



MINUTES

Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors

Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, November 15, 2023

8:30 am – 10:30 am

Visit SLO CAL Office, 81 Higuera St, Ste 220, San Luis Obispo, CA

1. CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT: Vic Popp, Amar Sohi, Amit Patel (arrived after call to order), Jed Bickel, Nipool Patel, Pragna Patel-Mueller, Aaron Graves, Toni LeGras-Price (arrived after call to order), Mark Eads, Britt Shuford, Clint Pearce (arrived after call to order), Hamish Marshall (arrived after call to order), Bryan Bonelli

STAFF PRESENT: Chuck Davison, Cathy Cartier, Emily Rudge, Annie Braunschweig

ABSENT: Hemant Patel, Jim Hamilton

Call to order at 8:32am

2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SLO CAL Branded Apparel is now available, please review the samples and make your selections at the end of the meeting; complete the JLL survey by November 30; sign the Conflict of Interest Form and Board Member Guidelines if you didn't at the September meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of September 27, 2023 Board of Directors Annual Meeting Minutes

4. Approval of September 2023 Visit SLO CAL Financials

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion – None.

ACTION: Moved by **Popp/LeGras-Price** to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion carried: 11:0:2 (Pearce and Marshall arrived after the Consent Agenda)

CEO REPORT

5. Visit SLO CAL CEO Report

Davison highlighted the STR report for the week of October 29, noting that occupancy is off by 3.5% and RevPAR is flat, Paso and Atascadero are holding rate, and the largest impacted area remains the north coast with the closure of HWY 1. Davison provided a recap of the Brand USA CEO Summit and shared an update on the Mid-State Fair sponsorship, highlighting a recent meeting with Tom Keffury and future follow up to discuss possible next steps. Davison shared an update on the upcoming meeting regarding the advocacy needs and tourism impacts related to the HWY 1 closure, in partnership with Visit California, CalTrans, See Monterey, and several elected officials, hosted in VSC's office on November 28. Davison provided an update on the possibility of a TOT increase ballot measure- sharing that it is now unlikely to appear on an upcoming ballot due to negative polling results thus far. Davison shared an advocacy update on the potential LA ballot measure regarding hotel vacancy reporting being used to provide housing for the homeless, highlighting that an agreement was reached with the city council and the item will no longer appear on the ballot, however the compromise now includes hotel development regulations being linked to the creation of residential housing and additional items related to short-term vacation rentals, which are under review by city departments. Davison shared a recent letter of support provided for the Bob Jones Trail Pathway Gap Closure Project and noted his upcoming travel schedule.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

Business Items

6. Financial Updates

Braunschweig provided a recap of the year-to-date financials through September 2023, and highlighted updates regarding the annual tax return filing, the mid-year budget reforecast, and the changes made to the Morgan Stanley investment portfolio which were approved in the November Executive Committee meeting.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

7. Advisory Committee Meeting Feedback

Davison shared a draft version of the upcoming Advisory Committee Meeting agenda, which was vetted by several city managers, and requested Board feedback on the agenda direction based on what is happening in their respective communities.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion. Pearce shared his concern for the high level of turnover with city managers and notions of threats to tourism. Davison noted the ongoing work with Melissa James and Pete Rodgers on the regionalism side working to connect the dots for new city/county managers. LeGras-Price commented on the frustration surrounding the ongoing housing issue and STRs; the land use direction does not seem to be focused on long term solutions that help create work force housing. Marshall shared that the city of SLO doesn't have an economic development division which would be helpful to create incentives and subsidizing for builders. Eads summarized his conversation with Jimmy Paulding at the SLO CAL Summit, noting that many of his housekeeping staff have been forced to quit and relocate to Los Angeles in order to find more affordable housing. LeGras-Price suggested SLO County review what the communities in the San Joaquin Valley are doing with pre-approved floor plans for those who wish to build ADU units on their property. Popp commented on the recent creation of Paso Robles' tourism ecosystem committee which shares study money and digs deeper into specifics. Davison noted that the cities need to be reminded that they must step out and take the lead on many of these community issues that are also recommendations in Experience SLO CAL 2050.

8. Central Coast Economic Forecast Recap

Davison shared several slides from Dr. Chris Thornberg's presentations from the Central Coast Economic Forecast. Davison requested Board feedback on how the forecast will impact the industry and anything the Board would like Visit SLO CAL to consider in the mid-year reforecast based on the data Dr. Thornberg provided.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion. Graves shared that he recently spent two days with Peach Street Group and SLO CAL is aggressively on their radar, and it was fascinating to see how engaged they are; they are willing to inject a lot of capital into this area. Davison commented on how great KSL has been for this area, they are community focused and engaged. Graves agreed and noted the need for sincerity and authenticity. Graves inquired about the possible impact of fast-food workers' hourly wage increase to \$20 per hour and how that will soon impact the tourism industry. Davison stated that it is being talked about at a state level, and we are hearing there will likely be a bill on this subject in the next year focused on a broader portion of the hospitality industry.

9. Travel Trade & Marketing Update

Cartier provided a recap of the SLO CAL Summit and shared a highlight video. Cartier provided an update on the My SLO CAL local media buy in order to advance the nomenclature initiative. Cartier shared a recap of the recent Denver Key Market Activation and the recent Spartan Race at Santa Margarita Ranch, noting that race participation was up by 1,600. Cartier noted the upcoming "Unpacking SLO CAL" shoot, and the recent announcement of a Monopoly SLO CAL Edition to be created in 2024. Cartier noted the SLO CAL Open taking place in Morro Bay from December 4 – 10, the creative brief for the planned activation at IPW in May 2024, and several media wins for the PR department.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion

Davison provided a reminder for the upcoming meeting dates.

ADJOURN 10:30 am