



Minutes

Visit Morro Bay Board of Directors Visit Morro Bay Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 26, 2023

9:00 am – 11:00 am

Virtual via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89792541583?pwd=bHF1K2ZnNFNiTk9SWVZobUZTNnBXQT09>

Meeting ID: 897 9254 1583 Passcode: 695525

Call-In Phone Number: 1(669)900-6833

CALL TO ORDER – Board President Amish Patel called the meeting to order at 9:01 am

PRESENT: (VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE) Board members - Amish Patel, Robert Elzer, Amit Patel, and Dane Jacobs, Steven Allen, Scott Collins

ABSENT: Christopher KostECKa

STAFF PRESENT: Michael Wambolt, Elizabeth Gilson

PUBLIC PRESENT: Brian Owens, Erica Crawford, Andy McKay, Ken Vesterfeldt, Hannah Held, THE ABBI Agency staff – Ally Stemen, Warren Phan, Taylor Calhoun, Haley Walter, Kim Burciaga, Nathaniel Perez, Henry Merchel, Ty and Abbi Whitaker

1. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

Brian Owens of the SLO Comedy Show spoke about wanting a sponsorship for the comedy shows that he produces at the Vet’s Hall and spoke on where his audience comes from and their percentages. 10% are from Morro Bay, 23% Cayucos and San Luis Obispo, and 52% from SLO County and Santa Barbara. He feels that his comedy shows are a draw to get people into town stay at the hotels.

ANNOUNCEMENTS - None	M. Wambolt
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT	M. Wambolt
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2. Executive Director Report (15 min)

Staff will provide an updated on current projects, reporting and areas of focus for the months ahead

Michael commented on the January 9th flooding and the outreach that he did to properties regarding discounts for victims.

EVENTS - Michael spoke on the SLO CAL OPEN and that they would be hearing from Andy McKay shortly regarding a sponsorship. City-wide Yard Sale. He explained how we are using the Morro Bay Active Adults at the Senior Center as a hub for the sale for information and maps for the sale. Michael commented on the new branding for the Kite Festival and that he would like to get a subcommittee together and call a special meeting to go over the branding choices. He stated that the Car show is coming up as well as the Iron man race that he has been working on logistics, permits etc.

FINANCES - Michael went over the current numbers and explained carry over amounts and their future usages.

BRANDING - Michael gave an update on the VW Bus and stated that it has been dropped off for an appraisal of the renovation work.

REPORTS - Michael went over the STR and TOT reports and the impact the rain has had on occupancy and rate numbers.

STRATEGIC PLAN - Michael stated that he is working with Coraggio on the back-end work.

SALES - Outreaching to tour and travel . Michael stated that he would be going to GOWEST and that he is working on leads in late spring for cycling and car clubs.

SLO CAL WELCOME = Michael stated that we have been working to push this program out to partners.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAEMENT - Michael stated that he has reached out to properties the smaller properties feel that they are not faring well. Everything seems to be slow and that is expected during winter.

TRAVEL/VACATION - Michael stated Visit SLO CAL is doing a media mission to Dallas for 3 days and that he would be attending they will be meeting with 20 media influencers there and will be working with The ABBI Agency with talking points that will filter back to the agency and build up our PR account. Michael stated that he would be on vacation from February 1st - 4th. Michael asked if there were any questions.

Board member Steven Allen asked if the Bird Festival was supposed to take place last month. Michael stated that it did take place and it happened the weekend after the Monday January 9th flood and that Robbie and Rob held strong to hold the event and make it happen. They had 860 originally and stated that they would give exact numbers at a later date but had about 600 people attend. Board member Steven Allen stated that their occupancy numbers were down. Michael stated we had done calls to the hotels at the beginning of the week and their occupancy was 80% and by Friday the numbers were down to 40%. If it weren't for the Birders, it would have been one of the worst weekends we've seen. Board member Steven Allen summarized that we should keep sponsoring it we just had bad luck with the weather. Michael stated that he feels that the Bird Festival could grow to nine hundred to a thousand participants in the future and also that they have shown that they won't cancel due to bad weather and that the event gives us a good base for winter so it is not a dead period.

Board president Amish Patel asked Michael if he wanted to comment on the two branding concepts for the Kite Festival and that they may make a motion on it.

