



# MINUTES

## Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors

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### Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors Annual Meeting

Wednesday, May 29, 2024

8:30am – 10:30am

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

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

**PRESENT:** Mark Eads, Aaron Graves, Toni LeGras-Price, Bryan Bonelli, Britt Shuford, Vic Popp, Amar Sohi, Jim Hamilton, Hamish Marshall, Pragna Patel- Mueller, Jed Bickel, Hemant Patel

**STAFF PRESENT:** Cathy Cartier, Annie Braunschweig, Emily Rudge, Kristen Carlson

**ABSENT:** Clint Pearce, Nipool Patel, Amit Patel

Call to order at 8:33am

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

##### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you for attending the Annual Bash! Reminder: June 6 Advisory Committee at our office followed by a happy hour reception. SLO CAL Summit Save the Date: September 25, 11:30 am – 4:00 pm.

#### CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of March 27, 2024 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

4. Approval of March 2024 Visit SLO CAL Financials

5. Approval of April 2024 Visit SLO CAL Financials

6. Appointment of FY 25 Marketing Committee Seats

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion – None.

**ACTION:** Moved by **Graves/Popp** to approve the Consent Agenda.

**Motion carried: 12:0**

#### CEO REPORT

7. Visit SLO CAL CEO Report

Cartier provided a recap of the April STR report, highlighting that while most communities are seeing occupancy down compared to last year, SLO CAL is pacing for a strong June, with SBP bookings being high, tracking for a good summer. Cartier noted several staff promotions that occurred in April. Cartier shared a recap of the local media coverage for National Travel and Tourism Week along with California Tourism Month, and announced the several proclamations received from SLO CAL communities, Congressman Carbajal, and Dawn Addis. Cartier provided an update on Highway 1 and shared an update on the Cal Poly Scholarship, noting that it would be \$5,000 per year for 5 years. Cartier highlighted the high volume of meetings held in the past 2.5 months with key stakeholders and leaders in the Tourism industry both state and nationwide. Cartier recapped the Cal Poly Economic Development Committee Meeting held on April 19, the recent JLL and Visit California Meeting regarding the regional tourism strategic plan, the FY 25 VSC Board meeting dates, and shared her upcoming travel schedule.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

## Business Items

### 8. FY 2025 Business and Marketing Plan

Cartier noted that the draft of the FY 25 Business & Marketing Plan was included in the digital agenda packet for review in concept. Cartier provided a detailed review of the objectives, strategies, and key results which all ladder up to Strategic Direction 2026. Cartier highlighted various data and metrics for visitation, hotel growth plans, ethnographic research for the “Land Of...” campaign, as well as reviewed areas of focus for paid media, owned media, earned media, events, sales, ESC 2050, advocacy, and Film SLO CAL.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

**ACTION:** Moved by **Graves/ Marshall** to approve the FY 2024 Business and Marketing Plan in concept, as presented, and as recommended by the Marketing Committee and the Executive Committee.

**Motion carried: 12:0**

### 9. FY 2025 Budget

Braunschweig presented the proposed FY 25 TMD revenue projections, estimating a 3.3% growth YOY. Braunschweig noted Non TMD revenue, investment & interest income, expenses and carryover. Braunschweig provided a high- level overview of items of focus for each department: general & administrative, industry research and resources, sales, PR and communications, marketing/ advertising, marketing/ digital, events, community engagement and advocacy, and highlighted budget reductions.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion. Patel-Mueller requested that the overall percentages in the budget would be helpful in order to have a clear idea of what is being spent compared to what is being earned.

**ACTION:** Moved by **H. Patel/ Jed** to approve the Visit SLO CAL FY 2025 budget as presented, and as recommended by the Executive Committee.

**Motion carried: 12:0**

## **10. Executive Committee Seats**

Cartier reviewed the current structure, Eads noted that the recommendation by the Executive Committee is to leave the current slate as is for one more year, highlighting that consistency is needed during VSC's transitional period.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion. Popp voiced his support for the slate remaining for another year and Graves thanked Eads for his tremendous leadership.

**ACTION:** Moved by **Popp/ Shuford** to approve the following slate: Chair- Mark Eads, Vice Chair- Amar Sohi, Secretary- Clint Pearce, Treasurer- Hemant Patel, Past Chair- Aaron Graves.

**Motion carried: 12:0**

## **11. Board Member Selection Process**

Cartier reviewed the requirements for Board applicants and shared the details of the application process, as well as applications received and positions available. Visit SLO CAL received 3 new applications, one current Board member reapplied (Amit Patel), two requests for re-appointments (Jed Bickel- Pismo Beach, Victor Popp- Paso Robles), and one request for new appointment (Sean Dasmann- Arroyo Grande). The new applications included: Kathy Kelly, Digs Vacation Rentals; Kimberly Walker, Nomada Hotel Group; Kamal Patel, The Carlton Hotel.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

**ACTION:** Moved by **Popp/LeGras-Price** to elect Kimberly Walker to the at-large seat on the Board of Directors, as recommended by the Executive Committee, in addition to the ratification of Victor Popp- Paso Robles seat, Jed Bickel- Pismo Beach seat, Sean Dasmann- Arroyo Grande seat.

**Motion carried: 11:0:1 (Marshall abstained)**

## **12. Executive Search Update**

Cartier provided a reminder of the June 27 meetings (Executive Committee and Board of Directors). Braunschweig presented the Executive Search timeline with Winner Partners. Eads updated the Committee on the decision to add Jim Hamilton and Pragna Patel- Mueller to the Compensation Committee, temporarily for the purposes of the CEO Search.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

## **13. Travel Trade & Marketing Update**

Cartier highlighted the recap of IPW in Los Angeles, shared a new social media reel, shared the new SBP creative which was made in collaboration with Pensara, shared several PR updates, and highlighted several upcoming event and sponsorship dates. Cartier provided several updates on Community Engagement & Advocacy initiatives including a recap of CalTravel Advocacy Day and several legislation updates (SB 1028, SB

1372). Cartier shared that while SB 1028 was named dead, confirmation was received that morning of efforts to revive the bill.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion. Popp thanked Cartier for her participation in the Travel Paso Tourism Roundup, noting that she did a great job moderating the panel.

Cartier provided a reminder for the upcoming events and meetings.

**ADJOURN 10:15am**