

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES – Travel Paso Board of Directors
Regular Meeting



Tuesday, May 20, 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 3:08pm by Chair Alex Villicana with a roll call.

Present: John Arnold, Erica Fryburger, Angela McKee, Hemant Patel, Rich Verruni, Alex Villicana, Kaitlin Walton

Absent: Jill Alexander, Victor Popp

Staff: Stacie Jacob, Tracy Dauterman

Guests: Councilmember Gregory and Paul Sloan (City of Paso Robles), Lisa Belsanti (Visit SLO CAL), Matt Kleefisch (Hotel Ava), Gretchen Roddick (Hope Family Wines), Jamie Smith (Foreword Brand)

PUBLIC COMMENT

2. No public comment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- AB 1008 had unanimous support in the Assembly and is now in the Senate for approval.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Meeting Minutes from Board of Directors Meeting on April 15, 2025
4. Meeting Minutes from Executive Committee Meeting on May 14, 2025
5. Travel Paso April Marketing Report
6. Travel Paso April Media Report
7. March Community Performance Report (Visit SLO CAL)
8. March STR Report (Visit SLO CAL)
9. March STR Report
10. TOT Summary (City of Paso Robles)
11. TOT by Lodging Category Report (City of Paso Robles)
12. February TOT by Segment Report (Visit SLO CAL)
13. Thank You Letter from the City of Paso Robles

MOTION: Approve the Consent Agenda, as presented. It was moved by Angela McKee, seconded by John Arnold, and passed 6-0 with a roll call vote. Erica Fryburger arrived late and did not vote on this item.

NEW BUSINESS, UPDATES & DISCUSSIONS

General Business

14. Board Elections: After reviewing the applications for five open board positions, the Nominating Committee recommended the following slate for a two-year term beginning July 1, 2025: Lodging Seats - John Arnold, Hemant Patel, Rich Verruni; Winery Designated Seat - Gretchen Roddick; Community At-Large - Kaitlin Walton

MOTION: Elect John Arnold, Herman Patel, Rich Verruni, Gretchen Roddick, and Kaitlin Walton to the Travel Paso Board of Director for a two-year term beginning July 1, 2025. It was moved by Angela McKee,

seconded by Alex Villicana, and passed 6-0 with a roll call vote. Erica Fryburger arrived late and did not vote on this item.

15. Marketing Committee for FY 2025-26 : After reviewing the applications, the Nominating Committee recommended the following slate for a one-year term beginning July 1, 2025.

Incumbents (11):

Chanda Brown, Cass Winery
 Nicole Calabretta, Allegretto Resort
 Ian Consoli, Tablas Creek Winery
 Laura Callahan, Nomada Hotel Group
 Julie Fischer, Paso Wine Merchant
 Katie Hayward, Uncorked Wine Tours
 Morgen Hoffman, Morgen Hoffman Events
 Kristin Muhly, Ancient Peaks Winery
 Krista Smith, PRWCA
 Jill Tweedie, Breakaway Tours
 Shelbi Wilson/ Molly Kastendieck, Destination Paso

New Members (6):

Martha Clayton, CA Coast Beer Co.
 Kristina Horton, Toast Tours
 Shonna Howenstein, Mid State Fair
 Brianna Long, Sensorio
 Kate Marlow, Marlow Marketing & Design
 Shannon Spivey, Allegretto Resort

MOTION: Appoint the Marketing Committee slate for FY 2025-26 for a one-year term beginning July 1, 2025, as presented. It was moved by Rich Verruni, seconded by Hemant Patel, and passed 7-0 with a roll call vote.

16. April 2025 Financial Report: Income totaled \$100,027 and expenses totaled \$363,568. As of April 30, 2025, Travel Paso has a total equity position of \$990,161.67. The bulk of Travel Paso’s media spend occurs February – June. The ICS and checking accounts are rebalanced monthly to meet FDIC thresholds and to cover expenses.

