MINUTES
Visit SLO CAL Executive Committee

Visit SLO CAL Executive Committee Meeting
Thursday, May 28, 2026
12:00pm – 2:00pm
Visit SLO CAL Office – 81 Higuera Street, Suite 220, San Luis Obispo, CA

1. CALL TO ORDER: 12:03pm

PRESENT: Hemant Patel, Amar Sohi, Toni LeGras-Price, Aaron Graves, Clint Pearce, Mark Eads, Hamish Marshall
ABSENT: None
STAFF PRESENT: Cathy Cartier, Annie Braunschweig, Emily Rudge, Molly Cano, Ashlee Akers

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2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cartier thanked the Committee for attending the Annual Bash.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of April 27, 2026 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
4. Approval of April 2026 Visit SLO CAL Financials

Committee Discussion – None.

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

Motion: 6:0 (Marshall not present for vote)

CEO REPORT

5. Visit SLO CAL CEO Report

Cartier shared the April STR report which showed the North Coast leading the performance and Pismo Beach reflecting a slight softness. Cartier highlighted SBP's desire to sign a five-year contract for VSC to continue to provide their marketing services, which will be presented at the June 16 County Board of Supervisors meeting. Cartier announced an additional new tenant, Rita Casaverdes from the SLO Diversity Coalition. Cartier shared the feedback received from city managers following the May 8 Core Advisory Committee Meeting to revise the language on Strategic Direction 2029 to add "advocating for ground transportation." Cartier shared an update on the HWY 1 Tourism Alliance changing from a 1989 district to a 1994 district and potential changes in the timeline of that process. Cartier shared the planned meeting dates for the next fiscal year for the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee and the Advisory Committee. Cartier shared her upcoming travel schedule.

Committee Discussion- Pearce commented that ground transportation is an important piece of language to add, and it has been discussed at the SLO TBID as well. LeGras-Price requested VSC to include data from

lodging segments other than hotels in the CEO report, and Cartier agreed while noting that data for short-term vacation rentals is not always reliable or consistent.

Business Items

6. Leadership Redundancy Framework

Cartier shared a draft of the newly created leadership redundancy plan which would enable the executive leadership team to have a plan in place in the event of someone experiencing an extended unplanned absence. Cartier shared the executive level and director level plan for immediate action.

Committee Discussion- Graves agreed that a succession plan is a good idea to begin thinking about. Eads was supportive as well. Cartier confirmed that the process and plan will continue to be developed with best practices being researched in the next fiscal year.

7. President & CEO Annual Bonus Review

Cartier shared a reminder of the process of the Compensation Committee annual review and a reminder of the timeline of her employment as President & CEO. Cartier shared that she willingly chose to conduct the 360 review, and the feedback was helpful to show strong progress made amongst external partners. Cartier shared a brief recap of the presentation given. Sohi shared a recap of the Compensation Committee meeting and noted that Cartier has met all of her goals for the year, both individual and organizational, and received positive feedback from external partners, with some areas of improvement within internal teams. Sohi shared that the Compensation Committee was supportive of a 100% bonus payment.

Committee Discussion- Marshall asked for a reminder of the goals for the year, Cartier shared the four organizational objectives and key results and shared how she met each goal for the year under all four objectives. Marshall commented that the staff retention and lack of lawsuits are a huge note to highlight and praise. Pearce commented that Cartier is not agreeing to every single staff request which is in the best interest of the organization. Sohi commented that all of the achievements were made with a team of 15 full time staff, reduced over the last two fiscal years from a staff of 19, which is exceptional.

ACTION: Moved by **Graves/Marshall** to recommend the Board approve the 100% bonus payment of Visit SLO CAL President & CEO.

