



MINUTES

Visit SLO CAL Executive Committee

Visit SLO CAL Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 12, 2020

3:00pm

Video Conference – URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81121895828>

Meeting ID: 811 2189 5828

1. CALL TO ORDER: Clint Pearce

PRESENT (VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE): Mark Eads, Hemant Patel, Clint Pearce

ABSENT: Aaron Graves, Amar Sohi

STAFF PRESENT: Chuck Davison, Brendan Pringle

Call to Order at 3:01pm.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Davison congratulated Aaron Graves and his wife Katelyn on their recent nuptials.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of September 14, 2020 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

4. Approval of September Visit SLO CAL Financials

5. Approval of Kathleen Naughton's Marketing Committee Application

Davison noted that Kathleen Naughton is the new Executive Director of SLO Coast Wine Collective, and would take the seat formerly held by Anne Steinhauer, their former Executive Director.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

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

Motion carried: 3:0

CEO REPORT

6. CEO Report

Visit SLO CAL and the South County Chambers are working with communities in the Five Cities on an effort to commission an economic impact report on the Oceano Dunes SVR. The report would identify key economic impacts should Oceano Dunes State Park remain shut down or portions of the park are closed, and provide the necessary data to inform the cities, the County and economic development agencies in our region. It would also provide guidance for future areas of economic opportunity. Visit SLO CAL's role would be a supportive one, providing oversight in the process, and funding if approved by the Board in the mid-year re-forecast. Likewise, Visit SLO CAL has been in conversations with the City of San Luis Obispo and Cal Poly about the development of an economic impact report that would identify how the full or partial closure of Cal Poly impacts the region's tourism industry. Discussions for this report are still in the planning phases, and Visit SLO CAL would co-lead this work with Cal Poly, with assistance and contribution from the City of San Luis Obispo. Visit SLO CAL's role would be a supportive one, providing oversight and funding, if approved by the Board in the re-forecast. Davison provided a staffing update, noting that Kyla Boast will be on maternity leave from December 7 - March 1, 2020, and that during her absence, Charles Crellin, former GM at the Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort, will be serving as a sales contractor at around 10 hours per week. The South County Chambers of Commerce is actively working on the redesign of the California Welcome Center, and is currently interviewing for a Welcome Center Manager. Their intent is to re-open the center before Black Friday and they are working with the local DMOs on representation buildout for their communities. The December Executive Committee Meeting is currently scheduled for December 10, 2020, which conflicts with Destinations International's Winter Board Meeting. Davison asked the Committee if they would like to cancel this meeting or reschedule for another date.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion. The Committee agreed to cancel the December 2020 Executive Committee Meeting.

BUSINESS ITEMS

7. COVID-19 Impact & Response Update

As part of the Strategic Direction 2023 imperative to "Lead the county tourism industry in a collaborative resilience planning effort, Davison shared the latest draft of a three-page COVID-19 Recovery Tracker that will be sent with the Board Business Intelligence Report and Community Business Intelligence Report in the future. Davison noted SLO CAL continues to outpace its competitive set by double digits. Davison noted that, at a local level, Visit SLO CAL expects that San Luis Obispo County will return to the purple tier next Tuesday. He also provided a national update on the possibility of a federal recovery package, consumer sentiment around travel and current travel spending levels. He outlined current air service effective December 2020, and reviewed the most recent STR report, noting that the question remains whether SLO CAL can hold leisure travel for the next few months.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion. Patel asked what Visit SLO CAL's plan is in case there is another shutdown. Davison responded that Visit SLO CAL would revert back to "dreaming"-based advertising. Eads noted that Visit SLO CAL is providing great information and to keep it coming.

8. Operational Plan Update

On November 3, 2020, the Visit SLO CAL Leadership Team held a quarterly check-in with Coraggio to discuss its progress on the Strategic Direction 2023 (SD2023) Operational Plan. During this check-in, the team provided updates on the current challenges impeding progress on Operational Plan items, planned responses to those challenges and the items they are tackling in the current and upcoming quarters. Davison outlined the key progress made on SD2023 initiatives.

Public Comment – None

Committee Discussion.

9. FY2020-21 Budget Re-Forecast Update

Davison provided an update on the budget re-forecast timeline. He also outlined the key programming and staff updates, and requested Committee feedback on items that Visit SLO CAL should or should not include in the re-forecast.

Public Comment – None

Committee Discussion.

10. Marketing Agency RFP Update

Davison outlined the timeline and process for Visit SLO CAL's marketing agency RFP. He noted that out of the seven responses, four agencies were invited to provide an oral presentation, and of those invited, three agencies - MMGY, Miles Partnership and Mering - presented to the evaluation committee, which consisted of three Marketing Committee members (Molly Cano, John Sorgenfrei and Ashlee Akers). Davison reviewed how the agencies were judged. He noted that Mering provided the strongest responses to the two oral presentation prompt questions, and demonstrated the strongest performance in creativity and media planning. He also noted that Mering's familiarity with SLO CAL as Visit California's agency was demonstrated in their presentation. On November 10, 2020, the evaluation committee presented their feedback and recommendation to the Marketing Committee, and the Marketing Committee recommended that the Board approve a contract with Mering as Visit SLO CAL's Agency-of-Record. Davison shared some of the spec work that Mering provided in their presentation, as well as Mering's highlight reel. Davison commented that Visit SLO CAL owes a debt of gratitude to Keith Ireland of Sunshine & Bourbon, formerly BCF, for his development of the SLO CAL brand and that Keith would be pleased to see Mering take the brand to the next level. Davison commented on how far the destination has come in the last five years that the gold standard in California tourism advertising (Mering) wanted to pitch our account. Davison also reminded the Committee that Miles Partnership is already contracted to buy Visit SLO CAL's media through June, and that the first few months of the new agency's contract (January-June) would be focused on the brand evolution and website refresh in addition to FY2021/22 planning.

Public Comment – None

Committee Discussion.

ACTION: Moved by Eads/Patel to recommend that the Board allow the CEO enter into contract negotiations with Mering as Visit SLO CAL's marketing agency-of-record, as recommended by the Marketing Committee.

Motion carried: 3:0

11. Travel Trade & Marketing Update

Davison reported out on recent and upcoming travel trade efforts, paid and owned media highlights for October. He also provided an update on partnerships and events, noting that five communities have approved a \$5000 sponsorship co-op, which will provide the additional funding necessary to host a National Series race in SLO CAL. He noted that all partners now have an Enhanced Listing (more robust than the standard listing) on the SLOCAL.com website, and that all Enhanced Listings were upgraded to Featured Listings. He also noted that Restaurant Month will be happening in January, and Visit SLO CAL has begun reaching out to restaurants for specials, including take-out options.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion.

Davison noted upcoming agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 4:37pm.