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 16, 2018

11:30am

Visit SLO CAL Conference Room  
1334 Marsh Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Clint Pearce

**PRESENT:** John Arnold, Mark Eads, Aaron Graves, Jay Jamison, Clint Pearce

**STAFF PRESENT:** Chuck Davison, Brendan Pringle

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**Call to Order at 11:32am.**

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)**

None.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Eads announced that the Pismo Beach Hospitality Association voted unanimously on August 15, 2018 to support a proposal that would increase the city's LBID by one percent and hold it accountable for five years to an annual review.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

**3. Approval of June 27, 2018 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

**4. Approval of June/Year-End VSC Financials**

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

**ACTION:** Moved by Jamison/Graves to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

**Motion carried: 4:0**  
**Arnold arrived after the vote.**

### **CEO REPORT**

**5. CEO Report**

Davison reviewed the June 2018 Travel Trends Index from U.S. Travel, as well as the June TOT Report. On July 20, 2018, Caltrans hosted a Ribbon Cutting Event at the Ragged Point Inn, celebrating the re-opening of Highway 1. Davison spoke on behalf of Visit SLO CAL, joining government officials, Caltrans Director Laurie Berman and John Madonna of Madonna Construction. On August 9, Visit California hosted the Highway 1 Dream Drive event, featuring a caravan of more than 80

classic and modern cars that began in Monterey and ended at the Morro Rock in Morro Bay. Keynote speakers included Supervisor Bruce Gibson, Mayor Jamie Irons, Visit California President & CEO Caroline Beteta and Davison. VCA filmed the entire event via helicopter and drone, and will be giving VSC unrestricted access to the footage for future use. Following the event, VSC hosted 56 international journalists for a two-day FAM. On August 11-14, 2018, Davison, along with several members of VSC's marketing team, attended US Travel's ESTO Conference. Davison noted that destination management was a key theme throughout the conference, and that he presented on the topic during one of the sessions. While VSC did not end up taking home the Destiny Award for Best Digital Campaign at the conference, VSC was one of the top 3 finalists out of more than 1,000 DMOs nationwide, and lost to Visit Seattle (a DMMO with 10 times VSC's budget), which shows how far VSC's marketing efforts have come. VSC will be providing an update at the August 17, 2018 City Manager Meeting. Davison reported out on recent local meetings and outlined his travel schedule for the months ahead. He reported out on the Smith Travel Research (STR) June 2018 YTD report, and noted that even with an increase in supply over the past year, ADR, RevPAR and demand numbers are up countywide. However, Paso Robles and Atascadero are both losing market share to other local communities and the North Coast is off due to the 20-month closure of Highway 1. Countywide numbers are expected to continue to grow, as the North Coast rebounds with the re-opening of Highway 1.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

### **6. Operations Update**

Davison provided an update on the FY2017/18 Audit, noting that Burkart & Stevens, our past auditor, was approved by the County of San Luis Obispo. Burkart & Stevens held their in-office visit today (August 16, 2018), and the audit will proceed over the next few weeks. VSC will present the finalized Audit documents to the Executive Committee at the September meeting to recommend approval at the September 19, 2018 Board Meeting. The County also approved VSC's annual request for an extension on the deadline of its Annual Report to September 28, 2018 (from August 29). VSC will provide its report to the Board of Supervisors at their October 16, 2018 meeting. Davison asked the Committee to save the date, noting that this is VSC's last annual report presentation before the TMD renewal process begins and their attendance to show support would be appreciated.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

### **7. Destination Management Strategy Update**

Davison provided an update on key outreach and engagement efforts for the Destination Management Strategy (DMS). Davison, and Christine Robertson, VSC's VP of Community Engagement & Advocacy, met with Supervisors Peschong and Compton in July to provide an update and gain feedback. VSC has held meetings with Supervisors Arnold and Hill in previous weeks, and is scheduled to meet with Supervisor Gibson on August 20, 2018. The DMS has received favorable media coverage from the SLO Tribune, Pacific Coast Business Times and KSBY, at no cost to VSC. VSC launched its Community Survey (Stage 6) on August 1, 2018. VSC filmed PSAs to promote the survey, which are running at no charge on KSBY and on the radio. Assemblyman Jordan Cunningham filmed one, which he sent to his database of registered voters, and countywide mayors also filmed one to promote on their social media channels and on e-newsletters. The survey is likewise being promoted by Congressman Salud Carbajal, Supervisor Debbie Arnold, Cal Poly, local TBIDs, chambers and community partners. During VSC's next DMS Steering Committee Meeting on September 20, 2018, Resonance Consultancy will review the current data collection to-date and gain topline feedback from the group, review topline areas of focus and review next steps.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

## **8. TMD Renewal Update**

On July 23, 2018, VSC had a kick-off call with John Lambeth of Civitas, and sent feedback on the current TMD Management District Plan for their review, including the proposed changes. Davison outlined these proposed changes and the timeline for next steps in the renewal process.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion. The Committee recommended revisiting the proposed changes at the September Executive Committee meeting.

## **9. Strategic Direction & Alignment**

In June 2016, the Board approved VSC's Strategic Direction 2020, which includes five key imperatives. In recent months, some concerns have been expressed over the direction of Visit SLO CAL, including its scope-of-work, particularly as it relates to its DMS initiative and its partnership in Economic Development efforts for the region, although both align with the Strategic Direction 2020 which was approved by the Board. Davison noted that he and Christine Robertson met with former Board member JP Patel to discuss some of the concerns that he raised during Public Comment at the last board meeting including smaller properties' concerns about DMS spend and that VSC funding will eventually be sucked up by local government (which legally cannot happen). He noted that some Board and Executive Committee members have shared their concerns about VSC's work in this area with him as well. Davison asked the Committee how VSC can get the Board and Committee on the same page to avoid future stumbling blocks, and if there are Strategic Direction 2020 initiatives that the Board no longer supports, noting that it is important all board members publicly support initiatives that the board has voted to approve.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion. Arnold noted that he believes some of the confusion lies in VSC's role in economic development, but also suggested it might be an issue of how partners perceive that it is taking the place of some of VSC's marketing efforts. Davison noted that tourism is economic development at its core, and that VSC has not shifted marketing funds to economic development. Davison noted all efforts in this area align with the approved Strategic Direction 2020 and that marketing remains the core component of what the organization does, both in time and expense. However, without effectively managing the destination now, there will be no destination to market in the future.

## **10. B&B Seat Update**

Davison noted VSC has received one application thus far for the B&B seat on the Board. Alma Ayon, the owner/chef/innkeeper at Sundance B&B has expressed her interest and submitted her application. The Committee will review final applications after the submittal process closes.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

## **11. Marketing Update**

This business item was removed due to time constraints. Details on marketing efforts are in the Committee agenda.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 2:00pm.