MINUTES
Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors

Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors Annual Meeting
Wednesday, June 3, 2026
8:30am – 11:00am
Visit SLO CAL Office, 81 Higuera St, Ste 220, San Luis Obispo, CA

1. CALL TO ORDER
PRESENT: Nipool Patel, Mark Eads, Clint Pearce, Britt Shuford, Jim Hamilton, Aaron Graves, Sean Dasmann, Hamish Marshall, Jed Bickel, Kathy Kelly (arrived after Consent Agenda)

STAFF PRESENT: Cathy Cartier, Annie Braunschweig, Emily Rudge, Molly Cano, Ashlee Akers, Matt Halvorson

ABSENT: Toni LeGras-Price, Pragna Patel-Mueller, Amar Sohi, Kimberly Walker, Vic Popp, Hemant Patel

Call to order at 8:32am

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2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cartier thanked the Board for their attendance at the Annual Bash; shared a reminder of the SLO CAL Summit, and thanked Nipool Patel for his service on the Board since the TMD establishment in 2015.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of March 25, 2026 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
4. Approval of March 2026 Visit SLO CAL Financials
5. Approval of April 2026 Visit SLO CAL Financials
6. Appointment of FY 27 Marketing Committee Seats

Board Discussion – None.

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

Motion carried: 9:0 (Kelly not present for vote)

Cartier noted that due to several board members needing to depart early, the CEO report will be shared after all motion items have been voted on.

Business Items

7. President & CEO Annual Review and Bonus

Pearce shared a recap of the May 28 Compensation Committee Meeting and said that the Compensation Committee and Executive Committee recommended the full bonus payment to Cartier due to the stability of the staff and lack of departures, a positive 360 feedback with some slight areas to improve. Graves noted that Cartier achieved all individual and organizational goals for the year and shared a recap of discussion from the Executive Committee meeting which was a positive.

Board Discussion- Bickel shared that he previously had concerns about awarding full bonus payments but praised Cartier for having done a great job turning the organization around and pivoting, using the new brand campaign concept as an example of her flexibility; Bickel further noted he was happy to support awarding the full bonus. Hamilton echoed the brand campaign pivoting example and stated that he knew the brand campaign and the TMD renewal were large lifts and VSC had to adjust the plan immensely.

ACTION: Moved by **Bickel/Shuford** to approve the President & CEO's annual review and bonus at 100%.

Motion carried: 10:0

8. Review of FY 27 Business and Marketing Plan

Cartier noted that there are several printed copies of the draft Business and Marketing Plan, and final copies will be mailed shortly. Cartier highlighted the four Objectives, Strategies and Key Results. Cartier shared that the Core Advisory Committee suggested adding a focused effort on ground transportation within the Objective 3. Cano shared an update on the brand storytelling initiatives and SLO CAL Crafted Culinary series. Cano highlighted the paid media strategies for FY 27, the geographic prioritization, and the paid media budget division totaling $3m. Cano noted the objectives and strategies for the website, email, social media, earned media, partnerships and events, sales and travel trade, film SLO CAL. Cartier shared the objectives and key results for Experience SLO CAL 2050 and Advocacy.

Board Discussion- The Board agreed to add a focused effort on ground transportation into Objective 3.

ACTION: Moved by **N.Patel/Eads** to approve the FY 27 Business and Marketing Plan in concept as presented.

Motion carried: 10:0

9. Review of FY 27 Budget Items

Braunschweig highlighted the FY 27 operating budget overview, noting revenue, operating expenses, key initiatives and planned reserve spending. Braunschweig shared a snapshot of the budgeted FY 27 assessment revenue, which reflects a 1.5% YOY increase. Braunschweig shared the organization's planned key one-time initiatives, which will be partially funded by reserves. Braunschweig highlighted several items of note regarding the budget, including payroll and related expenses, paid media spending, brand awareness study, and the Del Mar Food & Wine event activation. Braunschweig also shared a chart demonstrating the breakdown of expenses by key function.

Board Discussion- Kelly asked about the current website vendor and why the CRM is problematic. Halvorson explained that the current website vendor and CRM vendor is Simpleview, and the CRM is antiquated and there are better options as of late, but the website and CRM integration is a large overhaul to depart from. Kelly agreed that there are certainly troubles in the user experience on the partner portal.

ACTION: Moved by **N.Patel/ Shuford** to approve the Visit SLO CAL FY 27 Budget and use of reserve funds.

Motion carried: 10:0

10. Executive Committee Seats

Cartier shared a reminder that the current structure keeps the Chair, Vice chair and Past Chair in the seat for two years, and shared the current slate which was approved by the Executive Committee:
Chair: Amar Sohi
Vice Chair: Clint Pearce
Secretary: Aaron Graves
Treasurer: Toni LeGras-Price
Past Chair: Mark Eads
Hemant Patel
Hamish Marshall

Board Discussion- None.

