



# MINUTES

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## Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors Meeting

### Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 17, 2021

8:30am-10:30am

Vespera Resort, 147 Stimson Ave, Pismo Beach, CA, 93449

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER: Hemant Patel

**PRESENT:** Jed Bickel, Bryan Bonelli, Jim Hamilton, Aaron Graves, Matt Wilkins, Jay Jamison, Amit Patel, Hemant Patel, Victor Popp, Amar Sohi, Alma Ayon, Clint Pearce

**ABSENT:** Nipool Patel, Mark Eads, Toni LeGras, Sam Miller

**STAFF PRESENT:** Chuck Davison, Cathy Cartier, Emily Rudge, Kyla Boast

**Call to Order at 8:31am.**

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

None.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Davison announced that Matt Wilkins has replaced John Conner's appointed Board Seat for the City of SLO. Davison welcomed Wilkins to the Board. Davison also announced that due to Brendan Pringle's upcoming departure, new calendar invites for the upcoming Board and Executive Committee meetings will be coming from his executive assistant, Emily Rudge's calendar.

#### CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of September 29, 2021 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

4. Approval of September 2021 Visit SLO CAL Financials

5. Approval of October 2021 Visit SLO CAL Financials

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

**Motion carried: 12:0**

#### CEO REPORT

#### 6. CEO Report

Davison noted that application for the paycheck protection program has been submitted and the full amount of the loan, \$151,056 is expected to be forgiven. Davison noted that the state is currently undergoing the review of redistricting maps

and it is suggested that SLO County could be split into two, breaking it from Northern Santa Barbara County and lumping it with the Valley or Monterey and Santa Cruz. Visit SLO CAL's weekly newsletter messaging has been encouraging the public to provide feedback on the importance of keeping the county whole, as much of the workforce of the county lives in Northern Santa Barbara County. Davison noted that Jordan Cunningham has been a great advocate for SLO County tourism and Cunningham's seat is in jeopardy of being eliminated. Davison notified the Board of the upcoming CalTravel Board meeting which is being hosted in SLO CAL for the first time since 2016 and will be taking place at Hotel SLO, with Senator Laird as the guest speaker. Davison provided a staffing update regarding Brendan Pringle's upcoming departure, his last day being November 24, and thanked him for his 6.5 years of service. Davison noted a new staffing structure that was discussed during the September Executive Committee meeting, and the Executive Committee approved the elimination of the Director of Operations role and the establishment of creating an Office Manager and HR manager role at their October meeting. Davison announced the hiring of an office manager, Jessie Borchin, who will be joining on December 6, 2021, as well as the hiring of Marketing Coordinator, Theresa Nagai, who joined on November 10, 2021. Davison mentioned the current open roles at Visit SLO CAL. Davison requested approval to increase the base pay for the open VP of Finance role and engage in a recruiting firm in order to connect with more qualified candidates. Davison mentioned that both expenses would be trued up in the budget re-forecast coming to the Board in January for review and approval. Davison noted Visit SLO CAL's upcoming holiday schedule and his upcoming travel schedule.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

### **7. FY 2021 Satisfaction Survey**

Davison noted the results of the satisfaction survey, with participation up from the FY 2020, and top survey representation being from Paso Robles and San Luis Obispo. Davison highlighted that numbers in almost every category had increased from FY 2020.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

### **8. Experience SLO CAL 2050 Update**

Davison noted that the Events and Festivals Phase 1 facilitation took place on November 10, with the second scheduled for November 30. Davison highlighted the facilitation outcomes and that progress had been made with everyone in agreement, but Paso Robles still felt reluctant that the strategy is necessary and that an external agency is required. Davison mentioned that the next steps will be reviewing the facilitation results and actions items, and Visit SLO CAL will begin to source consultants for Phase II work, which will be reviewed by the Board in January. Davison reiterated that the guidance is not to move specific events. The strategy will provide a framework for how to plan for new events and schedule to best serve the community as a whole focusing on non-peak, shoulder season periods in an effort to yield lodging rates. Davison provided an update on the Customer Service Training Initiative noting the contract with the production company is signed, with a project kickoff scheduled for November 18. Davison noted that the working group currently includes 3 Visit SLO CAL staff, 9 investors and partners, and will initially be two half-day sessions in December and January, with Destination Partners also engaged for a local expert component.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

### **9. Advocacy Update**

Davison requested the Board's approval in support of 768 Pacific Ave, Cayucos to allow Minor Use Permit in order to maintain current TOT inventory, as the number of inactive homes not paying TOT is now close to 50%. The item was opposed on November 3 at the Cayucos Advisory Council and will be coming to SLO County Planning next. Davison also requested Board approval to support the expansion of the definition of what constitutes Lower Cost Visitor-Serving Accommodations (LCVSA) in the Coastal Zone. The definition currently only includes hostels, and expanding this definition to include short-term rentals so that the Central Coast can accommodate more affordable options for visitors.

**ACTION:** Moved by Jamison/Pearce to approve supporting the MUP for 768 Pacific Ave.

**Motion carried: 12:0:1**  
**Hamilton abstained.**

**ACTION: Moved by Jamison/Pearce** to approve advocating for the modification of the definition of Lower Cost Visitor-Serving Accommodations to include short-term rentals. **Bickel opposed.**

**Motion carried:10:1:1**  
**Hamilton abstained.**

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

Boast provided an update on the recent conferences she attended, and shared a recent large piece of business she won. Boast also shared upcoming conferences she will be attending, both in person and virtual. Cartier shared an update on "The Land of" campaign, including examples of the photo assets, as well as October Media performance numbers which were remarkable, including an average time on Visit SLO CAL's website being 1:42 and over 92,000 sessions tracked. Cartier shared the first SLO CAL Crafted video featuring Morro Bay Oyster Company. Cartier provided an update on the House of Brands "community of" mockups which can be used in a variety of ways within each SLO CAL community. Cartier also shared an example of how the City of San Luis Obispo plans to incorporate the "Community of" logo within their current logo adaptation.

Public Comment – None

Board Discussion.

## **ANNOUNCEMENT OF CLOSED SESSION ITEM**

- 11. Employee Dismissal**
- 12. Board Member Resignation Update**
- 13. Employee Departure**

## **CLOSED SESSION REPORT**

No action was taken by the Board during Closed Session.

Davison noted upcoming agenda items.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Adjourned at 11:25am.