



# MINUTES

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## Visit SLO CAL Executive Committee

### Visit SLO CAL Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 14, 2019

11:30am

Visit SLO CAL Conference Room  
1334 Marsh Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Mark Eads

**PRESENT:** Mark Eads, Aaron Graves, Jay Jamison, Hemant Patel

**ABSENT:** Clint Pearce

**STAFF PRESENT:** Chuck Davison, Brendan Pringle

**Call to Order at 11:33 am.**

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**2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)**

None.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Davison announced that Brendan Pringle was promoted from Operations Manager to Director of Operations on November 1, 2019.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

**3. Approval of October 14, 2019 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

**4. Approval of September Visit SLO CAL Financials**

**5. Approval of October Visit SLO CAL Financials**

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

**ACTION:** Moved by Graves/Patel to approve the October 14, 2019 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes as presented.

**Motion carried: 3:0:1  
Jamison abstained.**

**ACTION:** Moved by Graves/Patel to approve the September Visit SLO CAL Financials and October Visit SLO CAL Financials as presented.

**Motion carried: 4:0**

## **CEO REPORT**

### **6. CEO Report**

Davison reviewed U.S. Travel's Travel Trends Index for September 2019 vs. September 2018. He reported out on the key takeaways and forecast from the Southern California Visitor Industry Outlook Conference, attended by Pringle on October 1, 2019 and the Central Coast Economic Forecast on November 8, 2019. Visit SLO CAL hosted its Industry Educational Symposium on October 23, 2019, which attracted 102 attendees. Davison noted that the event was professionally recorded and the videos and presentation decks from the event were shared via email and are available on the Resources page of SLOCAL.com. He provided an update on the Visit California (VCA) – California Welcome Center (CWC). The CWC closed, effective October 29, 2019, as Simon Group was no longer interested in staffing it, despite Visit SLO CAL agreeing to commit financial resources to keep it open, based on direction from the Executive Committee at last month's meeting. Visit SLO CAL emailed all of the local DMO partners on November 4, 2019, asking if any would like to consider opening a CWC in their community. Should Visit SLO CAL provide financial sponsorship, it would create its own standard operating requirements, in addition to VCA's contractual requirements for operators. Morro Bay Tourism Bureau (in concert with the Morro Bay Chamber) noted that they would be willing to relocate their current visitor center and expand it to include the CWC immediately, and that the South County Chambers proposed re-opening the old CWC with their own staff. Visit SLO CAL will be requesting formal business plans for this opportunity. He provided an update on Visit SLO CAL's sponsorship of the Spartan Race. Terms have been agreed to, the sponsorship agreement is being finalized, and full details will be reported during the November Board of Directors meeting. He also provided an update on open positions, and noted that after the approval of 3 additional roles (sales support, executive assistant, and graphic designer) to be added in the budget re-forecast, staff is recommending posting the sales support role as a Sales Manager position. He noted that staff is finalizing the job description for posting once the Board approves the position addition in November, and that hiring would follow the Board's approval of the budget re-forecast in January. He reviewed the results of the FY2018/19 Year-End Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey, and expressed concern about the lack of Board response and outreach. He reported out on local meetings and his upcoming travel schedule. He also reminded the Committee that the December Executive Committee Meeting has been confirmed by all Committee members for December 16, 2019 from 11:30am-1:30pm.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

### **7. Destination Management Strategy Work Plan**

Davison reminded the Committee that the Destination Management Strategy (DMS) Work Plan is an ever-evolving document that will change and develop in the coming years as the community gets deeper into the process. He outlined the contents of the Work Plan, and noted that Visit SLO CAL is recommending renaming the document "Experience SLO CAL 2050" as a new and aspirational name to give the community something to look towards as Visit SLO CAL seeks participation for the completion of the recommendations. He outlined the recommendations that would be 1) driven and owned by Visit SLO CAL, 2) developed and coordinated in partnership with Visit SLO CAL, and 3) championed by Visit SLO CAL. He also provided an overview of the draft projected lifetime financial resources for each recommendation, reviewed the scope that would be completed by Visit SLO CAL staff, and noted the draft activation timelines for each recommendation. He clarified that the activation of recommendations will be prioritized by the Board of Directors in March 2020. Davison reviewed next steps, and requested that the Committee recommend Board approval of the DMS Work Plan in concept.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion. The Committee recommended outlining to the Board that it is not asking for the allocation of resources, prioritization of recommendations or finalization of partners and ownership, when it requests approval at the next meeting, but rather for the approval of the Work Plan in concept.

