



Minutes

Visit San Luis Obispo County Board of Directors

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Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 20, 2015

8:30am

The Cliffs Resort

2757 Shell Beach Rd, Pismo Beach, CA 93449

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Jay Jamison

PRESENT: John Arnold, James Davison, Mark Eads, Jim Hamilton, Jay Jamison, Rachel Patranella, JP Patel, Nipool Patel, Clint Pearce, Roger Wightman

STAFF PRESENT: Chuck Davison, Kylee Jepsen, Brendan Pringle, Michael Wambolt

Call to Order at 8:34am.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

3. **Introduction of New Board Members**

C. Davison welcomed Visit San Luis Obispo County's two new board members: Nipool Patel of Lamplighter Inn & Suites, and Roger Wightman of Sandcastle Inn. Patel is the new appointee from San Luis Obispo (2-year term; 2015-2017), and Wightman is the new appointee from the City of Pismo Beach (3-year term; 2015-2018).

4. **Visit CA Television Ad**

Visit California recently featured San Luis Obispo County in their newest "Average Joes" advertisement, which will reach an international audience, giving the county great exposure. The ad shows a "bubblesmith" with Morro Rock in the background. This image has become the screenshot for the video. C. Davison played the YouTube video of the ad.

Board Discussion. Eads reported out on the Pismo Beach Clam Festival.

Public Comment – None.

CONSENT AGENDA

5. **Approval of September 16, 2015 Board Meeting Minutes**

6. **Approval of September VSLOC Financials**

7. **Approval of September SAVOR Financials**

Board Discussion—None.

Public Comment – None.

C. Davison asked the Board to approve the Consent Agenda.

ACTION: Moved by Arnold/Pearce to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion carried: 8:0:2

N. Patel and R. Wightman abstained.

8. Executive Committee Changes

VSLOC's Board Chair Kevin Phipps resigned on October 2, 2015, leaving his seat vacant. C. Davison asked for nominations for the VSLOC Board Chair.

Board Discussion.

Public Comment—None.

ACTION: Moved by Pearce/J. Patel to nominate Jay Jamison as Chair.

Motion carried: 10:0

With Jamison's appointment, the Vice Chair seat is vacant. C. Davison asked for nominations for the VSLOC Board Vice Chair.

Board Discussion.

Public Comment—None.

ACTION: Moved by J. Patel/N.Patel to nominate Clint Pearce as Vice Chair.

With Pearce's appointment, the Treasurer seat is vacant. C. Davison asked for nominations for the VSLOC Board.

Board Discussion.

Public Comment—None.

ACTION: Moved by Pearce/Wightman to nominate Mark Eads as Treasurer. Moved by **N. Patel/J. Patel** to nominate John Arnold as Treasurer.

VSLOC Board voted in favor of John Arnold. Motion carried: 8:2

BUSINESS ITEMS

9. Crisis Communication Plan

Solterra Strategies has drafted a Crisis Communication Plan for Visit San Luis Obispo County in order to provide direction during a crisis. This is an evolving and fluid document. C. Davison described the objectives of the plan and distinguished the two types of crises that may dictate a response (incidental and major disaster/emergencies), as well as the next steps to ensure the effectiveness of the plan.

Board Discussion.

Public Comment—Nikki Schmidt, County of San Luis Obispo, asked if VSLOC engaged the County’s Office of Emergency Services in the production of this plan. C. Davison responded that VSLOC had reached out to them.

ACTION: Moved by Wightman/J. Patel to approve the Crisis Communication Plan as presented.

Motion carried: 10:0

10. Conflict of Interest Policy

Every year, VSLOC does a review of its financials by Burkhart & Associates. Dennis Burkhart advocated that VSLOC draft and approve a Conflict of Interest Policy. The purpose of this policy is to protect VSLOC’s interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director, or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction.

Board Discussion.

Public Comment – None.

ACTION: Moved by N. Patel/J. Davison to approve the Crisis Communication Plan as presented.

Motion carried: 10:0

11. Capital Expenditure Policy

During the same review, Dennis Burkhart advocated that VSLOC draft and approve a Capital Expenditure Policy. This would establish a policy of identifying items that are \$500 or more as capital expenditure items.

Board Discussion.

Public Comment – None.

ACTION: Moved by J. Patel/C. Pearce to approve the Crisis Communication Plan as presented.