MOTION: Approve the April 2025 financial report, as presented. It was moved by Hemant Patel, seconded by John Arnold, and passed 7-0 with a roll call vote.

17. Draft Budget for FY 2025-26:

- a. Projected Income: The projected income for FY 24-25 income was \$2,120,000 with current fiscal year end income projections of \$1,837,943. The City of Paso Robles is currently projecting .5% - 1.3% increase over FY 24-25. The Tourism Economics Lodging Forecast projects a .9% decrease in TOT for FY 25-26. The Hotel Ava is anticipated to open in late July/August 2025. The Board discussed budgeting flat (no increase in income) for FY 25-26 and set the income projection at \$1,853,726.
- b. Program Priorities and Expense Budget: Stacie Jacob reviewed the program priorities and presented the draft FY 2025–26 budget. The proposed budget reflects a \$165,000 reduction in expenses across the following categories compared to FY 2024–25: Advertising & Media Buys, Community Support and Memberships, and Brand Identity. Despite these reductions, an additional \$104,000 in cuts is needed to balance the budget. The Board expressed strong support for maintaining a robust, year-round marketing and media campaign with integrated partner efforts, extending beyond the current Savor Campaign (January–June). In support of this priority, the Board agreed to draw down up to \$300,000 from reserves for FY 2025–26. Staff was directed to revise the budget accordingly for adoption at the June Board meeting.

18. Strategic Plan: The strategic plan, completed in 2023, is still applicable but needs a minor update particularly to the indicators/metrics section. Travel Paso may update in-house. Stacie Jacob will also get an estimate from Whereabout to update the strategic plan. This item will be on the agenda for a focused discussion at the June Board meeting.

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

19. Tourism Economics Studies: Travel Paso, the City, the Chamber, and PRWCA are collaborating to develop a unified message surrounding the release of the studies and highlighting the value and impact of tourism. The PRWCA has not released their study. There were some discrepancies in the geographic areas incorporated in to the study that are being corrected. It is anticipated that the release of all studies, along with a press release, will occur in early June.

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

20. Re-Cap of 2025 Tourism Round Up & Tourism and Hospitality Awards: The feedback from attendee survey has been positive. Adam Montiel was great as the MC and Dr. Thornberg was an engaging presenter. The event was well attended, and the awards are always a crowd favorite. There were several comments about potentially shortening the duration of the Tourism Round Up. The Board discussed holding the Tourism Round Up at the Paso Robles Inn again in 2026 for continuity and logistics. Travel Paso intends to issue an RFP for 2027 and will look for two-year commitments from potential venues.
21. Travel Paso Scholarship Update: The (8) recipients were announced at the Tourism Round Up. Six are from Paso Robles and two are from Atascadero. Travel Paso is coordinating the SLO Community Foundation for presentations at the awards ceremonies and will also inquire about the process and timeline for scholarships for FY 25-26.
22. 2025 Savor Media Campaign: Highlights for this month are included in the marketing and media reports. The results of the campaign will be presented at the July Board Meeting.
23. Update on Savor Paso Event: The date is set for Friday, June 27, 2025 in San Jose. Vendor registration for wineries, restaurants, and lodging partners is nearly full. The goal is 40 vendors with 35 vendors registered to date. Tickets for the public are on sale now with 66 tickets sold to date.

Objective 3: Foster Constructive Relationships and Strengthen Existing Partnerships

24. City of Paso Robles Updates:
- Chris Huot is the City Manager.
 - July 4th Community Celebration Sponsorship Campaign: Travel Paso assisted the City with the sponsorship campaign. The fundraising goal of \$60,000 has been met. Travel Paso will also assist with promoting the event.
 - In response to capacity and maintenance concerns raised by local sports organizations, the City Council is directing staff to explore both short- and long-term solutions to improve access and quality of youth sports facilities.
 - The City Council will consider amending the Fire Hazard Severity Zone Local Responsibility Area map.
25. Community Updates: No report.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm.

NEXT MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 24, 2025 at 3pm