

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES – Travel Paso Board of Directors
Regular Meeting



Tuesday, March 18, 2025 – 3:00 pm

Meeting Location: Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance, Conference Room
1314 Spring Street, Paso Robles, CA 93446.

Members of the public had the option to participate virtually or in-person.

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

1. The meeting was called to order at 3:05pm by Chair Alex Villicana with a roll call.

Present: John Arnold, Erica Fryburger, Angela McKee, Hemant Patel, Victor Popp, Alex Villicana, Kaitlin Walton

Absent: Jill Alexander, Rich Verruni

Staff: Stacie Jacob, Tracy Dauterman

Guests: Councilmember Gregory, Chris Huot, and Paul Sloan (City of Paso Robles)

PUBLIC COMMENT

2. No public comment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- AB 1008, which would authorize the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control to issue up to 10 additional on-sale general licenses to restaurants in SLO County, is gaining traction with the support of Assemblywoman Addis. If passed, five licenses would be issued in both 2025 and 2026.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Meeting Minutes from Board of Directors Meeting on January 21, 2025
4. Meeting Minutes from Executive Committee Meeting on February 19, 2025
5. Travel Paso January and February Marketing Reports
6. Travel Paso January and February Media Reports
7. January Community Performance Report (Visit SLO CAL)
8. January STR Report
9. TOT Summary (City of Paso Robles)
10. TOT by Lodging Category Report (City of Paso Robles)
11. TOT by Segment Report (Visit SLO CAL)
12. January Wine Sales Report (Visit SLO CAL)

MOTION: Approve the Consent Agenda, as presented. It was moved by John Arnold, seconded by Victor Popp, and passed 7-0 with a roll call vote.

NEW BUSINESS, UPDATES & DISCUSSIONS

New Business:

13. Letter for Support for The Landing: The proposed 140± acre redevelopment project features a unique mix of employment and visitor-serving uses. Planned components include industrial flex space, maker spaces, office space, retail establishments, a restaurant, a market hall, a hotel, and a winery. The project supports continued growth in the local hospitality industry and will be a valuable contributor to regional economic development. Stacie Jacob reviewed the draft letter of support for The Landing.

MOTION: Approve the letter of support for The Landing, as presented, and authorize Stacie Jacob to submit to the City of Paso Robles. It was moved by Erica Fryburger, seconded by John Arnold, and passed 7-0 with a roll call vote.

14. Consider Letter of Support for July 4th Fireworks: Travel Paso is a major sponsor of the upcoming July 4th Community Celebration. Stacie Jacob reviewed the draft letter of support, which will be included in the sponsorship package alongside a letter from the Mayor to help promote the event.

MOTION: Approve the letter of support for the July 4th Community Celebration, as presented. It was moved by Angela McKee, seconded by Kaitlin Walton, and passed 7-0 with a roll call vote.

General Business

15. Financial Reports:

- a. December 31, 2024 – Accrual Basis: Income totaled \$150,159 and expenses totaled \$150,903. As of December 31, 2024, Travel Paso has a total equity position of \$1,406,423.93
- b. February 28, 2025 – Cash Basis: Income totaled \$111,314 and expenses totaled \$178,042. As of February 28, 2025, Travel Paso has a total equity position of \$1,434,741.80. The checking and ICS accounts were re-balanced to remain under the \$250,000 FDIC limit for the checking account.
- c. Income continues to trend behind projections. The bulk of Travel Paso's media spend occurs Feb-June.

MOTION: Approve the December 2024 financials and the February 2025 financial reports, as presented. It was moved by Hemant Patel, seconded by Victor Popp, and passed 7-0 with a roll call vote.

Objective 1: Collaboratively Lead and Advocate for the Paso Robles Tourism Ecosystem

16. Tourism Economics Studies:

- a. Studies in collaboration with Visit SLO CAL - The Lodging Forecast is complete, and the Economic Impact Study is anticipated to be complete in March 2025 once the stats for December 2024 are available.
- b. The City's Economic and Fiscal Impact of Tourism Study was completed by Beacon Economics and was shared at the February 18, 2025 City Council meeting. Highlights include: 2.5 million visitors annually, tourism accounts for 40% of the City's general fund, without tourism households would pay an additional \$1,800 per year in taxes.
- c. PRWCA also engaged Beacon Economics for their own study that provides data for tourism impact outside of the City limits.
- d. Communications Plan: Travel Paso, the City, the Chamber, and PRWCA are collaborating on message development and roll out. A press release will go out at the end of April prior to the Tourism Round Up event. Long term plans include outreach to Rotary clubs and other community groups.

