Visit SLO CAL Marketing Committee Meeting
Tuesday, July 14, 2026
8:30 am – 10:30 am
Visit SLO CAL Office: 81 Higuera St, Suite 220, San Luis Obispo, CA

1. CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT: Jim Allen, Terrie Banish, Jessica Blanchfield, Sheridan Bohlken, Jacqui Clark-Charlesworth, Gordon Jackson, Lori Keller, Courtney Pene, Joel Peterson, Krista Rupp, Linda Sanpei, John Sorgenfrei, Leann Standish, Jill Tweedie

STAFF PRESENT: Cathy Cartier, Molly Cano, Ashlee Akers, Whitney Chaney, Matt Halvorson, Aleigh Hogan, Alyssa Manno, Lauren Miller, Brooke Weisbecker, Megan Leininger

AGENCIES PRESENT: Rachel Haik (Shipyard), Marisa Polin (Shipyard), John Risser (Shipyard)

Call to order at 8:32 am

2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

Public Comment – None.

Committee Comment – None.

CONSENT AGENDA – *motion required*

3. Approval of May 27, 2026 Marketing Committee Minutes

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

ACTION: Moved by Clark-Charlesworth/Peterson to approve the May 27, 2026 Marketing Committee Minutes.

Motion carried: 13-0-0
Tweedie arrived after vote

CMO REPORT	M. Cano

4. Visit SLO CAL CMO Report

Cano asked all committee members to complete the Marketing Committee Guidelines and Annual Conflict of Interest forms.

Cano thanked Jackson for his time and commitment over 11 years with Experience Pismo Beach and support of Visit SLO CAL (VSC) in advance of his retirement.

Cano provided an update on the upcoming Del Mar Wine & Food Festival Sponsorship in co-op with Visit San Luis Obispo, Visit Atascadero, Experience Pismo Beach & Travel Paso. There will be 22 wine partners, 4 restaurant partners, 1-2 experience partners and a local musician.

Cano shared that the Sojern co-op has expanded to local businesses with a 50% match of business investment (minimum $1,500) by Sojern. This opportunity will be shared through VSC's partnership newsletter with businesses committing directly with Sojern. Those businesses that participate will have SLO CAL logo lockup for their ad placements.

Cano highlighted Visit California's next President & CEO; Julie Coker. SLO CAL Summit will be October 29, Cano provided an update on ticket sales—there will be tables available and early bird pricing.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Blanchfield asked for confirmation on the match and minimum investment required for new local business Sojern co-op.

BUSINESS ITEMS	M. Cano

5. FY 27 Paid Media Plan

Polin introduced herself and shared her background and experience with the committee. Polin presented the paid media plan for FY 27, sharing the main business goal for media is overnight demand growth to outpace inventory growth. With travel behaviors changing, media must respond by constantly exposing to messaging for a non-linear planning timeline. At the core, the plan is to build demand across traveler moments with always-on brand presence, rotating motivation/moments to promote visits and dynamic activation (i.e. seasonality and planning windows).

Polin reviewed the new audience framework: the evolved purposeful traveler into the spontaneous traveler profile and the spontaneous traveler family profile. Polin went over the geographic breakout of opportunity markets and VSC's creative group that is best used there.

Cano added that there is a plan to schedule individual meetings with Polin and individual destinations to help coordinate paid media efforts.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Sorgenfrei asked about catering media content to direct fly markets and drive markets raising awareness for ease of arrival. He also asked about the role that AI is playing in the media plan. Polin shared how you can leverage dynamic messaging with AI and other opportunities to use AI as travel agents. Cano shared how content and the website are designed to be GEO optimized. Cartier added that VSC is having lots of conversations around being discoverable with the current RFP of the website and tech stack.

6. Turns Well Taken Family Spot

Cano introduced the backstory behind the next *Turns Well Taken* spot featuring a younger family. Risser walked the committee through the spot: "Dad's Turn." A solos dad's weekend with his kids that leads to discovery, positioned as family road trip.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Positive reception from the committee.

7. Where the Music Takes You Content Series Update

Cano recapped the creative series to date and played one of the episodes. Akers shared the campaign launch plan of *Where the Music Takes You* including KPIs, channel strategy and release timeline.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Keller asked about destination collaboration and possible cuts down for paid or other marketing opportunities. Clark-Charlesworth inquired about strategies VSC is deploying to gain band support in launch to their audiences. Keller mentioned the possible opportunity to play these videos before tour performances to reach other destinations. Cano added that featured bands are invested, so there are opportunities to find additional ways to promote and collaborate.

8. Marketing, Sales & ESC 2050 Updates

Akers recapped the *Tapped Into SLO CAL* beer launch with a wrap up video and marketing results. Cano added context around the possible future of *Tapped Into SLO CAL* in each individual destination.

Akers presented the *Turns Well Taken* paid media campaign performance.

Akers provided website highlights from the last quarter and a newsletter recap for May and June. Weisbecker presented May and June social media top performing posts, notably both were carousel posts.

Akers presented earned media coverage for May and June highlighting the Los Angels Times piece around World Cup Road Trips and Sunset Magazine's piece on a plant inspired itinerary in SLO CAL. Akers also

recapped the World Cup Influencer co-op in partnership with Experience Pismo Beach, Visit San Simeon and Travel Paso.

Manno reported on the education and network series: *Crafted Connections*. Four events were held between January and June. The series saw 99 total attendees.

Cano shared the "Kicks & Sips FAM" in partnership with Visit California and Delta Airlines. Top Delta agents attended with one night (visiting four communities) in SLO CAL.

Chaney shared the event toolkit that is live on slocal.com. Provided a countywide trail initiative update. Shared that Caltrans is updating the Big Sur Coast Management Plan. VSC is looking into how to increase involvement since previously there was not San Luis Obispo County represented on the plan. Chaney is keeping an eye on a low impact camping law that will be a topic of conversation at the Agritourism Summit in Paso in September.

Halvorson provided an RFP update that included 115 unique questions answered, 37 proposals submitted and 3 finalists selected. On the Film SLO CAL side, Halvorson shared four productions in market between May and July.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Clark-Charlesworth asked about how many cans were made of the SLO CAL beer. After some discussion, 12,000 cans.

Keller asked for YOY comparison of ad buys when reporting. Akers replied that when there is YOY data, VSC will share.

Next Meeting: September 8, 2026

ADJOURN: 10:32 AM