Michael presented the 2 choices. He stated that wanted to get a special board meeting to make a choice next week so that The ABBI Agency can use it in marketing in February.

CONSENT AGENDA – *motion required*

M. Wambolt

Board President Amish Patel asked if there was anyone that would like to make aa motion to approve the board meeting minutes of both Board meetings.

3. **Approval of November 17, 2022, Board Meeting Minutes**
4. **Approval of December 12, 2022, Special Board Meeting Minutes**

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board member Steven Allen made a motion to approve both Bard meeting minutes. Board member Robert Elzer seconded the motion

MOTION: Carried 6:0

BUSINESS ITEMS & DISCUSSIONS

M. Wambolt

5. SLO CAL Open WSL Surf – Sponsorship Approval February 2023 (10 min) - *motion required*

Staff will provide an update and SLO CAL Open WSL Surf Contest. Staff will seek approval of \$10,000 in sponsorship funds.

Michael introduced Andy McKay of the SLO CAL Open and spoke about the event and its importance to us. Michael stated what a great visual event it is for us. Andy McKay then spoke about the event and explained how it works. He stated that it is a big draw for tourism and eyes that are watching it online it is a four day commercial for Morro Bay. He then asked if there were any questions.

Board President Amish Patel asked if the event would run regardless of the weather, especially if it is windy? Andy McKay stated that the safety of the participants and spectators is we have never had to cancel the event. It might be put on hold due to weather or something in the water. Wind is the biggest challenge in Morro Bay.

Board Member Amit Patel asked if more participants could be added to the event. Andy McKay stated that there is a limit but there is a possibility but he feels they are in the right spot right now.

Board President Amish Patel commented about the number of spectators that are streaming on platforms that the WSL provide and wanted to know about the spectators that actually physically come to the event. Andy McKay stated that a lot of people watch online but that a large but not huge group of spectators come on the weekends. He stated that the big effect is in future visitors to Morro Bay that have seen it online.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board member Dane Jacobs made a motion to approve the Ten-Thousand-dollar sponsorship of the SLO CAL OPEN surf event. Board member Amit Patel seconded the motion.

MOTION: Carried 6:0

6. Morro Bay Car Show Sponsorship – May 2023 (15min) – *motion required*

Staff will provide an update and seek approve of \$5,000 in sponsorship funds for the Crusin' Morro Bay Car show.

Michael commented on the Car Show and introduced Ken Vesterfeldt. Ken then spoke on the Car Show and explained why the event is important to Morro Bay in bringing participants which number close to a thousand and visitors to Morro Bay. He also commented on additional expenses incurred since the City is not allowing them to use City equipment and the raise in the cost of permitting the event. He then asked if there were in any questions.

Amit asked if the increase in fees has caused a decrease in participants. Ken Vesterfeldt answered no.

Board member Steven Allen Asked Michael when the last time was that the TBID sponsored the event, Michael stated that we sponsored the event last year.

Board President Amish Patel asked if the event happens rain or shine? Ken Vesterfeldt answered yes.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board member Steven Allen motioned to approve the sponsorship for the Car Show. Board member Amit Patel seconded the motion.

MOTION: Carried 6:0

7. Morro Bay Trolley Advertising Opportunity 2023 – (15min)

Staff will provide an update on a marketing proposal for the Morro Bay Trolley. Board of directors to discuss opportunity and give staff next steps.

Michael explained the opportunity that was brought to him to advertise on the Morro Bay trolley that runs from Memorial Day to Labor Day and the costs to do so. Michael stated that part of it is a good opportunity, The trolley is run by the city but the advertising is brought to the city through the Community Foundation of Estero Bay. Michael then stated that he feels that we don't need to advertise on the whole Trolley and the explained the amount that would be better and , what that looks like. He also commented on who will see this. Along with visitors and locals will also see the advertising and get more comfortable with the "Come Get Salty" branding. Michael introduced Hannah Held president

of the Community foundation of Estero Bay. Hannah Held explained what the organization is and what they're mission is which is to provide low-income children participate in youth sports and recreation programs at a reduced cost. She stated that the three board members that had handled the trolley advertising had left the board. But that one of the past Board members Joan Solu came to her with the proposal to Michael. She stated that there are some unknowns with cost, ridership and the number of trolleys that will be running depending on staffing. She stated that she had never worked on the trolley advertising and that she may not be able to answer questions but would get back to the board.