Objective 2: Amplify the Paso Robles Brand through Strategic Marketing Initiatives

17. 2025 Savor Paso Event Venue: The date is set for Friday, June 27, 2025 in San Jose. Due to the SAP Center's requirement to use Ticket Master, the venue has been changed to The Glasshouse. The Glasshouse is conveniently located with parking one block away. The space lends itself to building a unique user experience and can accommodate Paso Robles area winery partners including set up. The budget is being finalized with a goal of breaking even. This signature event in San Jose is a collaboration with key partners in a target market that meets several objectives of Travel Paso's marketing and media campaign.
18. The 2025 Savor Media Campaign is underway. Highlights for this month include features in Robb Report, Weekend Sherpa, Edible San Luis Obispo, SF Gate, Wall Street Journal, The Travel, Midwest Living, and the Santa Barbara Independent. Savor Paso billboards in San Jose and wrapped buses in Orange County and Santa Monica launched and are expected to generate an estimated 85 million impressions.
19. 2025 Tourism & Hospitality Awards:
 - a. The Call for Nominations closed on March 7, 2025. Travel Paso received approximately 20 nominations. The judges' panel is reviewing nominations and will select recipients for the Visitor Experience, Emerging Leader, and Tourism Champion award categories.
 - b. The Distinguished Leader Award is selected by the Travel Paso's Board of Directors. The Board discussed the slate of candidates.

MOTION: Select Chris Cherry, Ken and Bobbi Hunter, and Margaret Johnson as recipients of the 2025 Distinguished Leader Award. It was moved by Victor Popp, seconded by Angela McKee, and passed 7-0 with a roll call vote.

20. 2025 Tourism Round Up:

- a. Date/Time/Venue: May 8, 2025, 11:30am-5:30pm, at the Paso Robles Inn.
- b. Dr. Chris Thornberg, Beacon Economics, will be the keynote speaker and will highlight the recent economic impact studies completed for the City of Paso Robles and the PRWCA. The SLO County Arts Council will provide a short presentation on their recent economic impact study. The Run of Show is currently being developed.
- c. The cost of the event is projected to be \$37,000. Ticket prices will be \$50-\$55 per person and include lunch and the reception. This event is part of Travel Paso's strategic plan to promote the tourism ecosystem and highlight its importance and contributions to bolstering the local economy. The majority of the costs for this event will be absorbed by Travel Paso and is part of the approved budget for FY 24-25.

21. Giving Back Scholarship Program: The Travel Paso Scholarship Fund is managed through The Community Foundation San Luis Obispo County. The application period closed on February 13, 2025. An update will be provided at the April Board meeting.

Objective 3: Foster Constructive Relationships and Strengthen Existing Partnerships

22. 2025 Hospitality and Tourism Bootcamp - March 10-12, 2025: This event is a collaboration between Travel Paso, PRWCA, and SLO Partners. Nearly 100 people attended the event. Travel Paso offered \$100 scholarships to attendees to cover registration costs.

23. City of Paso Robles General Updates:

- The City's Economic Development Strategic Plan identified childcare as a critical need. The City will take steps to address and is meeting with CAPSLO in Q2 2025.
- The City is putting together a housing summit to address housing constraints and needs.
- The City has designed new banners to be installed on lamp posts highlighting downtown businesses. The banners will be installed within the next month.
- Gateway beautification continues at the train station. Wraps were recently added to the east and west sides of the building featuring iconic Paso Robles landscapes and a welcome message for arriving visitors. Scenic images, doubling as selfie-spots, include a QR code to assist visitors in discovering dining, lodging, shopping, activities and attractions in Paso Robles.
- Stacie Jacob presented Travel Paso's Annual Report at the City Council meeting on February 18, 2025.

24. Community Updates:

- The ribbon cutting for the Chamber's new Visitor Center is April 9, 2025
- PRWCA has created and sent promotional codes to Travel Paso lodging partners for discounted tickets for Wine Fest.
- PRWCA will begin developing their strategic plan in May 2025.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 pm.

NEXT MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 18, 2025 at 3pm