



# MINUTES

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## Visit SLO CAL Executive Committee

### Visit SLO CAL Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 14, 2020

3:00pm

Video Conference – URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81975231790>

Meeting ID: 819 7523 1790

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Clint Pearce

**PRESENT (VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE):** Mark Eads, Aaron Graves, Hemant Patel, Clint Pearce, Amar Sohi

**ABSENT:** None

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

**Call to Order at 3:04pm.**

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

None.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**3. Approval of August 24, 2020 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

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

**5. Approval of FY 2019/20 Annual Report**

Davison noted that once it is approved, the Annual Report will be finalized and sent to the County to meet our contract and MDP obligation.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

**ACTION:** Moved by Graves/Patel to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

**Motion carried: 5:0**

**CEO REPORT**

**6. CEO Report**

Visit SLO CAL is pursuing a service mark for “The California Less Traveled,” but based on legal counsel, will start by using the “SM” mark on the brand for the next two years to stake its claim and understand any objections prior to applying for a service mark. Davison reported out on two local KCBX stories in the previous two weeks that featured Visit SLO CAL. Derek Kirk, Director of Community Engagement & Advocacy, met with a small group of vacation rental investors today (September 14, 2020) to help them brainstorm advocacy strategies and best practices prior to his departure. On October 8, 2020, Kevin Bumen, the County Director of Airports will be resigning from his role, accepting an offer as the first Chief Commercial Officer for San Francisco International Airport (SFO). Davison noted that he has asked to be involved in the hiring process for the Director of Airports role, since Visit SLO CAL’s partnership with the new hire will be integral to the organization’s air service development efforts moving forward. All paid social and some SEM was paused due to the fire situation and resulting smoke in our communities. Visit SLO CAL will continue to monitor California’s fire situation and stay aligned in its messaging with Visit California. Davison shared Visit SLO CAL’s Board Dashboard (Business Intelligence Tool) and highlighted key insights. He provided a staffing update on currently vacant roles at Visit SLO CAL. He also provided an update on the California Welcome Center, noting that South County Chambers of Commerce is actively working on an RFP for the redesign of the California Welcome Center, with the intention of re-opening that center before the holidays. On September 8, 2020, after a series of five planning meetings, Davison participated in a presentation to the City Council on proposed changes to the TBID structure (spinning back out of the city and establishing a new non-profit under the ’94 Act, similar to Visit SLO CAL’s structure). During the meeting, the City Council publicly recognized the successes of Visit SLO CAL’s model, and voted unanimously to approve the recommendation. The start date of the proposed district, once approved, would be July 1, 2021, and prior to that, the TBID would pursue a national search for an Executive Director. Visit SLO CAL will be holding an Advisory Committee Meeting on October 1, 2020 from 3:00pm-4:30pm via videoconference, and all Board members are encouraged to participate. Davison noted that Visit SLO CAL is still waiting for feedback on the city managers desire to create a subset of the Advisory Committee to meet with the Executive Committee two to four times per year. He outlined some of the key agenda items for the meeting. The proposed date for the SPARTAN Race in SLO CAL is April 10, 2021, which would place the event during their National Series (one of five spots in their series, which begins in Jacksonville, FL and ends in Seattle, WA). Visit SLO CAL’s Board previously committed \$50k in sponsorship, and the date shifted due to COVID-19. SPARTAN is offering a potential upgrade to the existing program at a discounted rate of \$75k (\$25k additional). Visit SLO CAL presented the opportunity to the Marketing Committee to gauge their interest in a potential co-op to fund the additional \$25k. Some Committee members expressed concern at such a commitment with so much uncertainty for upcoming events and festivals, and some DMOs have stripped their events budget. Visit SLO CAL has a call scheduled with interested partners on September 22, 2020, and a decision is due prior to October 1, 2020. Davison reported out on key local and remote meetings and interviews.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

### **7. FY 2019/20 Audit**

For the fifth year in a row, Visit SLO CAL received a clean audit from Burkart & Stevens with no material weaknesses. Management Advisory Comments were consistent with past years and were expected. The auditor recommended that another individual open the checks received via mail and make a listing prior to processing (which was in place prior to COVID-19 cutbacks, when an Office Coordinator was on staff), and he noted that checking accounts exceeded \$250k FDIC insurance limits.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

