



MINUTES

Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors Meeting

Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 23, 2022

8:30am-10:30am

Paso Robles Inn, 1103 Spring St, Paso Robles, CA, 93446

1. CALL TO ORDER: Hemant Patel

PRESENT: Bryan Bonelli, Jim Hamilton, Alma Ayon, Toni LeGras, Amar Sohi, Aaron Graves, Jay Jamison, Amit Patel, Hemant Patel, Victor Popp, Mark Eads, Clint Pearce, Jed Bickel (arrived shortly after call to order)

ABSENT: Sam Miller, Nipool Patel, Matt Wilkins (resigned day prior)

STAFF PRESENT: Chuck Davison, Cathy Cartier, Emily Rudge, David Fields, Tracy Campbell

Call to Order at 8:32 am.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Davison announced that the annual bash will be held on the afternoon of May 5.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of January 19, 2022 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
4. Approval of January 2022 Visit SLO CAL Financials
5. Approval of February 2022 Visit SLO CAL Financials

ACTION: Moved by Popp/Jamison to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion carried: 13:0

CEO REPORT

6. CEO Report

Davison provided an update on the most recent STR report and announced the new schedule of future marketing committee meetings which will be held bi-monthly and will be in the same months as Board of Directors meetings. Davison provided an update on the Morgan Stanley investment structure for certain CD's which are soon to reach maturity; the new structure will move to a laddered bond approach rather than laddered CD approach due to bonds currently yielding about 100 bps higher interest than CD's. Davison provided a recap of the February 11 Regionalism Retreat with city/county

managers, held in Morro Bay, with topics focused on resetting relationships, onboarding new members, and 4 key initiatives (Housing, Homelessness, Diablo, Talent attraction & development). Davison noted the key takeaways of the Visit California Outlook Forum, held in San Francisco on February 14 -16, noting the panel Davison spoke on regarding Rebuilding Destination Airlift. Davison shared photos from the March 1 Visit SLO CAL Team outing which included a beach cleanup and bonfire. Davison highlighted the key takeaways from the Visit California CEO Mission Mexico City, which was held on March 14-16. Davison noted the mission being overwhelmingly successful, with more participants than previous international missions. Davison highlighted some of the data shared by Visit California which showed the importance of international travelers for California, the Mexico visitation and spending forecast, and updates from other industry partners such as Avis and Corporate Travel Services. Davison highlighted Visit SLO CAL's current open positions. Davison provided an air service update, noting that the pilot shortage recovery is estimated to take 4-5 years, and highlighted the upcoming meeting with Alaska Airlines at their Seattle Headquarters to discuss performance, review data, and outline future opportunities. Davison requested Board feedback regarding discontinuing the bi-monthly CEO Report which has shown low engagement and seems to lack value and engagement. Davison highlighted upcoming CEO Travel dates for March and April.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion. Eads noted that the CEO Report is useful sometimes, but it could go either way in terms of being kept or eliminated. LeGras stated that the act of sending the CEO Report does feel like an exercise. Davison suggested perhaps the sharing the Powerpoint Presentations from the monthly executive committee meetings might be a suitable alternative, which was unanimously agreed upon. Graves commented that the upcoming travel schedule is rigorous and thanked Davison and Cartier for their efforts.

BUSINESS ITEMS

7. Office Space Update

Davison provided an update on the board approved relocation and budget for a larger Visit SLO CAL office. Davison highlighted the desired location as 81 Higuera St, which has been reviewed and approved by the Chair and Vice Chair. The office is owned by Rob Rossi who has generously agreed to a ladder rent structure and tenant improvements to be covered by Rossi entirely. Visit SLO CAL is pursuing a targeted June 1 occupancy and a lease through June 2030. Davison highlighted the substantial annual savings to be made available in the new office due to the ability to hold events such as the Executive Committee meeting, Marketing Committee, Culture Retreats, Budget Planning Retreats, Community Engagement & Advocacy meetings onsite rather than an offsite location.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion. Pearce noted the excellent timing of securing the new office space, as inventory will look very different in a few years, and the surplus of vacant space could be absorbed. Graves commented on the immense enhancement for the company culture and improved quality of life now that the team will be able to easily take calls and Zoom meetings at ease without having to leave the office due to lack of privacy and overcrowding.

