



# MINUTES

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## Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors

### Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 15, 2017

8:30am

Madonna Inn

100 Madonna Road, San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER: Clint Pearce

**PRESENT:** John Arnold, Kathy Bonelli, Mark Eads, Aaron Graves, Jim Hamilton, Lori Keller, Sarah Maggelet, Sam Miller, Clint Pearce, Amar Sohi, Roger Wightman

**ABSENT:** Jay Jamison, Nipool Patel, Val Seymour

**STAFF PRESENT:** Chuck Davison, Brooke Burnham, Michael Wambolt, Brendan Pringle, Yarina Valverde, Kimberly Headington

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Call to Order at 8:33 am.

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

None.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Board welcomed Amar Sohi, who now holds the city-appointed seat for Atascadero, to the VSC Board of Directors. Davison introduced VSC's newest team members, Kimberly Headington and Yarina Valverde. Headington is the Executive Assistant to the President & CEO and Valverde is the Brand & Digital Manager. Davison also asked representatives from VSC's three agencies (BCF, Goodway Group and Turner PR) to introduce themselves. They are currently in town for VSC's All Agency Meeting.

#### CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of September 20, 2017 Board Meeting Minutes
4. Approval of September & October Financials
5. Approval of Danna Stroud's Marketing Committee Application

Davison noted that Danna Stroud is Travel Paso's new Executive Director.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

**ACTION:** Moved by Keller/Bonelli to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

## CEO REPORT

### 6. CEO Report

Davison reviewed the September TOT Report, as well as the September Travel Trends Index from U.S. Travel.

Davison reviewed the key takeaways from Southern California Visitor Industry Outlook Conference, attended by Pringle. He noted that the complete forecast was both distributed in This Week in SLO CAL and is available on the Members Area of the VSC website. Davison attended the SLO Airport Terminal Grand Opening on November 1, 2017, welcoming the very first flight into the new terminal. The terminal features large SLO CAL banners featuring the tagline “Life’s Too Beautiful to Rush.” Davison and Burnham also attended the Central Coast Economic Forecast on November 3, 2017, and Davison recapped some the major takeaways. Caroline Beteta, President & CEO of Visit California, was one of the keynote speakers, and frequently noted the economic impact that VSC has in the county.

VSC is currently holding a two-day All Agency Meeting (November 14-15, 2017). VSC’s Advisory Committee Meeting is happening Thursday, December 7 from 3-5pm at the Embassy Suites. Davison requested the attendance of all Board members to support VSC’s initiatives with our communities and elected officials.

Davison outlined his travel schedule.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

## BUSINESS ITEMS

### 7. Executive Committee Seat

With JP Patel’s resignation, the Secretary seat on the Executive Committee is currently open. Pearce requested nominations for the seat. Graves nominated Keller, and Keller accepted the nomination.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

**ACTION:** Moved by Graves/Wightman to appoint Lori Keller to the Executive Committee as Secretary.

Motion carried: 11:0

### 8. Financial Discussion

VSC will kick off its budget re-forecast process on December 6, 2017. The re-forecast will account for the revised media calendar based on Goodway onboarding, the Destination Development Plan and a recent change in VSC’s accounting services. VSC’s current accounting contractor, Connect Accounting, gave notice on Monday, November 13.

VSC’s recent audit report pointed out that VSC cash accounts are only FDIC insured up to \$250,000, and that the current balance exceeds this insured amount. VSC looked into opening a Prime Index CD with Bank of the Sierra, VSC’s current bank. However, the FDIC insurance limit is per institution—not per account. On the other hand, Morgan Stanley, which currently manages VSC’s 401k investments, offers access to laddered CD investment options provided by institutions throughout the country, allowing VSC to meet the FDIC insurance limit without the need to hold accounts at different banks. This option would allow VSC to buy CD’s with longer maturities and liquidate prior to maturity by selling them on the secondary market for close to what was paid for them, limiting risk. VSC can also link the Morgan Stanley account to VSC’s

current operating account to sweep fees monthly for no fee. At their October meeting, the Executive Committee recommended moving reserve funds to laddered CDs managed by Morgan Stanley.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

**ACTION:** Moved by Graves/Bonelli to approve opening a new account with Morgan Stanley, purchasing laddered CDs for the management of reserve funds or long-term funding held for future use, which will be swept monthly from the operating account.