**ACTION:** Moved by Graves/Patel to recommend Board approval of the Destination Management Strategy Work Plan in concept.

**Motion carried: 4:0**

## 8. Coraggio Group Engagement

Davison noted that during the Tourism Marketing District (TMD) Renewal process, there were requests from communities to help inform the Business & Marketing Plan and usage of the additional 0.5 percent funding post-renewal, including one letter sent to the Board of Supervisors with the city's resolution. He said that the TMD Renewal process left some scar tissue in areas like Paso Robles, where some strategic partners (Chamber, PRWCA and select leadership of Travel Paso) did not support the renewal. Based on Visit SLO CAL's organizational value of Collaboration, and in the effort to bring communities together in line with the Visit SLO CAL funnel, staff has worked with Coraggio Group to concept next steps. Davison described Coraggio Group's strong reputation in the county, and proposed that Coraggio lead the planning process going into Strategic Direction 2023 (post-TMD renewal), where communities would have a say in the process, but the Board of Directors would have the final vote. He outlined Coraggio Group's three-phase process, which would build buy-in with investors and stakeholders, and assist them in understanding the timing and mechanics of additional TMD funding. He also noted the investment costs of the proposed engagement. Additionally, Davison requested Board direction on the amount of time, energy and resources to spend engaging with partners who are not supportive of the renewal of the TMD.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

**ACTION:** Moved by Graves/Jamison to recommend that the Board approve the President & CEO entering into contract negotiations with Coraggio Group for post-renewal planning and development of Strategic Direction 2023, of which work would begin January 15, 2019, post-TMD renewal.

**Motion carried: 4:0**

## 9. Advisory Committee Meeting Format Discussion

After dozens of 1:1 meetings and presentations with and to elected officials and city managers on the results of Visit SLO CAL's previous work, throughout the TMD Renewal process, staff is considering a different, more engaging approach to the December Advisory Committee Meeting. In lieu of the normal format, staff is recommending a planning session that would allow the Advisory Committee to weigh in on the areas of focus in "Visit SLO CAL 2.0," and would ask Coraggio Group to draft some probing questions to spur conversations in this discussion. During the meeting, staff would work with the Committee to outline the ownership of Destination Management Strategy recommendations, and review the timeline of community planning meetings. Visit SLO CAL would review the draft agenda with various city managers in advance to assure understanding and agreement with the revised process.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion. The Committee supported the proposed changes to the Advisory Committee Meeting format.

## 10. TMD Renewal Update

Davison provided an update on the TMD renewal process, noting that since the County released the petition on August 1, 2019, Visit SLO CAL has collected petitions representing more than 600 lodging properties. Countywide petitions received in support total 73.18% (a super-majority), which doesn't include a number of petitions that are yet to be counted. Davison noted that the County has said that future petitions will not be added to the total percentage of petitions since the required threshold has already been exceeded. He provided an update on recent meetings, noting that the Pismo Beach City Council voted unanimously to adopt a resolution for the renewal on October 15, 2019, and that all other jurisdictions have

unanimously approved resolutions. Visit SLO CAL has met with all County supervisors, all of which are very supportive and don't foresee any challenges for the renewal. He reviewed the upcoming schedule of Board of Supervisors hearings, and noted that Civitas, Visit SLO CAL's legal counsel, will be present for the second and third hearings (on December 10, 2019 and January 14, 2020, respectively). At this time, Visit SLO CAL will not provide a formal presentation at any of the hearings, but will rather be in attendance to answer any questions or frame discussions. He encouraged all Committee members to attend the final Board of Supervisors hearing on January 14, 2020, and noted that he would advise them of our placement on the agenda when it is posted the Thursday before the meeting.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

## **11. Marketing Update**

Davison provided an update on travel trade efforts, partnership and events updates, and key marketing initiatives, and he reported out on paid, earned and owned media results. Davison also provided an update on Visit SLO CAL's recent hero asset shoot, noting that the new footage from the shoot would be rotating in starting January.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Adjourned at 1:24 pm.