



Minutes

Visit San Luis Obispo County Executive Committee

Visit San Luis Obispo County Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 14, 2016

3:00pm

Visit San Luis Obispo County Office

1334 Marsh Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Jay Jamison

PRESENT: John Arnold, Jay Jamison, JP Patel, Clint Pearce

ABSENT: Noreen Martin

STAFF PRESENT: Chuck Davison, Brendan Pringle

Call to Order at 3:08pm.

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

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Beginning of Year Bash is happening January 21, 2016 from 5:00-7:00pm at Café Roma.

Visit California's Dream Eater is visiting San Luis Obispo County January 20-21, 2016. VSLOC campaigned to get this program to visit the County. They will be filming at Madonna Inn, Sidecar and Splash Café.

Committee Discussion.

Public Comment – None.

BUSINESS ITEMS

3. **Executive Committee Power**

John Lambeth of Civitas Advisors recommended formally establishing what powers the Executive Committee has without Board consent. Such powers may include making decisions on urgent action items, employment action, executive evaluation and compensation, and contracts up to a certain dollar amount. The Executive Committee cannot take final action on governance (amending bylaws), removing board members, and obligating the organization to new debt. The Executive Committee would report out on any action taken at the following Board meeting.

Davison requested that the Executive Committee draft some recommendations to the Board.

Committee Discussion. The Committee resolved to draft some recommendations by the February Executive Committee meeting. Davison noted that he would summarize these recommendations for feedback at the February 17, 2016 Board meeting.

Public Comment – None.

4. Research RFP Update

VSLOC received three proposals by the January 8, 2016 deadline: King Brown, Inc, Merrill Research and Connected Solutions. The Marketing Committee decided to advance two finalists, King Brown, Inc. and Merrill Research, to Oral Presentations on January 19, 2016. Oral Presentations will start at 8:30am at Embassy Suites in San Luis Obispo. VSLOC will bring their recommendation to the Board on January 20, 2016 for final approval.

Committee Discussion.

Public Comment – None.

5. Marketing Agency RFP Update

Catalyst has failed to complete some of the deliverables promised during the November 30, 2016 Executive Committee meeting. Their contract ends June 30, 2016. VSLOC planned to RFP for our marketing agency after Year One to line up with year two and beyond initiatives and the forthcoming research. The Marketing Committee reviewed the FY2016-18 Marketing Agency RFP, and asked staff to make one change: to request case studies on big picture co-ops and large partnerships. Davison discussed the RFP timeline. The RFP will be disseminated on January 20, 2016 (upon Board approval). Proposals will be due February 18, 2016. Once the Board authorizes contracting with an agency the week of March 16, 2016, VSLOC will have several weeks to work out the details of the contract, and be able to transition to a new agency within three months, but as soon six weeks if necessary (if Catalyst is not selected). If deliverables from Catalyst are not completed by April, VSLOC should consider if they start withholding payment until items are complete.

Committee Discussion.

Public Comment – None.

6. Strategic Planning

VSLOC has approached Coraggio Group about producing a strategic plan. Coraggio Group has worked with the SLOTBID, City of Atascadero, and Visit California. The Tourism Marketing District was approved for five years, and it needs a comprehensive long-term plan. Coraggio noted that if granted a contract, they would want to start 3-4 weeks ahead of receiving research. Davison asked the Committee for their recommendations on whether VSLOC should issue an RFP for a strategic plan.

Committee Discussion. The Committee decided that since Coraggio is a known quality in the community based on work with a number of partners and there was no fiduciary or fiscal reason to RFP, an RFP would not be necessary in this instance. Davison said he is planning to meet with Coraggio Group on January 29, 2016.

Public Comment – None.

7. Fall Campaign Creative and Reporting Update

Additional digital banners are still in production, and pre-roll is in production with voiceover recording scheduled for January 15, 2016. Davison showed the Committee examples of banner creative running on sites like BBOnline.com, RVParking.com, and VacationRentals.com. VSLOC will be highlighting these examples during the Industry Educational

Symposium on February 3, 2016. Davison also showed the December Reporting Metrics to the Committee, and noted that the pre-roll videos should be ready for viewing at the January 20, 2016 Board Meeting.

Committee Discussion.

Public Comment – None.

8. Budgeting Re-Forecast

VSLOC will be asking the Board for approval of a full re-forecast of the FY2015-16 budget, which includes the reallocation of a \$300,000 surplus. This surplus is likely to be even higher, since there was no interest on co-op advertising opportunities. At the last meeting, Catalyst asked the Marketing Committee to consider some one-day runs, but they were not interested in these opportunities due to their short shelf life. VSLOC has asked BrandUSA to provide opportunities to reach an international audience. Options to re-allocate these funds include increasing media spends/sales activities or paying off the line of credit (\$236,000).

Committee Discussion.

Public Comment – None.

ACTION: Moved by Pearce/Arnold to pay off \$136,000 of the line of credit, and re-allocate the rest of the surplus to media across selected channels based on the final Budget Re-Forecast approval by the Board on January 20, 2016.

Motion carried: 4:0

9. SAVOR the Central Coast

Any Olmsted at Sunset notified us that major sponsors like Volvo are not willing to commit this early. Sunset does not feel it is in a position to commit to a big event for 2016 and play a large role in the event without a major sponsor on board, due to all of their recent restructuring. Olmsted noted that they may be willing to assist with smaller events throughout the year and give VSLOC some editorial assistance. Sunset has also hired F2V to run Celebration Weekend in Sonoma, and Sunset is working on redesigning this event in Sonoma

The Marketing Committee recommended taking SAVOR on the road as more of a campaign than an event, and using it for branding at food and wine events. VSLOC already has some of these events in the budget, and Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance is already headed to Texas, possibly providing a great opportunity for SLO County to have a presence there at the same time. The Marketing Committee seemed open to selling the event, but expressed caution in selling to the right person based on changes and brand awareness. They are not interested in taking on individual events in their own markets and didn't see the value in using the SAVOR name on existing events.

Rob Rossi would like to explore options for his team to facilitate a SAVOR event at the Santa Margarita Ranch in Spring of 2017. He has proposed having the SMR team operate the event with assistance from VSLOC. VSLOC would need to define "assistance," but this would likely include promotions and marketing. Rossi would need to provide a proposal for consideration.

Committee Discussion.

Public Comment – None.

10. Morro Bay Tourism Bureau

On January 12, 2016, the Morro Bay City Council voted unanimously to take over the management of the Morro Bay Tourism Business Improvement District after the Morro Bay TBID Advisory Board, made up of hoteliers, voted

unanimously against this. VSLOC will still be actively working with the City and the Tourism Bureau through the transition as IPW (June 2016) and Amgen (May 2016) are upcoming partnership initiatives on the horizon.

Committee Discussion.

Public Comment – None.

11. CEO Report

Lois Fox, who is the B&B representative on the Board, will be resigning from the Board in February as she recently sold her B&B. The Board will be discussing options for this seat at the January 20, 2016 meeting.

VSLOC has hired Pam Roberts as its Travel Trade Sales Coordinator. She will start on January 25, 2016.

VSLOC's second Industry Educational Symposium is happening February 3, 2016. This symposium will include speakers from Booking.com, the California Film Commission, and Yelp. Dave Hovde, chief meteorologist at KSBY, has also been invited to give a short update on the threat of El Niño.

Visit California's Outlook Forum is happening February 22-23, 2016.

Committee Discussion. The Committee recommended adding Booking.com to the items for discussion at the January Board meeting as VSLOC's booking engine solution.

Public Comment – None.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 4:57pm.