



MINUTES

Visit SLO CAL Marketing Committee

Visit SLO CAL Marketing Committee Meeting

Tuesday, February 9, 2021

8:30 am - 10:00 am

Video Conference – URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81698300044> Meeting ID: 816 9830 0044

1. CALL TO ORDER Chuck Davison

PRESENT: Ashlee Akers, Jim Allen, Terrie Banish, Jocelyn Brennan, Molly Cano, Cheryl Cuming, Gordon Jackson, Stacie Jacob, Lori Keller, Kathleen Naughton, Joel Peterson, Lindsey Roberts, John Sorgenfrei, Jill Tweedie

ABSENT: Audrey Arellano

STAFF PRESENT: Chuck Davison, Annie Frew, Ashley Mastako, Eric Parker, Vanessa Rodriguez

Call to Order at 8:31 am.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Davison introduced Maureen Thielen, Senior Account Executive with Mering, Visit SLO CAL's new agency.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of November 10, 2020 Marketing Committee Minutes

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

ACTION: Moved by Banish/Cano to approve the November 10, 2020 Marketing Committee Minutes

Motion carried: 12:0:1
Naughton abstained.

BUSINESS ITEMS

4. Visit SLO CAL CEO Report

Davison gave an update on board approved increased media spend of \$600K over the next 4.5 months as well as additional items approved, including development of the Chief Investment Officer workplan, Oceano Dunes and Cal Poly Economic Impact Reports and website refresh. He also let the committee know that we are able to share our consumer mailing list as a one-time use for SLO CAL's destination partners to use, and stipulated the consumer privacy guidelines for the usage of the list.

Public Comment – None

Committee Discussion - Jacob inquired about the Events & Festival strategy. She asked whether the RFP was available to be shared and what individual involvement would look like. Davison clarified that individual communities would be involved in the process but Visit SLO CAL would need someone to manage and move the initiative forward. Once Visit SLO CAL has additional details, staff will come back to the Committee for their feedback. Brennan asked about the website refresh and whether there would be specific tools available making it easier for partners listings to be updated. Davison said that although it will still be up to the individual partners, Visit SLO CAL will continue looking for innovative ways to get partners involved.

5. Highway 1 Update

Davison provided an update on the current Highway 1 closure, which was pushed further up north on February 8, 2021, as well as the team's efforts in re-activating informational one-sheets and directions in multiple languages which have been mailed and are up on our website. He noted that coverage has been focused on Monterey County, and some of the additional advertising funds that were recently approved by the Board will go towards additional exposure for Highway 1. As soon as Caltrans releases their assessment, Visit SLO CAL will begin its advocacy efforts.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

6. Miles Presentation – Google My Business

Nate Huff, Senior Vice President at Miles Partnership gave an overview of the Google My Business program to date, which has seen a steady decline in participation, including webinars and office hours. He also provided results from the recent distribution of tokens, of which only a handful of businesses used to redeem their listings. He noted that this lack of engagement was a missed opportunity, as one of the questions potential travelers are asking is “what is open.” He noted that they are looking to shift their suggestion for the future of this program and are looking to the Committee for their commitment in participation in order for Visit SLO CAL to continue funding this program.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion - Peterson inquired about some of the gaps in Google My Business engagement. Miles noted the length of lockdown in California and fatigue played a big role in engagement of businesses and that now is a good time to take advantage of the optimism in the marketplace. Banish shared that an intern called every single business and still had little results, and she suggested getting different community organizations involved. Sorgenfrei added that the need for greater outreach has been challenged by the inability to do in-person meetings. Cuming shared that they have been actively involved in the process; however, it has been difficult to know where to start and what to focus on. She noted that she would like Visit SLO CAL to redefine what the DMO is responsible for, so there is a clear set of expectations. Jacob suggested getting a workplan in place and more individuals, such as interns, involved to focus solely on this project. Cano agreed with identifying what the DMO role is and to get other community organizations involved. Tweedie added that timing has been everything, and that businesses are questioning the value. Davison let the Committee know that Visit SLO CAL would re-connect with Miles Partnership on a more solid activation plan, which they would bring to the Committee at the March meeting.

7. California Welcome Center Presentation

Megan Leininger, Manager at The California Welcome Center gave the Committee an update on the newly re-opened

California Welcome Center, which is located at the Pismo Beach Premium Outlets, is funded by Visit SLO CAL's sponsorship in partnership with Visit California, and managed by the South County Chamber of Commerce. She described the remodel, which included TVs with destination video loops and updated brochure racks. She also asked the Committee to keep her in the loop with updated information and deals.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

8. January Marketing & Trade Update

Davison gave an update on the Marketing Committee Retreat, which has been postponed. Visit SLO CAL is working with Mering and Coraggio Group (who would facilitate) on re-imagining what that meeting will look like. He provided a Travel Trade update, noting that CalSAE and Visit California Luxury Forum was attended by staff in December, and notes and leads were distributed. He noted that GoWest is taking place March 1st and 5th. He reviewed earned media highlights, noting Turner PR is currently working on a wellness media drop as well as seeking information on Spring Break deals and Revenge Travel Packages. He reminded the Committee of the SLO CAL properties nominated in Travel + Leisure's World's Best Awards and encouraged everyone to continue to vote. Davison provided a paid media update, with a snapshot on upcoming ad spend as well as an overview of Mering's on-boarding schedule.

Rodriguez walked the Committee through Visit SLO CAL's always-on approach to paid search, paid social and native campaigns. Looking towards the Spring campaign, programmatic, rich media and connected TV will be added back into the mix as well as a focus on supporting North Coast communities. She provided an update on paid social, which has focused on our "House of Brands" campaign, generating 3.7M impressions and 38K link clicks across Facebook and Instagram.

Mastako updated the Committee that Spartan has been postponed until November 20, 2021 due to the fact that the county is not yet in the final reopening phase. The event will still be part of the U.S. National series providing the added exposure at the same discounted price. She reminded the Committee of Visit California's Outlook Forum taking place February 18th and 19th. The event is free and its agenda is packed with meaningful data. Additionally, Restaurant Month just ended and had a record-breaking 58 participants this year. Take-out, local advertising and a targeted local social campaign were all aspects that differed from past years.

Rodriguez highlighted Restaurant Month wins from an owned media perspective, which included high average session durations, as well as low bounce rates. She shared that social giveaways helped @SLOCAL exceed 40K followers.

Parker provided a snapshot of recent content Visit SLO CAL has created, as well as upcoming themes in the next three months, asking the Committee to keep Visit SLO CAL in the loop when planning events or deals so that they can be included in upcoming content.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 10:19 am.