



MINUTES

Visit SLO CAL Executive Committee

Visit SLO CAL Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday, May 11, 2023

12:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Visit SLO CAL Office – 81 Higuera Street, Suite 220, San Luis Obispo, CA

1. CALL TO ORDER: 12:04 pm

PRESENT: Aaron Graves, Amar Sohi, Mark Eads, Hemant Patel

ABSENT: Clint Pearce, Annie Braunschweig

STAFF PRESENT: Cathy Cartier, Chuck Davison, Emily Rudge

2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Bash- tomorrow night at The Carrisa; Full Advisory Committee meeting on June 1.

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| CONSENT AGENDA |
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3. Approval of April 20, 2023 Executive Committee Minutes

Public Comment – None.

Board Discussion – None.

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

Motion carried: 4:0

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| CEO REPORT |
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4. Visit SLO CAL CEO Report

Davison highlighted the weekly STR report, noting that occupancy was mostly flat and overall the numbers have caught up from the previous few weeks which had heavy rain. Davison wished the Committee Happy National Travel & Tourism Week and highlighted the upcoming media outlets that have run interviews during the week. Davison noted that SLO CAL has seen the highest economic impact ever reported in the county (\$2.15 billion). Davison provided an update on the AG TBID, sharing that the City Council has voted to move the AG TBID from the South County Chamber to become a part of the city government and on May 23 they'll hold a public hearing to discuss the proposed resolution. Davison highlighted the County's recent selection of the new interim SLO County Administrative Officer, John Nilon, who will serve for a minimum of 3 months. Davison

noted the advocacy issue surrounding bringing a Wind Energy Farm to SLO CAL and the frustration that some tourism partners are communicating. Davison provided an update on SLO CAL Welcome, sharing that the questions have moved to a quiz format and will now require a score of 85% to pass and proceed to the next page. Davison provided an update on the Collaboration agreement, highlighting that the contract has been finalized and the internal and external work is to begin in May and early June. Davison shared his upcoming travel schedule.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

Business Items

5. FY 24 Business & Marketing Plan

Davison noted that the draft of the FY 24 Business & Marketing Plan was included in the digital agenda packet for review in concept, and that minor final updates will be made to the plan after Board approval and prior to publication. Davison noted the key strategies that inform the overall vision: SD 2026, ESC 2050, and the 4 organizational objectives. Cartier shared a recap of the ROI on the Brand Awareness Study which was done last year and will be done again in July of this year to understand if SLO CAL has strengthened familiarity in markets which scored low. Cartier shared a new roadmap for an integrated storytelling framework and highlighted areas of focus for new marketing assets & activations. Cartier highlighted the primary audience for FY 24, budget allocations for media (paid, earned, and owned), and areas of focus for partnerships, events, sales, ESC 2050, EDI, and advocacy.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion. Graves commented on the high- quality production of the Business & Marketing Plan and shared that he assumed it was produced via outsourcing rather than in-house by VSC Graphic Designer, Lauren Miller. Sohi echoed the job well done.

ACTION: Moved by **Patel/Sohi** to recommend Board approval of the FY 24 Business & Marketing Plan in concept as presented.

Motion carried: 4:0

6. Marketing Committee Seats

Davison shared the details of the recent Marketing Committee application process which was open from April 3 – May 3; a total of 6 new applications were received plus 2 of the 3 elected seats up that were for renewal (Ashlee Akers and Joel Peterson; Audrey Arellano chose not to reapply). The new applicants included: Annie Bowsky, SLOCOG; Chanda Brown, CASS; Sara Elena Loaiza, Casa San Miguelito; Ashley Lavacot, EverlyGrove Brokers; Lydia Bates, Hotel SLO. Davison noted the Marketing Committee's desire to move forward with Lydia Bates, and outlined the various paths, should the Committee decide to appoint Lydia Bates or hold the seat.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

ACTION: Moved by **Eads/Patel** to recommend Board approval of the Marketing Committee's selection to renew Ashlee Aker's and Joel Peterson's seats and to recommend that the Board hold the seat vacant of the Marketing Committee's selection for a new appointment, Lydia Bates.

Motion carried: 4:0

7. Board Member Selection Process

Davison shared the details of the Board Member application process which was open from April 4 – May 3; a total of 3 new applications were received (one did not meet the eligibility requirements) and two current Board members reapplied (Aaron Graves and Pragna Patel-Mueller). Davison noted that Pragna Patel-Mueller's previously appointed SLO TBID seat would now be held by Clint Pearce, allowing Pragna Patel-Mueller to apply for an at-large seat. The new applicants included: Bram Winter, Moonstone Hotels; Denis Volic, Hotel SLO. Davison outlined the various paths, should the Committee decide to recommend that the Board renew Graves and elect Patel-Mueller or appoint Bram Winter or Denis Volic.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

ACTION: Moved by **Patel/Sohi** to recommend Board approval of the election of Pragna Patel-Mueller and renewal of Aaron Graves.

**Motion carried: 3:0:1
(Graves abstained)**

8. Executive Committee Seats

Davison outlined the current structure of the Executive Committee: Chair- Aaron Graves; Vice Chair- Amar Sohi; Secretary- Mark Eads; Treasurer- Clint Pearce; Past Chair- Hemant Patel. New seats, once appointed, would be effective July 1, 2023 for FY 2024. Davison noted that staff is requesting that the Executive Committee recommend a slate of candidates for the Board to consider at the May 2023 (Annual) Board Meeting.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

ACTION: Moved by **Eads/Patel** to recommend Board approval to keep the current Executive Committee structure as is, along with the addition of Toni LeGras- Price and Hamish Marshall.

Motion carried: 4:0

9. FY 24 Budget Review

Davison presented the proposed FY 2023/24 TMD revenue projections, noting an estimated 3.9% growth YOY, bringing Visit SLO CAL to a flat TMD Revenue total as was FY 22. Davison provided a high- level overview of items of focus and funding from each department: general & administrative, industry research & resources, sales, PR and communications, marketing, community engagement & advocacy/ESC 2050, staffing & benefits.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

ACTION: Moved by **Eads/Patel** to recommend Board approval of the FY 24 Budget.

Motion carried: 4:0

10. Travel Trade & Marketing Update

Cartier shared an update on the recent team scavenger hunt which was a huge success and noted how we'd like to involve local partners more in future scavenger hunts. Cartier outlined the upcoming SBP attitudes and usage research study which will be conducted by Heart & Mind Strategies; the purpose being to use the research to help inform decisions the airport is making and help align creative assets. Cartier noted that the study is being paid for by the airport, not Visit SLO CAL.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

Davison noted upcoming meetings during the remainder of May and June.

ADJOURN 1:47 pm