



MINUTES

Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors Meeting

Visit SLO CAL Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 21, 2022

8:30am-10:30am

Avila Lighthouse Suites, 550 Front St, Avila Beach, CA, 93424

1. CALL TO ORDER: Aaron Graves

PRESENT: Pragna Patel-Mueller, Jim Hamilton, Vic Popp, Nipool Patel, Mark Eads, Clint Pearce, Aaron Graves, Amar Sohi, Hemant Patel, Toni LeGras-Price, Amit Patel, Jed Bickel, Bryan Bonelli

ABSENT: Sam Miller, Hamish Marshall, Britt Shuford

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

Call to Order at 8:33 am.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

Reminder to complete the Board of Directors Guidelines Form and the Conflict of Interest Form prior to the meeting adjournment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of May 18, 2022 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
2. Approval of June 2022/Year-End Visit SLO CAL Financials
3. Approval of July 2022 Visit SLO CAL Financials
4. Approval of August 2022 Visit SLO CAL Financials
5. Approval of FY 2022 Annual Report
6. Acknowledgement of Pragna Patel-Mueller's Visit SLO CAL Board Seat (SLO TBID Seat)

ACTION: Moved by Pearce/N. Patel to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion carried: 13:0

BUSINESS ITEMS

3. Annual Audit Process

David Fields introduced Erin Nagle, Audit Principal (Glenn Burdette) to present the completed FY 2021/22 Annual Audit which resulted in a clean audit report for the seventh consecutive year with no material findings or weaknesses. Nagle provided two recommendations: to create an Audit Committee which would meet approximately 3 times during the Audit

process, and to be cognizant of new reporting requirements for in-kind donations such as large monetary contributions, which is not typically applicable to Visit SLO CAL.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion - Hamilton congratulated Davison and Fields on the achievement of a clean audit for seven years and noted that an Audit Committee is a great recommendation and he'd be happy to consider being the Chair of the Committee.

ACTION: Moved by Hamilton/Popp to approve the Visit SLO CAL FY 2022 Audit as presented.

Motion carried: 13:0

CEO REPORT

Due to time constraints, additional CEO Report slides were shared via email in advance of the meeting. Davison shared the latest STR report, noting that rates have begun to slip slightly across the county, but the numbers will now be a true comparison to 2019 due to school being back in-person full time for the first time since the pandemic. Davison shared the latest advocacy efforts, highlighting that the Federal Per Diem rate has been increased through September 2023, and Visit SLO CAL has joined the California Hospitality United Coalition (CHUC) in order to help protect California's hospitality economy, jobs, and tax revenue. Davison provided an election update, sharing there would be a need to hold onboarding meetings in the coming months with newly elected officials onboarding them into our work and the economic impact value of tourism. Davison shared an update on the SLO CAL Welcome program which will launch this Fall in both English and Spanish. Davison provided a reminder of the Market Data report from Tourism Economics which was sent to the Board and all investors, partners and stakeholders on August 17. Davison shared an update on the Morgan Stanley Account and noted that the Executive Committee approved moving \$521,000 to a laddered CD account. Davison shared the new involvement with the Citizen's Homeless Accountability Commission (CHAC) in which Davison will serve as one of eleven Commission Members that will meet 4 times a year to monitor the County's goals for a 5-year plan to decrease homelessness by 50%. Davison shared a staffing update, announcing the new team members: Kristen Buhring, Sales Manager; Alyssa Manno, Partner Engagement Manager; Cozette Skupny, Director of HR; Cynthia Gonzalez, Director of Sales; Brooke Weisbecker, Digital & Social Media Producer; Lauren Miller, Graphic Designer; Rachelle Ramirez, Event Manager. Davison provided a recap of the FY 2021/22 Year-End Satisfaction Survey, highlighting the overall decrease in both participation and scores in general. Davison noted that this survey approach may not be applicable and a new path for feedback will be reviewed going forward given the larger size of both the community and the organization. Davison shared his upcoming travel schedule.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion- LeGras-Price commented on the inundation felt by herself and many peers of survey fatigue and too many emails in general, it is difficult to keep up, and that another digital or emailed survey format is not effective anymore. Hamilton commented that perhaps a one-on-one, in-person approach would be better at obtaining helpful, concrete feedback.

BUSINESS ITEMS

4. Destination Analysts' Resident Tourism Sentiment Study Proposal

Campbell presented a proposal for the upcoming Resident Tourism Sentiment Study which was last done in 2017 and will evaluate the SLO CAL residents' opinions and perceptions surrounding tourism and its impact in their communities. The data collected is to be used for understanding awareness, identifying pain points and opportunities in the future, not necessarily solving the individual issues. Campbell highlighted the project's overall cost as \$117,000, with a \$6,800 co-op

opportunity for each community which will allow them to gain customized reports for their specific community with top-line findings and recommendations.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

ACTION: Moved by Bickel/A. Patel to authorize the President & CEO to finalize the Resident Tourism Sentiment Study Consultant Contract.

Motion carried: 13:0

5. Strategic Direction 2026 Consultant Contract

Davison reviewed the proposal to utilize Matthew Landkamer of Whereabout (formerly Corragio) to facilitate the development of Strategic Direction 2026. The process would remain similar to previous years in that it would include 3 phases- Discovery & Analysis, Strategy Development, and Implementation. Landkamer would conduct surveys, interviews and workshops with investors, partners & stakeholders to create shared ownership & buy-in. Davison highlighted that the work would begin in November and be brought to the Board for approval in March.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

ACTION: Moved by Pearce/N. Patel to authorize the President & CEO to finalize the Strategic Direction 2026 Consultant Contract.

Motion carried: 13:0

6. Brand Awareness Study Presentation

Cartier introduced Darren Bishop, of Heart + Mind Strategies, who completed the Brand Awareness Study; Bishop shared an in-depth recap of the research and findings, noting that the ads had a 97% favorable impression, nearly one in ten travelers across DMAs recall the SLO CAL ads, and the ROI for the campaign is positive, with a tax revenue per ad dollar ratio around 2:1.

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion.

7. Travel Trade & Marketing Update

Cartier shared an update on the recent marketing efforts, highlighting that the Land Of... Campaign will launch into its second phase (Land Of...2.0) and will focus on the purposeful traveler and increasing cross-visitation among communities. Cartier provided an update on the Visitor Profile study and shared three new Land Of... 2.0 15 second ads, along with new assets from the Land Of... 2.0 shoot during the week of July 25. Cartier shared an update on the Destination Summit which will be held on November 10 at The Embassy Suites, featuring a keynote address from Adam Sacks, two panels discussing Sustainability and Strategic Power Behind Social Media, followed by a cocktail hour with a SLO CAL Crafted pop-up event. Cartier announced the WTTC Content Partnership, which was being filmed in market during the week of September 19, and

highlighted content from local partners throughout SLO CAL discussing how sustainability is tied to tourism. Cartier announced that SLO CAL is the first destination in the world to be selected for WTTC's spotlight series.

Public Comment – None

Board Discussion.

Davison noted the next Board of Directors meeting will take place on November 16, 2022, with the location to likely be in the new office.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 10:35 AM.