The Board discussed.

Hannah stated that since she was unable to answer questions, that she would get back to the Board with more information.

Michael asked Hannah to please get a quote back to him regarding the advertising spaces requested.

8. Avocado and Margarita Festival Recap – (15min)

Erica Crawford President and CEO of the Morro Bay Chamber will give a recap of event and what is in the future for the event.

Michael introduced Eric Crawford. Erica gave a recap of the reimagined Avocado Margarita Food and Drink Festival. Erica asked if there were any questions. There were none. Erica then spoke on the new strategic plan efforts of the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce. Erica stated that it was decided to end having the Avocado Margarita Festival as it did not fit into the new strategic plan goals for the future.

Michael asked if Erica would like to speak about the Avocado Margarita Festival brand. Erica stated that the Festival brand is established and the Chamber controls ownership over it even though it is not trademarked. Erica would be happy to talk to any group that would like to continue it.

Michael then asked the Board what they see our roll in something like this. We are not an event company, but this is a unique brand to San Luis obispo County. In the future Should we help the brand stay in Morro Bay and what does that look like. Should we help the event with funding but get an event company that takes it on, we seed the event and then after 2 to 3 years let the event company take over.

The Board discussed.

9. Visit Morro Bay Marketing Update - Abbi Agency (20min)

The Abbi Agency will provide an update to the board on current marketing efforts and focus on months ahead.

Michael introduced Kim Burciaga. She and the rest of the ABBI Agency Team presented what they have been doing to tell the Morro Bay story. What they have been doing to update the Kite Festival. Work being done on a website copy audit. Work being done on the eblast newsletter and website blog and explanation of social media impressions and numbers.

Kim asked if there were any questions.

Board President Amish Patel stated that he didn't have a question but asked that in the future is it possible to add the amount we are spending on each channel for advertising so we can get an idea of how much each click or impression is costing.

Henry stated that yes the Board will see the numbers on the next report.

Board President Amish Patel asked what the reason was for the Twitter handle to be Morro Bay Travel and not Visit Morro Bay.

Nathaniel stated that that was a good question. He didn't know but would look into it.

Board member Robert Elzer asked, as far as social media followers, can we see a breakdown of how many followers per platform we are using?

Nathaniel said yes, he could add that to the next report.

10. Get Salty Trademark Discussion (10mins)

Staff will provide an update to the trademarking for "Get Salty." Board will provide next steps to staff.

Michael explained the process and cost of trademarking "Come Get Salty"

The Board discussed. The general agreement of the Board was that it was worthwhile.

Michael asked for Board to make a motion giving him the power to proceed.

ACTION: Board President Amish Patel made a motion to give the Executive Director Michael Wambolt the authority to pursue trademarking "Come Get Salty". Board member Dane Jacobs seconded the motion.

MOTION: Carried 6:0

11. Threshold360 Destination Opportunity (10min)

Staff will provide an overview of Threshhold360 Destination and look for next steps from board of directors.

Michael explained that threshold360 is a virtual tour application and it is a unique opportunity for partners to have tours done at their properties. Michael stated that he just wants the Board's feedback on pursuing the opportunity and taking it to the next level.

12. Visit Morro Bay Financial Update and Review (10 min)

Staff will provide an update to the current financials of the Visit Morro Bay TBID.

Michael presented an update on finances and budget numbers and stated that we are on track

13. Next Board of Directors meeting – March 23 , 2023– 9:00am – 11:00am – Via Zoom

ADJOURN. Board President Amish Patel adjourned the meeting at 11:10 am

Brown Act Notice: Each speaker is limited to two minutes of public comment for items not on the agenda. Public comment for each agenda item will be called for separately and is also limited to 2 minutes per speaker. State law does not allow the Board of Directors to discuss or take action on issues not on the agenda, except that member of the Board may briefly respond to statements made or questions posed by the person giving public comment. Staff may be directed by the Board to follow-up on such items and/or place them on the next Board agenda. The order of agenda items is listed for reference and items may be taken in any order deemed appropriate by the Board.

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