MINUTES
Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors

Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, September 17, 2025
8:30am – 10:30am
Visit SLO CAL Office, 81 Higuera St, Ste 220, San Luis Obispo, CA

1. CALL TO ORDER
PRESENT: Kimberly Walker, Britt Shuford, Hamish Marshall, Hemant Patel, Amar Sohi, Pragna Patel-Mueller, Kathy Kelly, Aaron Graves, Vic Popp, Nipool Patel, Toni LeGras-Price, Jim Hamilton, Clint Pearce, Jed Bickel

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

ABSENT: Mark Eads, Sean Dasmann

Call to order at 8:34am

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2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cartier reminded the Board to sign their annual Conflict of Interest forms and Board of Directors Guidelines forms, announced that the January meeting will move from January 28 to 21, notified the Board that Charles Amian has left his position at Pismo Coast RV Village Resort thus leaving the RV Park seat vacant once again. Cartier shared a reminder of the October 29 virtual Brown Act training, the Central Coast Economic Forecast, the November 13 SLO CAL Summit, and wished a congratulations to the Graves family on the birth of their son and the opening of The Ava Hotel.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of May 28, 2025 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
4. Approval of June and Year End 2025 Visit SLO CAL Financials
5. Approval of July 2025 Visit SLO CAL Financials

Board Discussion – None.

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

Motion carried: 14:0

CEO REPORT

6. Visit SLO CAL CEO Report

Cartier shared the monthly STR report for July, highlighting the continued softening across several communities, specifically Pismo Beach and Atascadero. Cartier reviewed the Partner Satisfaction Survey results, noting a net promoter score of 97. Cartier shared an update on AB 1008, noting that it is awaiting the Governor's signature by October 13 and if passed, it would allow San Luis Obispo County to obtain 5 new onsite general alcohol licenses in 2026 and 5 more in 2027. Cartier shared several SBP airport updates, announced that SLO CAL Open will now be run by The World Surf League, with the VSC sponsorship details remaining the same. Cartier shared several Cal Poly academic calendar details for the next two years as they move to a semester system. Cartier shared an update on the City of Los Angeles hotel and airport worker minimum wage increase which will be $30 per hour by 2028 for hotels with 60 rooms or more and provided a recap of the July 17 Regent's Slide visit with CalTrans and Transportation Secretary Toks Omishakin. Cartier noted a letter VSC sent to SLOCOG requesting a change to their messaging regarding the Local Roads First Tax campaign. Cartier provided a recap of the U.S. Travel Association Summer Summit and Board meeting. Cartier highlighted her participation on the HWY 1 Tourism Alliance (CBID) steering committee as they will move from an '89 district to a '94 district, noting that their goal is to have the new district in place by October 1, 2026, with a five-year term. Cartier shared her upcoming travel schedule.

Board Discussion- None.

Business Items

7. FY 25 Annual Audit

Braunschweig introduced Erin Nagle, of Glenn Burdette, who presented the FY 2025 audit, sharing that this was the tenth consecutive year of a clean audit, with no findings or non-routine adjustments. Nagle shared that a letter will be shared with the Board which will highlight the financial statements, that there were no findings, and no material weaknesses. Braunschweig shared the routine financial adjustments, audited net income, and the cumulative operating surplus carried forward.

Board Discussion- Hamilton commented that this is a great vote for professionalism, and it speaks to the management and staff, and congratulated the team on their great work. Cartier recognized Braunschweig for her hard work, especially being a team of one.

ACTION: Moved by **Hamilton/Kelly** to approve the FY 2025 Visit SLO CAL audited financial statements and related report, as conducted by Glenn Burdette and recommended by the Executive Committee.

Motion carried: 13:0 (Pearce not present for vote)

8. Visitor Profile Study

Cartier introduced Darren Bishop, of Heart + Mind Strategies, who presented the findings from the recently completed Visitor Profile Study. Bishop noted the survey included 3,000 respondents and key findings included that travelers are now staying closer to home and are cautiously spending, SLO CAL is seeing younger and more diverse audiences, and 89% of visitors feel welcome in SLO CAL. Bishop noted that beach towns and diverse experiences are favored, and while wine tourism is down, the opportunity remains.

