

Draft until Approved

SLO Wine Lodging Board Meeting Minutes

February 21, 2024 – La Lomita Ranch

Board Members Present:

Jena Wilson
Sarah Hames
Alicia Cocks
Karen Reed

Others Present:

Danielle Carpenter, Admin
Amanda Diefenderfer, Big Red Marketing
Cheryl Cuming, CBID
Diane Ortiz-Legg, BOS

Absent: Lizzy Thompson, Leigh Woolpert and Elise Carraway (excused)

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1. **Call to Order:** by Cheryl at 3:35pm
 2. **Public Comment:** none
 3. **Presentation:** Supervisor Ortiz-Legg is making the rounds to connect and learn how the BOS can help.
 - a. SLO airport: There are 9 destinations flying in and out of the airport, including the new flight to Las Vegas. Staffing has been increased to 25 and there are 15 arrivals and departures per day. Flights are coming on larger planes and the pilot shortage hampers expansion to more destinations. CalPoly is trying to get young people interested in aeronautics using the Oceano airport to create a pipeline. We need flight access for business development. The 20-year plan includes land acquisition and development, including moving the restaurant. FAA requirements for the larger plans require longer runways. Cheryl requested flights to Chicago. Alicia asked if the Paso airport was expanding, but they have no air traffic tower. If we could support Santa Maria getting flights to Santa Maria and Vandenburg, the overflow would come to SLO county.
 - b. Sustainability and groundwater management: EV/AGV is on overdraft, but all parties get along, which is not true in Paso. They are working on monitoring groundwater, a metering system and figuring out what to do to supplement. Our deficit is at a manageable level based on laws set out in the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Plan. SLO has excess recycled water and big users are willing to pay. Everything got approved by the department of water in Sacramento. If you use under 5-acre feet you don't need to invest in supplemental water.
 - c. Temporary Events: Nothing is changing, and the enforcement people are working with those out of compliance. It's a public safety and liability issue – some Fire Code regulations are costly and challenging. We are following Napa's lead on rules that seem like why too uc when risks are not evident. She asked if anyone in our group is having issues with this. The BOS hasn't had a chief administrator since February. She wants direct access and information and knows that the BOS needs cohesiveness because the planning and building fee structure is expensive and slow. They are working to clean-up cannabis as high potency cannabis affects the health of young people. They need funds for advocacy and to add staff. Costs are going up and there's a deficit of \$250 k and delivery times have changed from 8 pm to 10 pm.
 - d. NOAA: Public comment on Chumash marine sanctuary shows a 96% acceptance rate but don't want a gap between Chumash and Monterey sanctuaries to keep offshore wind out of the area. BOS said they don't want offshore wind, they want water desalination, but can't we have both?
 - e. Workflow Development Board: In an economic analysis of our area, tourism is the second largest employer in our county, right behind agriculture. There is discussion of a county-wide wine BID, combining with Paso, larger producers, and the SLO Coast Wine Collective, which will be our LFA, and this would bring in a lot more money.
 4. **Consent items:** There were not enough board members present to vote on the minutes from the 11/15/23 meeting, so we will vote next time.

5. Member Updates I Committee Reports:

- a. **Marketing Partner:** The theme of the Q3 of this fiscal year is “Open Space to Connect”. There are great new assets from the photo shoot, which will be augmented by new images and video from the spring photo shoot, planned for April. As a result, our website visitors are up 1% over last year and we are mainly driving visitors to the lodging page. The SF Gate collaboration brought in 4 million impressions and used content from the photo shoot. March ads will be starting up and we need to think about adding some funds to pay for models for the April photo shoot, since that was the most challenging element of the project.
- b. **CBID Local Fund Update I Financials:** There were 200k sessions in January and the CBID grew its mailing list by 120k subscribers. Although TOT has been soft in the first half of the fiscal year, our LFA is up. The CBID just reforecast down 11% but January was only down by 1%. San Simeon has been affected by the Hwy 1 closure the most and that is skewing the numbers for the whole CBID down.

6. **Budget:** Leigh: We are still bringing in more than we are spending, so our expenses are on target. We will need to have a budget planning meeting in the next month for the new fiscal year and should plan for revenues to be flat or slightly lower.

7. Discussion and Action Items:

- a. **Bylaws**
The county asked the LFAs to agree on common bylaws, namely 4-year renewable terms for officers (2 two-year consecutive terms renewable if no one else wants to take over the chair). Board members will serve 2-year terms that are also renewable.
- b. **Jena’s board renewal**
Alicia motioned to approve Jena’s renewal; Sarah seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
- c. **Adjust advertising budget to replenish funds for spring**
Stephanie will provide updated creative for the paid social LFA imperative for Danielle to send Lori Keller. Big Red will use the funds to promote weddings as part of the wedding portal campaign and also to shore up campaigns that are currently running. The will provide proposals on the wedding portal and the increased ad spend. The board agreed to spend up to \$8,000 of their contingency funds on these two projects.
- d. **Points of Interest Map**
The CBID has 5 maps but not one specific to wine country. We could update the Points of Interest and the information on the back. We can show things to do from Pismo to SLO. Danielle will work with Stephanie on a process to update the existing map

8. Future Agenda Items:

- a. Marketing proposals
- b. New budget

9. **Closing Comments:** Danielle will solicit proposals for the increased ad spend and the wedding portal from Big Red.

10. Next SLO Wine Lodging Alliance Meeting:

Date: May 8, 2024

Location: TBD

2024 Meeting Dates: Feb 21; May 8; Aug 14; Nov 13

11. **Adjournment:** 5:05 pm