



MINUTES

Visit SLO CAL Advisory Committee

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Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 3, 2022

3:30pm – 5:00pm

Embassy Suites, 333 Madonna Rd, San Luis Obispo, CA, 93401

1. CALL TO ORDER: Aaron Graves

PRESENT: Jen Ford, Ty Lewis, Wade Horton, Steve Martin, Scott Collins, Whitney McDonald, Jim Lewis, Lan George, Matthew Bronson, Erica Stewart (arrived after call to order, 4:00)

ABSENT: Lynn Compton, Rachelle Rickard, Daniel Rushing, Scott Newton, Derek Johnson, Heather Newson

STAFF PRESENT: Chuck Davison, Cathy Cartier, Tracy Campbell, Emily Rudge, Jessie Borchin, Melissa Murray, Eric Parker, Camille Silvera, Theresa Nagai, Alyssa Manno, Lauren Miller, Mayla Lohnes, Cynthia Gonzalez, Rachelle Ramirez, Kristen Buhring

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Mark Eads, Clint Pearce, Hamish Marshall, Bryan Bonelli, Aaron Graves, Amit Patel, Jed Bickel, Toni LeGras-Price, Britt Shuford

MARKETING COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Joel Peterson, Jim Allen, Ashlee Akers, Terrie Banish, Michael Wambolt, Gordon Jackson

Call to Order by Pearce at 3:32 pm.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of May 19, 2022 Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

ACTION: Moved by Martin/Horton to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion carried: 9:0

BUSINESS ITEMS

4. Visit SLO CAL Update

Davison provided a reminder of the upcoming November 10 Destination Summit and thanked those who had already purchased tickets. He noted that the Annual Report and Scorecard had been mailed the day prior. Cartier highlighted the Land Of... 2.0 campaign which is solving for time and distance in order to promote cross visitation. Cartier shared several new video and photo assets for the Land Of... 2.0 campaign which illustrate the ability to do multiple activities in one day and visit multiple communities. Cartier highlighted the completion of the Brand Awareness Study which was conducted by Heart & Mind strategies. The study was conducted to assess the awareness of SLO CAL branded advertising and analyze the differences in perceptions and audiences. The key findings provided stellar results, noting 97% having a favorable impression of the ads which is unprecedented, and the campaign's expected economic contribution to SLO CAL as a whole is estimated between \$1.2B and \$1.4B. Cartier highlighted the Visitor Profile Study as reminder of the audiences being targeted: Outdoor Families, Beach/Wine Couples, Yolo, Explorers. Cartier shared a recap of the recent Land of 2.0 asset shoot and shared several new video assets which illustrate the promotion of cross visitation. Cartier highlighted the WTTC content partnership which focuses on businesses practicing sustainability throughout SLO CAL, and then shared a rough-cut video of the video trailer. Cartier highlighted the Visit California "Kidifornia" campaign which featured two SLO CAL destinations and shared the newest SLO CAL Crafted video featuring Talley Farms. Cartier announced that there are now 100 SLO CAL Crafted certified partners, and shared which communities where additional partners are needed. Cartier announced the increased sponsorship with the World Surf League and shared the 2023 dates to be held in both Pismo Beach and Morro Bay. Cartier announced the confirmed November 4, 2023 Spartan Race to be held again at Santa Margarita Ranch. Davison provided a recap of Luxury Forum, shared positive community feedback received from local partners, Visit California, and government officials, and shared a highlight video of the successful event. Campbell shared several advocacy updates, noting that the federal lodging per diem rate has successfully been increased and there are ongoing efforts for the state rate increase. Campbell noted the support of CHUC (California Hospitality United Coalition), a possible nexus study with Beacon Economics to determine the impact of vacation rentals on workforce housing, Davison's appointed seat on the Citizens Homelessness Accountability Commission, and his upcoming role as Chair of CalTravel in 2023. Campbell shared an update on the ongoing efforts surrounding fire insurance, highlighting the creation of a new partnership between the Department of Insurance and emergency preparedness agencies (CalFire, CalOES).

Visit SLO CAL asked the following questions from the committee:

What feedback do you have on Visit SLO CAL's advocacy, travel trade and marketing strategies for FY 2023?

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion. Martin voiced his support of Luxury Forum and shared what a great event it was, commenting that the person he sat next to had never heard of SLO CAL before and happened to win a trip to return and she was really excited to visit SLO CAL again in the future. Martin asked what the follow up process would be. Davison replied that Cynthia Gonzalez, Director of Sales will be doing individual follow up with all the buyers and suppliers in addition to Connections doing follow up every 6 months and will report out on bookings. Martin asked if there would be any challenges and Davison responded that while we heard no negative feedback about SBP airport, there are some challenges surrounding extended Visa wait times for international travelers. George asked how this information is being distributed to partners in Arroyo Grande, if it is being filtered down to local TBIDs, and can it be dissected for lodging owners. Davison replied that every local DMO has a seat on the marketing committee, and it is really up to them how they choose to engage. Davison reminded George that the South County Chamber of Commerce CEO is new and still getting her feet wet but noted that Ashlee Akers is another resource and does the marketing for the South County Chamber of Commerce. Akers commented that a Visit SLO CAL team member is always at the TBID meetings and can also help report out. George asked where the WTTC videos are being viewed. Cartier replied that they'll be housed on the WTTC website which will have a landing page and path and will be routed back to us, but the WTTC owns the traffic. T.Lewis asked who owns the videos and how they are being circulated. Cartier replied that anything with talent featured such as The Land Of... assets enable Visit SLO CAL to

