



# MINUTES

## Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors

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### Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, January 15, 2025

8:30am – 10:30am

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

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

**PRESENT:** Clint Pearce, Aaron Graves, Jim Hamilton, Jed Bickel, Pragna Patel- Mueller, Bryan Bonelli, Sean Dasmann, Hemant Patel, Hamish Marshall, Toni LeGras-Price

**STAFF PRESENT:** Cathy Cartier, Annie Braunschweig, Emily Rudge, Molly Cano, Lisa Belsanti

**ABSENT:** Mark Eads, Amar Sohi, Britt Shuford, Vic Popp, Nipool Patel, Kimberly Walker

Call to order at 8:40am

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

##### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you for attending the Advisory Committee meeting; 2025 Visitor Magazine is now available; March Board of Directors meeting has moved to March 19; outlined future meeting date changes.

#### CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of November 6, 2024 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

4. Approval of October 2024 Visit SLO CAL Financials

5. Approval of November 2024 Visit SLO CAL Financials

Board Discussion – None.

**ACTION:** Moved by **Pearce/Marshall** to approve the Consent Agenda.

**Motion carried: 10:0**

#### CEO REPORT

6. Visit SLO CAL CEO Report

Cartier shared the monthly STR report for November as well as the YTD report- noting that Atascadero was down due to a hotel briefly closing and reopening, and San Luis Obispo was down due to a hotel permanently closing. Cartier noted that paid media was paused and SLO CAL social media pages went dark due to the Los Angeles wildfires, it would likely resume within the next few days. Cartier also noted that a best practice resource guide was shared with destination partners. Cartier provided a recap of the U.S. Travel Association Board Meeting & Travel and Mobility Conference held in Washington D.C. Cartier also shared a recap of the CalTravel Association Board Meeting. Cartier provided an update on the type 47 liquor license issue, noting that Supervisor Ortiz-Legg has now signed on to champion the effort and has met with Assemblymember Addis' office to discuss the issue. Cartier noted that the Board application process will open in the spring and highlighted which members are up for renewal; individual discussions will be scheduled soon. Cartier provided a final legal update, noting the final resolution in the matter. Cartier highlighted her upcoming travel schedule.

Board Discussion- None.

## Business Items

### 7. FY 25 Mid-Year Budget Reforecast

Braunschweig presented the Mid-Year Budget Reforecast, highlighting a significant decrease in TMD revenue, decrease in operating expenses, an increase in deficit versus approved budget, and provided a percentage overview of expenses by department and by function. Braunschweig reviewed significant differences in expenditures by department.

Board Discussion- None.

**ACTION:** Moved by **Marshall/Bickel** to approve the FY 25 Mid-Year Budget Reforecast.

**Motion carried: 10:0**

### 8. Tourism Economics Lodging Forecast Results

Cartier provided an overview of the results from the Tourism Economics Lodging Forecast co-op, noting that the data was distributed to each participating co-op partner on December 20, and 1:1 calls with Tourism Economics are available for additional questions. Key takeaways include supply is expected to outpace demand impacting RevPAR and occupancy, hotel RevPAR is expected to grow 0.1% in 2025 and decline 0.7% in 2026, hotel room revenue is expected to grow 2.1% in 2025 and 2.9% in 2026.

Board Discussion- Marshall inquired about the reopening of HWY 1. Cartier responded that it isn't fully open, perhaps in the spring as we have had a dry winter, however VSC is working with CalTrans to update signage to state that things are open past Cambria. Dasmann asked how California ranks overall on tourism compared to the rest of the U.S. Cartier replied that CalTravel has that data, but overall California is ranked very high. Patel-Mueller asked how LAX is performing due to the Los Angeles wildfires. Cartier responded that LAX is open but there is confusion with travelers as to whether you can get in and out of LAX.

### 9. Last Mile Working Group Discussion

Cartier shared a recap of the Last Mile Working Group discussion, highlighting the first meeting on December 18 in which they identified current challenges, potential solutions, collaboration opportunities, and identified next steps including the immediate need for a survey to gather data on transportation needs from residents and visitors.

Board Discussion. Bickel voiced the importance of fixing the transportation issue if SBP plans to expand and add more flights in the future. Marshall suggested having each municipality help pay for the survey.

## **10. Marketing, Travel Trade & ESC 2050 Updates**

Cano shared campaign timeline updates for Unpacking, Sustainably SLO CAL and Wine-O-One, and shared several clips from Unpacking episode 2. Cano shared a sneak peek of Wine-O-One video assets, gave a recap of the November UK Sales Agent FAM, highlighted the engagement metrics for the Morro Bay SLO CAL Open, and reviewed participation metrics for the November Spartan Race. Cano gave a reminder that SLO CAL Welcome went dark on December 31, 2024, and will return on July 1 on a new hosting platform. Cano shared a recap of the Workforce Development Group Working Group meetings.

Board Discussion. Graves asked if VSC has reviewed or talked to hotel partners about occupancy data during SLO CAL Open. Cartier replied that we haven't done so yet as we're waiting for Pismo to wrap up but have a meeting with Michael Wambolt and Gordon Jackson to discuss. Bickel commented that Pismo City Council really loves SLO CAL Open, and they are especially eager to see more large events in the offseason. Pearce commented that Spartan Race has been great for occupancy in Atascadero.

Cartier provided a reminder for the upcoming events and meetings.

**ADJOURN 10:01am**