8. Advocacy Update

Campbell provided an advocacy update, noting the outcome of the Los Osos Coastal Commission's ruling against the short-term rentals despite the hefty advocacy efforts of both the Visit SLO CAL staff and community partners. Campbell highlighted the several letters of support Visit SLO CAL has provided, the upcoming federal and state lawmaker visits in April & May, and the May 3 Cambria Christmas Market Permit Hearing.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

9. Events & Festivals Strategy Consultant Update

Davison provided an update on the Events & Festivals Strategy and explained the Phase II agency of choice, MMGY NextFactor, has been fully vetted and requested Board feedback to authorize the proposal. Davison noted that as of March 7, the Commitment to Collaborate was fully executed with 11 signatures confirming the commitment to the Events & Festivals Strategy creation, implementation, and adherence process.

ACTION: Moved by Pearce/Bickel to authorize the President & CEO to finalize the Events & Festivals Strategy contract agreement with MMGY NextFactor.

Motion carried: 13:0

10. Oceano Dunes Draft Proposal

Davison provided an update on the Oceano Dunes Draft Proposal from Resonance outlining the \$81,000 cost, leaving a \$20,000 gap between what was originally approved by the Board and contributions from communities. Davison noted that the Resonance proposal would create a stakeholder process to develop the Oceano Dunes Destination Stewardship Plan. Phase 1 would include data analysis including economic impact for purpose of future mitigation, interviews, and stakeholder feedback. Phase 2 would include stakeholder input to develop multiple preferred directional uses for Oceano Dunes if closed. The goals of the study is to determine the direct & indirect impacts and mitigate loss of Oceano Dunes-related travel and tourism in the region and to understand next best use options for the dunes if closed. Davison stated the process could be completed by late summer if executed in April. Davison outlined staff's request for Visit SLO CAL to fund up to \$60,000, or \$20,000 above what was originally approved, to advance the work.

Public Comment – None

Board Discussion.

ACTION: Moved by Jamison/Eads to authorize the President & CEO to finalize the Oceano Dunes Proposal contract agreement with Resonance and allocate a total of up to \$60k in Visit SLO CAL funding for the project.

Motion carried: 13:0

11. Travel Trade & Marketing Update

Cartier provided an update on the recent Marketing Committee Retreat held on March 8, which included agenda topics such as the House of Brands strategy phases 2 and 3, the Annual Survey, a Media Review, the FY 2023 potential Co-Op, PR & Communications FY 2023 Areas of Focus, and Collaboration Opportunities. Cartier noted that the interactive map should be active on the website in about 3 weeks, which will highlight time and distance to enable cross-visitation. Cartier noted the results of the fall research data where SLO CAL ranked #1 for families compared to competing destinations such as Monterey, Napa, Santa Barbara, Palm Springs, Tahoe, and San Diego. Cartier provided a recap on the Visit SLO CAL sponsored Spartan Race held at Santa Margarita Ranch, commenting that there were 7,000+ participants registered. Cartier noted that the data will be available in the coming weeks regarding where participants traveled from. Cartier also shared plans for next year's Spartan Race to feature beverage partnerships with Firestone Walker and Mylene Wine. Cartier highlighted the results of the overwhelmingly successful SLO CAL Open, stating that the World Surf League recorded their best media numbers ever recorded for an event of this size. Cartier noted the recent PR RFP, with finalist presentations to take place on March 21, and will seek Executive Committee approval during the April 14 meeting.

12. President & CEO Annual Review

Davison reviewed the criteria set forth for the President & CEO's bonus compensation as part of the employment contract: 12.5% bonus is tied to Visit SLO CAL's operation and a 12.5% bonus is tied to the delivery of Strategic Direction 2023 imperatives. Davison noted that detailed documentation of the results was provided to the Board in advance of the meeting. Davison exited the room while the Board discussed the Annual Review.

ACTION: Moved by Graves/A. Patel to authorize the President & CEO to receive the annual bonus in full.

Motion carried: 13:0

Davison highlighted the upcoming May agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 10:36 AM.