



MINUTES

Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors

Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 17, 2018

8:30am

Holiday Inn Express, Paso Robles

2455 Riverside Ave, Paso Robles, CA 93446

1. CALL TO ORDER: Clint Pearce

PRESENT: John Arnold, Kathy Bonelli, Aaron Graves, Jim Hamilton, Jay Jamison, Lori Keller, Nipool Patel, Clint Pearce, Amar Sohi, Roger Wightman

ABSENT: Mark Eads, Sarah Maggelet, Sam Miller, Val Seymour

STAFF PRESENT: Chuck Davison, Brooke Burnham, Brendan Pringle

Call to Order at 8:32 am.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Davison presented former VSC Board and Executive Committee member JP Patel with an honorary award, thanking him for his time, dedication and service.

Brown Act Training is February 21, from 8:30am-10am, at the Embassy Suites. This is required for all Board members who have not yet completed Brown Act Training. RSVP by using the Google Form link on the invitation or by emailing Brendan@SLOCAL.com. Marketing Committee, TBID board members and local Government officials are also invited to attend, but RSVP is required.

VSC's Beginning of Year Bash is Wednesday January 24, from 6:00pm-8:00pm, at Edna Valley Vineyard. RSVP using the Google Form link on the invitation or by emailing Pam@SLOCAL.com.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of November 15, 2017 Board Meeting Minutes

4. Approval of November & December Financials

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

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

CEO REPORT

5. CEO Report

Davison reviewed the November TOT Report, as well as the November Travel Trends Index from U.S. Travel.

Davison announced that beginning April 9, United Airlines will add a second daily non-stop flight to Denver. This announcement comes less than 9 months after the initial launch of services and is a direct result of the investment made by our Board to launch and sustain the Denver air service. United also announced that it would be replacing the current 50-seat planes with larger, 77-seat planes in April for both Denver flights, two daily flights to LA and one daily flight to SF adding an additional 125+ seats to the market daily.

After the Board approved the transfer of reserve funds to laddered CDs managed by Morgan Stanley, VSC opened two separate accounts, with initial deposits of \$400,000 and \$100,000, to ensure there is no intermingling between TMD assessment funds and non-TMD assessment funds in order to remain in compliance with our contract with the County. Davison outlined the CD purchases, and noted that this ensures that funds are FDIC-insured, which was one of the comments mentioned in our FY2016/17 audit.

VSC received notice that its "SAVOR – A San Luis Obispo County Experience" service mark has been approved, and expects approval on its "Life's Too Beautiful to Rush" service mark by February.

Davison noted that the County has added the Highway 1 closure to their legislative platform, allowing the Board of Supervisors to write letters, lobby, etc. and also authorize their lobbyists to officially lobby on behalf of the issue.

Davison updated the Board on the VSC communication team's response to both the Thomas Fire and Montecito mudslides.

After VSC's contracted accountant, Connect Accounting, gave notice on November 13, 2017, VSC started vetting current qualified applicants with Connect's assistance. Davison asked the Board to send any recommendations for a contract controller to Brendan@SLOCAL.com.

Davison outlined his travel schedule.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

BUSINESS ITEMS

6. Destination Development Strategy

Visit SLO CAL will hear Destination Development Plan (DDP) consultant presentations during a special Board Meeting on January 31, 2018, from 8:30am-12:30pm at the Embassy Suites. Proposals were sent to the Board on January 16, 2018 in the Agenda Packet for this meeting. Davison asked the Board to review these documents in advance of the presentations. Once the DDP consultant is hired and begins work on the plan, VSC will need to hire a Director of Destination Development to champion the planning, along with implementation and management of the DDP recommendations. The proposed budget re-forecast accounts for the position's salary, which would start April 1, 2018, if approved. Davison outlined some of the responsibilities of the role, and noted that this position would put VSC's administrative staffing costs above 20 percent.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

7. Budget Re-Forecast

Davison provided an overview of the re-forecasted budget for FY2017/18, noting that it includes the adjustment for actual income received from each community through November, as well as the additional TMD assessment revenue from new inventory in Pismo Beach (the Inn at the Pier) and the County contract with Airbnb to collect assessment funds. The re-forecast also includes the costs associated with the Destination Development Plan, expanded research efforts, one-time website set-up fees and a re-allocation of \$300,000 in surplus funds to media placement/advertising.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

ACTION: Moved by Jamison/Wightman to approve VSC’s FY17-18 Budget Re-Forecast as presented.

Motion carried: 10:0

8. Membership Update

Davison outlined VSC’s current paid membership structure for non-lodging members, but noted that with the new website launching in February, all relevant tourism businesses will essentially become members, clouding the difference between members and non-members. VSC staff is recommending ending membership sales under this structure, replacing the term “Members” with “Partner Services” for all intents and purposes. DTN, a subdivision of Simpleview will be selling ad space (including preferred listings on the new site, to all non-lodging related businesses, replacing membership revenue and thus achieving VSC’s legal need for a secondary source of revenue.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

ACTION: Moved by Graves/Patel to end VSC’s paid membership structure, replacing the revenue with paid media solutions.

Motion carried: 10:0

9. Advisory Committee Meeting Recap

Davison thanked the Board members who attended the Advisory Committee meeting and recapped some of the feedback provided by officials at the meeting, noting that it was very positive overall. He added that one of the opportunities presented by a member of the Committee was that VSC needs to provide a “hook” for smaller operators to get more involved and connected with its efforts. Davison also requested the Board’s feedback on the meeting.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

10. DMAP Update

Pringle provided an overview of Destination International’s Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP), which VSC is pursuing. He noted that only 175 out of 572 Destinations International DMO members are currently accredited. The process includes following the DMAP Code of Ethics, as well as meeting 93 standards revolving around governance, finance, marketing, sales, management, innovation, research, brand management, destination development and other categories. Pringle is currently assembling all the documentation for VSC’s application for submittal by January 31, with accreditation anticipated in the spring.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

11. Marketing Update

Burnham provided the details and strategy for VSC's upcoming ad campaign. She also provided an update on VSC's travel trade efforts and opportunities, as well as VSC's upcoming SAVOR activation in Washington.

VSC held trainings January 9-10, 2018 in San Luis Obispo, Pismo Beach and Paso Robles on VSC's new extranet, called SLO CAL Connection, which launched January 15, 2018. Burnham provided an update on earned and owned media, noting that the new website will launch February 13, 2018.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

ACTION: Moved by Patel/Wightman to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried: 10:0

Meeting adjourned at 10:05am.