



MINUTES

Visit SLO CAL Marketing Committee

Visit SLO CAL Marketing Committee Meeting

Tuesday, January 31, 2023

8:30 am – 10:30 am

Visit SLO CAL Office – 81 Higuera Street, Suite 220, San Luis Obispo, CA

1. CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT: Ashlee Akers, Jim Allen, Terrie Banish, Cheryl Cuming, Lori Keller, Kathleen Naughton, John Sorgenfrei, Lynette Sonne, Linda Sanpei, Michael Wambolt

STAFF PRESENT: Cathy Cartier, Tracy Campbell, Cynthia Gonzalez, Trevor Lynch, Melissa Murray, Eric Parker, Kristin Buhning, Ashley Scarcella, Rachelle Ramirez, Lauren Miller, Alyssa Manno, Brooke Weisbecker, Camille Silvera, Theresa Nagai, Mayla Lohnes

AGENCIES PRESENT: Maureen Thielen-The Shipyard

Call to order at 8:33am

2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

Public Comment – None.

Committee Comment – None.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of November 8, 2022 Marketing Committee Minutes

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

ACTION: Moved by Cuming/ Wambolt to approve the **November 8, 2022** Marketing Committee Minutes.

Motion carried: 10:0

CMO REPORT

4. Visit SLO CAL CMO Report

Cartier provided the committee with a recap of the SLO CAL Open at Pismo Beach surf competition which took place January 23-29. The surf competition brought 240 surfers from multiple categories to Pismo Beach to compete. Cartier shared with the committee the sandcastle event activation sponsored by Visit SLO CAL.

Cartier reminded the committee of the Marketing Retreat scheduled for Tuesday, March 14. Cartier informed committee members that they are welcome to extend the invitation to an agency staff member if they will find the retreat helpful.

Cartier provided an update of the scope of work already completed by mid-fiscal year. Cartier then provided an overview for the upcoming planned projects to be completed by the end of the fiscal year. Cartier informed the committee of Visit SLO CAL Brand Marketing Manager Riley Grim's departure from the organization and the posting of the Marketing Manager job opening.

Cartier shared the implemented crisis communication plan executed by Visit SLO CAL staff during the floods in SLO County. Visit SLO CAL distributed weather updates and resources through multiple channels including the website, social media and partner newsletter.

Thielen proposed the co-op structure for a Pinterest extension campaign. Thielen asked the committee for commitment to the co-op by the end of February. Cartier informed the committee that she will share the co-op information following the meeting and that committee members are welcome to set up 1:1 meetings to discuss any questions they have.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

Business Items

5. Destination Summit Recap

Cartier recapped the 2022 Destination Summit. Cartier shared that the post-event survey responses showed that attendees were very happy with the Adam Sacks Keynote and the SLO CAL Crafted pop-up market during the reception. Cartier asked the committee for their feedback on the event – Should SLO CAL host the Destination Summit annually or move to a bi-annual schedule as well as what the committee members want to see more of in the future?

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Sorgenfrei said he liked Destination Summit as a one-day event and prefers the event without breakout sessions; he also stated that it was good to hear research from outside of the community about the impending recession and that it's good for city officials to see the work being done for the tourism industry.

Wambolt said that while it's a heavy lift, this year was the best one yet. He also added that hosting the Destination Summit annually allows the industry to get together to reenergize, recharge and mingle. He stated that if we move to a bi-annual schedule we should do a mixer in the off years.

Keller shared that within the industry there is frustration from DMO partners that hoteliers aren't aware of the work DMOs do, and Destination Summit helps to inform lodging investors of their work. Keller also shared that strategic planning for HWY 1 Road Trip suggested breakout sessions at Destination Summit for each destination to connect with their lodging investors. Cartier agreed that it would be interesting to have a panel of DMO partners to inform more specific opportunities in SLO CAL communities.

Banish stated that it's difficult to get city officials on board with DMO strategies, therefore this could help inform and show value to stakeholders.

Cartier agreed that if the committee finds it helpful, Visit SLO CAL will continue to host annually.

Sonne stated there was a lot of discussion in the community post-event and people who didn't attend wished they had. Sonne added that having the current energy from this past event can serve as a growing foundation for next year's event.

Cartier added that featuring the SLO CAL Crafted pop-up marketplace also allowed for more brand recognition.

Akers added that new general managers of hotels can use the event as an entry point for understanding "SLO CAL" as a destination and brand.

6. Tourism Economics Forecast

Cartier shared highlights from the SLO CAL Lodging and Visitor Economy Forecast. Visit SLO CAL will be sending the tourism economic forecast with key findings of mild recession outlook to partners in its partner newsletter.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

7. International PR/Trade Contract

Cartier gave an update on the International PR and Trade RFP for representation in the UK and Ireland. After conducting oral presentations, Visit SLO CAL is negotiating a contract with MMGY Hills-Balfour with an anticipated start date for March 1, 2023.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

8. Sustainability Content

Cartier updated the committee on the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) Sustainability Series featuring SLO CAL. The WTTC will be launching the full campaign in February featuring a full landing page with video and blog content about SLO CAL's sustainability initiatives. Cartier informed the committee that SLO CAL will also have a landing page on SLOCAL.com with the sustainability content.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Keller asked if there was a resource for sustainable practices in hospitality to which Sanpei responded that the Kind Traveler Partner is a helpful resource.

9. Mural Trail and Wall Activation

Cartier provided an update on the mural trail. The mural located in Cambria has been completed. The murals slated to be painted in San Luis Obispo and Arroyo Grande have been put on hold due to unforeseen circumstances.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Sonne suggested a wall in Tin City on a new business opening soon.

10. Dylan Efron Partnership

Parker provided an overview of the partnership between Visit SLO CAL and Dylan Efron. Dylan Efron came to market in January to do a social series about SLO CAL being his hometown which included a 3-part series on YouTube and his social channels.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

11. Travel Trade & Marketing Update

Parker provided an overview of SLO CAL's earned media in the past two months. Parker shared the earned media for Conde Nast and Travel + Leisure featuring SLO CAL as one of the best places to travel in 2023.

Lynch provided an overview of SLO CAL's owned media for the past two months. Lynch shared the 2023 SLO CAL Culinary Celebration social media content and the top December media posts, blog posts and website analytics. Lynch then provided an overview of SLO CAL's paid media for the past two months.

Murray shared updates about the success of SLO CAL Welcome, SLO CAL's customer service training program. As of January 27, there are 301 certified SLO CAL Welcome experts and 81 businesses participating. Murray also announced that the Spanish version of the program launched in January. Murray requests the committee to reach out with any upcoming publication or speaking opportunities to share SLO CAL Welcome.

Gonzalez recapped the CalSAE tradeshow event she attended December 13-14.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

12. California Welcome Center Presentation

Megan Leininger, Manager of the California Welcome Center at Pismo Beach, provided the committee with an annual update on visitation at the welcome center. The Pismo Beach Welcome Center was the most visited welcome center in the Visit California program over the last year.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

ADJOURN 10:21 am