**ACTION:** Moved by Eads/Patel to recommend that the Board approve the FY 2019/20 Audit, as presented.

**Motion carried: 5:0**

## 8. COVID-19 Impact & Response Update

Based on the Governor’s guidelines, San Luis Obispo County remains in the most restrictive purple tier. Visit SLO CAL is still following Visit California’s lead on media flights, which has been impacted by the wildfires. Davison provided an update on national trends. Davison reported out on current air service, and noted that Labor Day Weekend, which reported under 1M air travelers across the US (33 percent of normal capacity) is expected to be the high point for air travel leading up to the holiday season. He also reported out on the latest STR report for the week ending September 5, 2020, and noted that Visit SLO CAL is working with STR to update reporting as 28 properties are currently missing from the countywide inventory. Davison outlined Visit SLO CAL’s latest cash flow projection through June 2021, and noted that updates include current occupancy results from August.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

## 9. FY2019/20 Year-End Satisfaction Survey

Davison reported out on the response rate and results from the FY 2019/20 Year-End Satisfaction Survey compared to FY 2018/19 response rate and results. He noted that some of the results need to be viewed from the lens of COVID-19’s impact, as many taking the survey were noticeably influenced by their personal frustrations with the impact of COVID-19 on their businesses.

Public Comment – None

Committee Discussion.

## 10. Public Policy Platform Review

Visit SLO CAL’s Advocacy Plan and Public Policy Platform, adopted by the Board of Directors in September 2019, commits to an annual review of the document to ensure the platform remained consistent with the organization’s values and priorities. Davison outlined the Core Pillars of the Public Policy Platform and the instances in which the Platform was activated over the last 12 months. Staff is recommending the following additional Core Pillar to the Public Policy Platform: “Support Public Policy Initiatives that Promote California’s Position as an Inclusive, Diverse and Welcoming Destination” with the note that “Visit SLO CAL is committed to equity and inclusion in all aspects of the industry and business and will support and advocate for policies that help SLO CAL and California become a more inclusive and welcoming destination for travelers.” Davison noted that the addition is not driven toward broad-scale equity and inclusion efforts, but rather toward ensuring that the destination is welcoming to travelers. The updated document (with edits highlighted) was included in the agenda packet.

Public Comment – None

Committee Discussion.

**ACTION:** Moved by Graves/Eads to recommend that the Board adopt the updated Public Policy Platform, as presented.

**Motion carried: 5:0**

## 11. Equity & Inclusion Measurement

In June 2020, the Visit SLO CAL Board directed staff to draft a formal Equity & Inclusion Statement. The Board formally adopted VSC’s Equity & Inclusion (E&I) Statement in July, which outlined a set of core values and action items to be taken. Since the adoption of the E&I Statement, staff has been working to implement the action items associated with it. Davison noted how the statement was shared with Destination Partners, and how staff has met with the National Blacks in Travel & Tourism Collaborative to understand the opportunities they have created to support DMOs in ensuring their marketing materials are inclusive and representative. Additionally, Visit SLO CAL’s marketing agency RFP, sent out on September 11,

2020, includes questions and understanding around diverse representation for participating agencies. As noted in the E&I Statement, staff has built out a draft matrix to track a variety of data points from organizational representation to media hosting and social posts. Davison outlined the different metrics that Visit SLO CAL is currently tracking, and noted that as the organization onboards a new agency, staff will build out tracking for additional content and information about its agencies. He provided screenshots of the current matrix, a work in progress, and outlined next steps. Davison noted that staff will use the matrix to track representation of diverse populations and begin to benchmark itself year over year, providing updates to the Board throughout the year, and requesting feedback on these efforts.

Public Comment – None

Committee Discussion. Graves requested additional insight into the goal of the matrix. Davison explained that the purpose behind the matrix is to be mindful of where the gaps are in equity and inclusion, and understand how Visit SLO CAL can tell a broader story. He clarified that the desire is not to be punitive, but rather to be “additive” as the organization expands its efforts and reach. Eads inquired about how Visit SLO CAL will begin these efforts. Davison noted that part of this is achieved by making sure we are speaking to and with diverse audiences.

## **12. Travel Trade & Marketing Update**

Davison reported out on recent and upcoming travel trade efforts, and earned, owned and paid media efforts, including an update on the timing of both Visit SLO CAL’s brand campaign and co-op campaign with Visit California. Davison also outlined the marketing agency RFP process timeline.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

Davison noted upcoming agenda items.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Adjourned at 4:39pm.