own them because we secured the talent rights. Cartier noted that Visit SLO CAL also owns the SLO CAL Crafted videos but allows the businesses featured to use the footage. Davison commented that last year a co-op was created so that each destination that participated would gain access to the photos and videos. Cartier shared that every destination participated in the co-op and the rights are for 3 years. T.Lewis replied that Paso Robles is in the process of reimagining the use of their airport and might want to use some of those assets. Cartier encourages T. Lewis to work through Travel Paso. Davison encouraged Lewis to reach out if there is something specific Visit SLO CAL can help with, and shared that for example, all of the assets from Luxury Forum we own and can now use as meeting and conference content. Martin asked how the catalog can be accessed. Cartier replied to reach out to your local TBID and that we are happy to curate something specific for you and are happy to work directly with you or your local TBID.

5. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Conversation

Cartier shared a recap of the EDI asset alignment study which was completed the year prior to help inform the work and create authenticity in our marketing efforts. Cartier announced a new culinary series which will include programming throughout the year with some focus during restaurant month in January and the first SLO CAL Crafted video featuring Ulloa Cellars which will be filmed entirely in Spanish with English subtitles. Cartier highlighted EDI content created for owned and earned channels and shared that the SLO CAL Welcome training modules will be available in English and Spanish. Cartier also highlighted the upcoming EDI training for Visit SLO CAL Board and staff.

Visit SLO CAL asked the following questions from the committee:

What feedback do you have on Visit SLO CAL's EDI work?

How can we continue to partner with you on this important work and what does success look like?

Are there unintended consequences to this work that we need to be aware of?

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion. Martin asked if there will be outreach to individual properties for the SLO CAL Welcome training modules. Davison replied that there is an outreach activation by the Visit SLO CAL team and anyone can take the course. Bronson shared that he was so impressed with the work Visit SLO CAL has done, it is so cool to see what is being accomplished, and how Visit SLO CAL has drilled down the values of the community. Davison thanked Bronson and noted how proud he is of the team; it is amazing to see what they are getting done. Ford noted that in her opinion, success is visible in the diversity of the visitors SLO CAL now has, especially how much it has changed in the past ten years. Ford voiced her appreciation for the work Visit SLO CAL is doing, commenting that it is well done, and she is thankful. Davison thanked Ford for her support and shared his appreciation for the Board not just wanting to be collaborators but wanting to be leaders in EDI, commenting that if we make people feel welcome and invited, we can change demographics of our community and that everything starts with a visit.

6. Experience SLO CAL 2050 Conversations

Davison provided a reminder that the tracking matrix was requested by Jim Lewis at the May meeting, and while we know we cannot do everything all at once, this matrix was developed so we can see and share the status of items, including what Visit SLO CAL owns, what we can champion and what we can advocate for. Davison noted that the matrix will be published on the website in January and updated monthly. Campbell provided an update on the SLO CAL Welcome customer service training program, reminding the committee that it is free, self-paced and available in English now and Spanish within the next month. Campbell shared an update on the Events & Festivals strategy, sharing that the countywide calendar is expected by Q2 of 2023.

Visit SLO CAL asked the following questions from the committee:

What overall feedback do you have on the direction of this work?

Where and how would you like to partner with Visit SLO CAL in the coming year?

Public Comment.

Committee Discussion. Stewart commented that the countywide calendar is really exciting, and she felt hopeful for the return of something similar to SLO Happenings. Stewart asked if there is a way to post events happening now, before the calendar is live. Campbell replied that we do currently have a calendar on our website and things can be posted there. Davison noted that this is a two-pronged approach because we are also working to find the right time for the event in addition to creating one calendar for everything and want to make it a great user experience. Stewart replied that it will be great for everyone. Stewart also asked how success is being tracked for the customer service training program. Campbell replied that there is tracking being done on the back end for the individuals and businesses. Davison shared that Visit SLO CAL has goals as an organization for how many businesses and individuals complete it. Stewart thanked Davison and asked if the goal is to score 62% or higher. Davison replied that the number will be measured every year and evaluated, and that we should realize that the number is likely lower than 62% right now due to staff shortages and that number being from 2017 or 2018; we hope to get it up to at least 80%. Stewart commented that staffing issues is obviously a huge issue in the community and asked how that will play into the results of the success. Davison replied that it will play into the businesses ability to be certified, while having our partners understand the broader impact by seeing the level of service change. Campbell shared that we hope that the program can become an opportunity for businesses to make their place of employment an attractive place to work. Marshall asked who wrote the program. Davison replied that the Canadian company ICOM created it. Marshall asked how long the program takes. Davison replied approximately 4-6 hours but that it is self-paced. Murray shared that each module takes roughly 30 minutes to complete, and participants will have 90 days to complete it. Marshall asked if it can be done as a group. Murray responded that while it cannot be done as a group because it is an individual program, it could be done in a group setting if each participant had their own device to work off. Davison shared that there are badges along the way and at the end of the program everyone receives a lapel pin they can wear showcasing them as a SLO CAL Welcome Expert.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:02pm.