Motion: 7:0

8. Review of FY 27 Business and Marketing Plan

Cartier shared the Objectives 1 – 4 along with their respective strategies and key results. Cano highlighted the upcoming plans for brand storytelling campaigns. Cano shared the paid media objectives, strategies and geographic prioritization for paid media. Cano shared the graphic breakdown demonstrating the $3m paid media budget, along with the measurement across awareness and intent to travel. Cartier highlighted objectives and strategies regarding owned media, earned media, partnerships and events. Cano shared the strategies within sales, travel trade and Film SLO CAL. Cartier highlighted the objectives and strategies within Experience SLO CAL 2050 and Advocacy.

Committee Discussion- LeGras-Price commented that she would like to see additional focus on lodging segments other than hotels. Pearce commented that the goal is to bring visitors to the region, but the ultimate decision of where they decide to stay is out of our control.

ACTION: Moved by **Patel/Pearce** to make a Board recommendation for approval of the FY 27 Business and Marketing Plan.

Motion: 6:0:1 (LeGras-Price abstained)

9. Review of FY 27 Budget Items

Braunschweig highlighted the FY 27 operating budget overview, noting revenue, operating expenses, key initiatives and planned reserve spending. Braunschweig shared a snapshot of the budgeted FY 27 assessment revenue, which reflects a 1.5% YOY increase. Braunschweig shared the organization's planned key one-time initiatives, which will be partially funded by reserves. Braunschweig highlighted several items of note regarding the budget, including payroll and related expenses, paid media spending, brand awareness study, and the Del Mar Food & Wine event activation. Braunschweig also shared a chart demonstrating the breakdown of expenses by key function.

Committee Discussion- None.

ACTION: Moved by **Eads/LeGras-Price** to recommend Board approval of the FY 27 Budget.

Motion: 6:0 (Marshall not present for vote)

10. Executive Committee Seats

Cartier shared a reminder of the current slate of Executive Committee seats and sought feedback from the Committee on any desired changes.

Committee Discussion- The Committee voiced no desire to change any of the current seats.

ACTION: Moved by **Marshall/Patel** to approve the following slate:
Chair: Amar Sohi
Vice Chair: Clint Pearce
Past Chair: Mark Eads
Treasurer: Toni LeGras-Price
Secretary: Aaron Graves
Hemant Patel
Hamish Marshall

Motion: 7:0

11. Board Member Selection Process

Cartier shared an update on the current status of Nipool Patel's hotel being in a pending sale which would impact his eligibility for a seat on the VSC board. Cartier shared that Civitas confirmed that if N. Patel leases his property to another owner, it will cause him to be ineligible to hold a seat on the VSC board. Cartier shared background on each of the four new board applicants received (Matt Kleefisch- The Ava Hotel; Angel Gonzalez- Oceanpoint Ranch; David Morneau- Paso Robles Inn; Matt Wright- Hotel Cerro). Cartier also shared the two at-large applications received for renewal (Aaron Graves and Pragna Patel-Mueller, as well as the reappointment of Jim Hamilton (County at-large seat) and Hemant Patel (City of Morro Bay seat).

Committee Discussion- The Committee discussed the backgrounds and qualifications of each new candidate as well at N. Patel's potential departure.

ACTION: Moved by **Eads/LeGras-Price** to approve the renewal of Graves and Patel-Mueller, and the addition of Angel Gonzalez (in the event of Nipool Patel's exit from the Board).

Motion: 6:0 (Sohi not present for vote)

12. Marketing Committee Seats

Cartier shared a recap of the Marketing Committee's decision on the applications received during the May 27 Marketing Committee meeting, highlighting their vote to renew Joel Peterson's seat and refrain from adding any other additional seats.

Committee Discussion- None.

ACTION: Moved by **LeGras-Price/Graves** to approve the Marketing Committee seat renewal of Joel Peterson.

Motion: 6:0 (Sohi not present for vote)

13. Marketing, Travel Trade & ESC 2050 Updates

Due to time constraints, Cano briefly highlighted updates regarding paid media, sales, earned media, owned media, and Film SLO CAL. Cartier shared an update regarding the reopening of the Oceano Dunes.

Committee Discussion- None.

Cartier highlighted upcoming meetings and important dates.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 2:06pm