**Motion carried: 11:0**

## **9. Destination Development Strategy**

VSC's Strategic Direction 2020 lists the "Develop[ment] of a long-term Tourism Infrastructure Master Plan" as an initiative to advance the imperative of "Advocat[ing] for the development of critical tourism infrastructure." Based on VSC's annual survey results, "Sustainable Tourism/Capacity Issues" was also ranked first among tourism-related issues. Stakeholders, members, local government officials, strategic partners and community residents would all be invited to participate in this 9 to 15-month process. Davison highlighted the purpose of the plan. VSC has received proposals from two consultants: Coraggio Group, who facilitated the development of VSC's strategic plan, and Resonance, who has created Destination Development plans for destinations throughout North America. These consultants are currently working through questions from VSC on their proposals. Davison discussed the cost range and budget impact for the current fiscal year. The Executive Committee recommended that the consultants give presentations to the Board in a special meeting that would tentatively take place on January 31, 2018 from 8am to noon.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

## **10. Cannabis Legalization Education**

As part of VSC's Strategic Direction 2020 imperative of "Demonstrat[ing] value to stakeholders, partners and communities," VSC believes that its role should be to help educate constituents with questions they should consider as they plan for how to be successful in an approved Prop 64 California. CalTravel is developing a one-sheet of "items to consider" based on learnings discovered from other states with legal recreational cannabis, which they plan to distribute prior to January 1, 2018. VSC is also vetting questions with Visit California to provide additional direction for DMOs and stakeholders, and asked members of the Marketing Committee yesterday about the issue. The DMOs noted that they are still working through this issue. Davison said that VSC will need to assert a position on the membership and marketing of cannabis-related activities soon since at least one community is advancing recreational cannabis sales. He noted that the recommendation from the Executive Committee was to pause and wait for local communities to determine their policies, bring it back to the board at a later date. Currently, VSC is not accepting or promoting members in this space.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

**ACTION:** Moved by Hamilton/Wightman to pause and wait for local communities to determine their policies before asserting a position on the membership and marketing of cannabis-related activities.

**Motion carried: 11:0**

## **11. Destination Security Discussion**

Destination security was a major discussion point at CalTravel's Fall Board Meeting, and aligns with VSC's Strategic Direction 2020 imperative of "Demonstrat[ing] value to our stakeholders, partners and communities." The issue is especially relevant following the tragic NYC vehicle terror attack and the mass shooting in a small Texas community. VSC would like to work toward a Destination Security Educational Summit in January/February. Davison noted that this is a larger opportunity for tourism to lead the effort on a "community" issue.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

## **12. FY2016-17 Year-End Satisfaction Survey**

As part of VSC's Strategic Direction 2020 imperative of "Demonstrat[ing] value to our stakeholders, partners and communities" and objective of "Increased stakeholder satisfaction scores," VSC launched its FY2016-17 Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey on September 21, 2017 at the Fall Symposium. The survey was sent to VSC's full constituent list, and separately, with tracking links, to the Board and Marketing Committee on September 29, 2017. In an effort to boost participation, the Board and Marketing Committee were also encouraged to send separate links to their lists, and VSC offered six \$100 Visa gift cards to randomly selected participants. The survey closed on October 20, 2017. Davison reviewed the results of the survey with year-over-year comparisons, including both positive and constructive write-in feedback from respondents.

Public Comment – Kristin Huebner, Pismo Beach CVB, asked if there was any dropoff in the survey responses. Pringle responded that there was no notable dropoff.

Board Discussion.

## **13. Marketing Update**

Burnham provided the most recent metrics on the fall ad campaign, noting that VSC is receiving some high-quality traffic.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion. The Board agreed that the upcoming media campaign, with the exception of social media, should not launch until the website is finalized in February.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**ACTION:** Moved by Graves/Maggelet to adjourn the meeting.

**Motion carried: 11:0**

Meeting adjourned at 10:04am.