ACTION: Moved by **Bickel/Dasmann** to approve the following slate:
Chair: Amar Sohi
Vice Chair: Clint Pearce
Secretary: Aaron Graves
Treasurer: Toni LeGras-Price
Past Chair: Mark Eads
Hemant Patel
Hamish Marshall

Motion carried: 10:0

11. Board Member Selection Process

Cartier shared a recap of the selection process, the vacant seats, and shared the four applications received. Cartier announced that Nipool Patel would be resigning from the Board due to the pending sale of The Lamplighter Inn. Cartier thanked Patel for his 11 years of service on the VSC Board of Directors and shared she appreciated his dedication to the organization and tourism. Cartier shared background on each of the four new board applicants received (Matt Kleefisch- The Ava Hotel; Angel Gonzalez- Oceanpoint Ranch; David Morneau- Paso Robles Inn; Matt Wright- Hotel Cerro). Cartier also shared the two at-large applications received for renewal (Aaron Graves and Pragna Patel-Mueller), as well as the reappointment of Jim Hamilton (County at-large seat) and Hemant Patel (City of Morro Bay seat).

Board Discussion- The Board of Directors discussed the backgrounds and qualifications of each new candidate.

ACTION: Moved by **Kelly/Shuford** to approve the renewal of Patel- Mueller and Graves (at-large seats), the reappointment of Hamilton, H. Patel, and the election of David Morneau to replace Nipool Patel's at-large seat.

Motion carried: 10:0

12. Volaire Air Service Conference Recap

Cartier shared a recap of the Volaire Air Service Conference highlighting the airlines in participation, number of attendees and meetings held, and thanked The Cliffs and Hotel SLO for their execution on the hosted events. Cartier shared the air service development items that were discussed during the Volaire air service conference and stated that Sacramento and Salt Lake City could potentially be upcoming new routes offered in SLO CAL, as route planners were more open to discussion than they had been in years prior. Cartier shared a recap video from the air service conference.

Board Discussion- None.

13. Marketing, Travel Trade & ESC 2050 Updates

Akers shared several paid media updates regarding the custom partnership highlights for Pandora, Vox, OOH, Hulu CTV and Expedia. Cano shared several updates from the Sales team including the recent group sales wins, recent and upcoming sales team FAMs, UK trade incentive programs, Cano shared a recap of the IPW tradeshow in Florida. Akers highlighted earned media updates regarding the Visit California L.A Media mission and the Phoenix media mission co-op, the recent HWY 1 influencer FAM co-op, and shared a recap of the National Travel and Tourism Week media coverage. Akers highlighted owned media updates including the newsletter engagement metrics, social media metrics and shared the recent Thrifty Beaches video. Cano shared an update on the Film SLO CAL FAM and permitting event. Cartier shared updates on the Oceano Dunes reopening, the National Travel and Tourism resolution at the May 5 County Board of Supervisors meeting, shared a recap of the HWY 1 press conference with CalTrans, CalTravel Advocacy Days, and gave an update on SB 917 regarding wineries serving tastings at Farmers' Markets.

Board Discussion- None.

CEO REPORT

14. Visit SLO CAL CEO Report

Cartier shared the April STR report with strong performance in HWY 1, with May looking to be strong as well, and Paso continuing to absorb new rooms. Cartier highlighted the 2025 visitation numbers which were record breaking across every category and noted visitor spending metrics. Cartier noted the adjusted Strategic Direction 2029 language regarding the addition of advocating for ground transportation. Cartier noted the upcoming outreach efforts to meet individually with city council members in every community for education in advance of next year's district renewal effort. Cartier highlighted SBP's desire to sign a five-year contract for VSC to continue to provide their marketing services which will be presented at the June 16 County Board of Supervisors meeting. Cartier shared updates on the upcoming changes to air service schedules and plane sizes. Cartier shared an update on the HWY 1 Tourism Alliance formation from an 89 district to a 94 district. Cartier announced an update on the possible LA minimum wage increase, and an Olympics hotel tax increase. Cartier highlighted the new location for the Cal Poly rodeo event, Breakawave on September 25 and 26, taking place in Avila Beach instead of Grover Beach. Cartier highlighted the Tapped Into SLO CAL partnership with Firestone Walker in which the SLO CAL beer was unveiled at the Firestone Walker Beer Invitational. Cartier announced the two new tenants in the VSC Office: Adam Montiel from Up + Adam, and Rita Casaverde from the SLO Diversity Coalition. Cartier shared the new FY Board of Directors and Advisory Committee meeting dates. Cartier shared her upcoming travel schedule.

Board Discussion- None.

Cartier provided a reminder for the upcoming events and meetings.

ADJOURN 10:28 am