Motion carried: 10:0

12. Simpleview SEO Analysis Review

As requested by the board, C. Davison provided an overview of SEO report distributed each month in the board packet. This included highlights from the last fiscal year (in this case, August 2014-July 2015), most notably, organic traffic of 71.31%, an overall decrease in its bounce rate, and a 146% increase in mobile visits. The numbers will change dramatically in the coming months with the launch of the Fall Campaign in two weeks, which will drive visitors to the website through paid search.

Board Discussion.

Public Comment – None.

13. SAVOR the Central Coast Update

Statistics for SAVOR the Central Coast (September 24-27, 2015) are still being refined. C. Davison noted that a complete report, including a series of recommendations for SAVOR, will be presented to the Board in November. These recommendations include asking the Board to vote to move forward with Fast Forward as our partner in the continued production of SAVOR in 2016, as well as budget reduction and revenue generating measures to move SAVOR into the black.

Board Discussion.

Public Comment – None.

PRESENTATION

14. Illegal Vacation Rental Update

Jim Hamilton gave an update on the issue of illegal vacation rentals throughout the County. Hamilton noted that there are a number of competing priorities for staff time, which has limited the County's ability to give sufficient attention to this issue. He pointed out that California State Sen. Mike McGuire had introduced a bill that would make sure local governments would have the ability to regulate online hosting platforms and identify illegal vacation rentals. However, this bill is currently stalled in the Government and Finance Committee. Code enforcement is a Planning Department issue, and they have competing priorities as well.

Board Discussion.

Public Comment – Justin Cooley, Principal Financial Analyst at the County, also noted that there is a competing bill on the floor from California State Sen. Robert Hertzberg, which advocates a uniform policy at the state level. Cooley noted that in the County unincorporated areas alone, TOT loss from illegal vacation rentals is estimated at \$150,000.

15. Catalyst Marketing

15a. Fall Creative Campaign/Branding

Catalyst Marketing CEO Mark Astone presented some of the creative for this Fall's print and digital co-op campaigns. Astone noted that the images used in the final ads would be key iconic images that are recognizably SLO County. Co-op opportunities are now available, with deadlines quickly approaching.

Board Discussion.

Public Comment –None.

15b. PRIZM Study

Astone discussed the PRIZM Study, which is the initial research campaign that VSLOC is pursuing to better understand the lifestyle of San Luis Obispo County's consumers. This campaign depends on gathering records from lodging partners.

This data would be gathered in complete confidence. The goal is to duplicate the profiles of consumers that are already coming to the region.

Board Discussion.

Public Comment –None.

16. CEO Report

As the TOT report shows, SLO County's TOT increased 8% year-over-year in July 2015 and 9% in August 2015.

VSLOC would like discussion from the Board on items that you would like to be covered in future meetings.

Visit California's Board Meeting is happening October 21-22, 2015. C. Davison and N. Martin will be attending.

VSLOC's first Educational Symposium will be happening November 4, 2015 from 8am-11:30am at the Courtyard San Luis Obispo.

Cal Travel will be having its Board Meeting on November 5-6, 2015 at the Paso Robles Inn.

On November 20, 2015, C. Davison will be travelling to Seattle with Mike Manchak from the SLO Economic Vitality Corporation and Phil D'Acri from the San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport to meet with Alaska Airlines about adding flights from San Luis Obispo.

VSLOC's first Advisory Committee meeting will be happening on December 3, 2015.

Brown Act Training for new Board Members and for Marketing Committee members will take place December 9, 2015.

C. Davison asked the Board if they wanted to meet in December. This discussion was tabled until the next meeting.

The next Board Meeting will take place on November 18, 2015 at 8:30am at the Allegretto Vineyard Resort in Paso Robles.

Board Discussion. J. Patel asked for an update on the proposal from the City of Morro Bay to have the TBID absorbed into the City. C. Davison reported that the Council has asked for a plan before making any consideration.

Public Comment—Nikki Schmidt, County of San Luis Obispo, asked why the City of Morro Bay didn't just cancel their contract. C. Davison responded that this would jeopardize their funding structure, and while the City has proposed asking voters to raise TOT 3%, the voters might be unlikely to vote in favor of tourism. Davison added that VSLOC continues to dialogue with both the TBID and Morro Bay City Manager David Buckingham. Aaron Graves, owner of Pleasant Inn Motel in Morro Bay noted that outside input on this issue would be beneficial.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 10:42am.