



MINUTES

Visit SLO CAL Executive Committee

Visit SLO CAL Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday, April 10, 2025

12:00pm – 2:00pm

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

1. CALL TO ORDER: 12:07pm

PRESENT: Amar Sohi, Mark Eads, Toni LeGras-Price, Hemant Patel, Aaron Graves

ABSENT: Hamish Marshall, Clint Pearce

STAFF PRESENT: Cathy Cartier, Annie Braunschweig, Emily Rudge, Molly Cano, Lisa Belsanti

2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Reminder- Annual Bash on May 2 and May Board of Directors meeting on May 28.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of March 13, 2025 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Committee Discussion – None.

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

Motion: 5:0

Business Items

4. President & CEO Annual Bonus Review

As requested by the Executive Committee, Cartier presented her annual review that was presented to the Compensation Committee in a prior meeting. Cartier highlighted her goals for the year, which were achieved by both her and the organization. Cartier thanked the team and acknowledged that the credit is due to them as well.

Committee Discussion – Sohi and Eads thanked Cartier for her efforts and dedication, especially in a year of so much change as an organization. Sohi applauded Cartier for the numerous positive culture changes, budget changes, and managing new team members joining. Graves shared that he felt confident that she deserved the full bonus and did well on every platform. Eads commented that this is a testament to the Board's decision last year to make moves and shows how much stronger the organization is now compared to last year.

ACTION: Moved by **Patel/LeGras-Price** to approve the Compensation Committee's recommendation for the President & CEO's annual review and bonus and make a recommendation for Board approval.

Motion: 5:0

5. Executive Committee Seats

Cartier reminded the Committee of their discussion at the March meeting. Eads shared his recommendation for a different structure, based on the potential for the TMD renewal process beginning earlier than planned.

Committee Discussion- No action was taken by the Committee. Cartier reminded the Committee that the formal vote will take place in May.

6. TMD Renewal Discussion

Cartier discussed the potential to begin the TMD renewal process early, based on potential upcoming ballot measures and the new influx of lodging inventory coming online in the next four years. Cartier explained the details which include the 10-year district resetting if there are proposed changes, versus an additional ten years added to the current district if there are no changes. Cartier highlighted the two tracks which involve the payors and the County and noted that the process would take 6-10 months. Cartier and Braunschweig outlined the competitive set rates and current TOT rates of SLO CAL Communities. Cartier highlighted the need for a higher percentage which would go towards the marketing budget, which would help drive demand as the lodging community plans to grow significantly in the next few years. Cartier sought Committee feedback.

Committee Discussion- The Committee voiced support of continuing to explore the opportunity to begin an early renewal and continue the discussion with the Board at the May Board meeting.

7. Review of FY 26 Budget Items

Braunschweig provided an overview of the FY 26 budget and provided TMD revenue projections. Braunschweig provided a high-level overview of items of focus for each department: Operations & Industry, Sales, PR & Communications, Marketing, Community Engagement & Advocacy, and outlined several large initiatives which will be paid with reserve funds.

Committee Discussion- Sohi suggested showing a side-by-side comparison of last year's marketing spend and this year's as well as how Monterey and Santa Barbara's marketing spend and total budget compares to VSC.

8. Volaire Air Service Conference

Cartier provided an update on the upcoming Volaire Air Service Conference which will be held in SLO CAL in 2026 and sponsored by VSC. Cartier highlighted the format for the 2-day conference and the airlines that are being considered to attend.

Committee Discussion- None.

9. HWY 1 Task Force

Cartier shared an update on the Highway 1 Task Force and the ongoing strategy work being done in collaboration with See Monterey and Visit California. Cartier highlighted the upcoming Hospitality Roundtable meeting on May 3 with Senator John Laird.

Committee Discussion- None.

10. Marketing, Travel Trade & ESC 2050 Updates

Cano highlighted the plans for concept testing of the new brand campaign, to be held virtually the following week with groups in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego. Cano shared a new social media content series with Visit California. Cano highlighted several sales initiatives including a Visit California Australia and New Zealand FAM and a UK product audit. Belsanti shared several updates regarding earned and owned media. Belsanti shared several Advocacy updates regarding the Bob Jones Trail and the Oceano Dunes.

Committee Discussion- None.

CEO REPORT

II. Visit SLO CAL CEO Report

Cartier shared the monthly STR report for the week of March 30 – April 5, noting that every community was slightly down compared to the prior year. Cartier announced the May 3 Hospitality Roundtable meeting with Senator Laird which will include focus on the ongoing challenges with HWY 1 and AB 1008. Cartier shared a recap of the DI CEO Summit held in Savannah, GA, and gave a recap of the U.S. Travel DMO CEO Roundtable meeting and Destination Capitol Hill, both held in Washington D.C. Cartier shared a recap of the Cal Poly Local Economic Development meeting and gave an update on the upcoming road closure plans for the Avila Drive Roundabout. Cartier shared her upcoming travel schedule.

Committee Discussion- None.

Cartier highlighted upcoming meetings and important dates.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 2:13pm