Board Discussion- Kelly asked how the people were chosen for the study and if everyone had recently visited. Bishop replied that the group was polled via online panels with incentives given in the form of gift cards, with the group weighted with the drive market versus fly market, and some respondents had visited in 2022, while others had never visited SLO CAL before. Sohi asked if all economic backgrounds were included. Cartier responded that they needed a household income of $75,000 or more for the fly market and $50,000 or more for the drive market.

9. FY 25 Annual Report

Cartier presented the FY 2025 Annual Report, sharing a reminder that printed copies will be mailed soon. Cartier noted that while occupancy, RevPAR and supply were up, TOT was slightly down, however the variance is due to the timing of remittance and collections. Cartier highlighted that there were no major shifts in arrivals or origin markets and reviewed the highlights from each department (earned media, owned media, paid media, partnership and events, sales, film SLO CAL, advocacy, experience SLO CAL 2050, and a budget overview).

Board Discussion- None.

ACTION: Moved by **N. Patel/Popp** to approve the FY 2025 Visit SLO CAL Annual Report, as recommended by the Executive Committee.

Motion carried: 13:0 (Pearce not present for vote)

10. TMD Renewal

Cartier presented a detailed, updated timeline and process for the TMD Renewal, targeting renewal in 2027. Cartier shared the steering committee feedback and shared the proposed scope of work for Jocelyn Brennan of HRM Consultants, who will be engaged as a consultant supporting the TMD Renewal process. The work will be a 26-month engagement; Cartier highlighted the four phases, with the work beginning in October 2025 and ending in approximately December 2027, with some flexibility in the timeline. Cartier noted that the proposal was approved by the Executive Committee the day prior during the September Executive Committee meeting.

Board Discussion- Hamilton asked if the hotels will be counted as well, not just the revenue. Cartier responded that they will be counted via a dual spreadsheet with information provided by the county. Patel-Mueller asked how the timing would work with discussing the changes with the cities before Civitas drafts the document. Cartier responded that there are several things that the cities will need to agree to which Brennan will help us navigate. Patel-Mueller asked if Brennan has done this type of project elsewhere previously. Cartier responded that she has done similar work and is well-respected in the region. Graves commented that the proposal will be money well spent as this project is an incredibly large lift and was very time consuming for the previous CEO in the last renewal process.

11. Investment Portfolio Update

Braunschweig presented the quarterly investment portfolio update, noting that it has now been nine months since moving to an actively managed portfolio. Braunschweig highlighted the current balance and asset allocation.

Board Discussion- None.

12. Last Mile Survey

Cartier shared the Last Mile survey results (intercept and wifi survey), noting the key takeaways: the time of arrival or departure did not impact the ease of getting to and from the airport, a large percentage of travelers rated rideshare as difficult for both arrival and departure, and travelers highlighted better food and beverage options as well as transportation options as areas that need improvement. Cartier noted the next steps to be reviewing the data with SBP airport, conduct a working group meeting on October 14, explore the shuttle option with SLO Safe Ride, and SBP airport is currently implementing an RFP with rental car providers to help solve the after-hours issue.

Board Discussion- None.

13. Strategic Direction 2029

Braunschweig shared an update on the Strategic Direction 2029 process which is currently underway, sharing that the stakeholder engagement survey is in progress and will be shared with the Marketing Committee in January 2026, approved by the Board of Directors in March 2026, with adoption in July 2026.

Board Discussion- None.

14. Marketing, Travel Trade & ESC 2050 Updates

In Cano's absence, Cartier shared a recap of Cano's recent trip to Madison, WI for the Chamber Economic Vision trip, shared the confirmed dates for the Volaire Air Service Conference, provided a recap of the meeting planner FAM, and upcoming sales activities (tradeshows and FAMs). Belsanti shared a recap of the recent agency immersion, highlighted the Sunset Magazine Travel Award win, and shared several social media metrics. Belsanti shared several ESC 2050 & Advocacy items, noting that SLO CAL Welcome is updated and available again, and reviewed the marketing plan for SLO CAL Welcome.

Board Discussion- None.

Cartier provided a reminder for the upcoming events and meetings.

ADJOURN 10:31am