

SCT Board of Directors Board Meeting  
November 15, 2023 3pm  
SCT Board Room  
400 Aviation Blvd, Suite 500. Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
**Meeting Minutes**

Members: **Joe Bartolomei, Jennifer Buffo, Thera Buttaro, Margaret Grahame, Keo Hornbostel, Monica Hubert, Kirstyne Lange, Kirk Lok, Crista Luedtke, Brian Marchi, Brandon Mrkvicka, Tony Pace, Bert Rangel, Edward Roe, Caroline Shaw, Tim Zahner, Scott Alonso**

Invitees: Ethan Brown, McCall Miller, Kristen Madsen, Bill Arnone, Claudia Vecchio, Todd O'Leary, Lori Angstadt, Kelly Bass Seibel, Jonny Westom, Conrad Braganza, Jessica Quigley (recording secretary), Tracy Koch,

Public: None

Absent: **Thera Buttaro, Tim Zahner**

Agenda Item/Issues	Information	Follow Up Action	Person Responsible	Date Due
<b>Meeting Call to Order</b>	Meeting commenced at 3:03pm	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Roll Call</b>	<i>Roll call taken for all members</i> J. Buffo is attending via zoom, as is ill. <b>Motion: J. Bartolomei S: C. Luedtke</b> to allow J. Buffo an emergency exception per the Brown Act, to allow her the ability to vote remotely. Verbal vote taken, as C. Shaw is also remote. <b>Ayes –13 Nays – 0, Abstentions – 0</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Public Comment</b>	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Statement of Abstentions</b>	None	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Approval of Consent Items.</b>	<b>Motion: K. C. Luedtke S: K. Hornbostel to approve the consent items- without BOD minutes from October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023 (as there is a clerical error)</b> Approval of Agenda: November 15, 2023 Approval of BOD Minutes: October 25, 2023 Acceptance of Committee Minutes: Governance October 3, 2023			



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<p><b>Items of Significance/Talking Points:</b></p>	<p><u>Marketing:</u>  Special Event Sponsorships</p> <p>C. Luedtke presents sponsorship requests as approved by the Marketing Committee and recommended to the full Board of Directors.  IPA 10K=\$2,500  Healdsburg Jazz- \$5000  Wine Road=\$7,500  Sonoma Film Festival= \$10,000  Healdsburg Wine &amp; Food Experience=\$10,000</p> <p>Board member discuss reasoning behind funding amounts, timeline to events and the desire to spread funding out to new events.</p> <p><b>Motion: C. Luedtke S: B. Mrkvicka to approve Special Event Sponsorship as recommended by the Marketing Committee and approved by the full Board of Directors.</b></p> <p><b>Ayes –14 Nays – 0, Abstentions – 0</b></p> <p>Convention Center Process Update.  C. Vecchio shares the following talking points:</p> <p>Sonoma County Tourism  Convention Center Talking Points  1. The idea of a convention center arose from the SCT Destination Stewardship and Resiliency Master Plan (launched May 2023). It was the “Big Audacious Goal” within the Strengthen the Health of the Region’s Economy imperative.  2. Because of the long development timeline and visibility</p>			

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	<p>of this project, SCT elected to focus on gaining an understanding of the feasibility of this venue immediately following the launch of the plan.</p> <p>3. This project is owned by the SCT Business Development team. Jonny Westom, VP Business Development, is lead and Tanya Rainey, Community Development Manager is the day-to-day.</p> <p>4. SCT identified HVS (HVS Convention, Sports &amp; Entertainment Facilities Consulting) as a viable contractor for the feasibility study portion of the project. HVS has an office in San Francisco and has conducted more than 60 appraisal and feasibility studies in Sonoma County since 2017.</p> <p>5. Because of the public nature of this project, SCT identified members of business and organization groups representing a county-wide constituency to become part of the Convention Center Advisory Council. At least initially, this is an ad hoc group designed to provide insights for HVS on the feasibility study and issues and opportunities inherent to their own organizations.</p> <p>6. The project is in its infancy (10/23). HVS has begun the first of a two-phase study. The first phase is meant to determine whether Sonoma County is a feasible location for a convention center. This is done with four key pieces of data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Market research – reviewing Sonoma County’s infrastructure, competitive landscape, assets, etc.</li> <li>b. In-market visit – reviewing the potential locations for a center.</li> <li>c. Meeting planner survey – identifying whether meeting planners would be interested in conducting meetings in Sonoma County and if so, what type of facility would be most</li> </ul>			

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<p><b>Sonoma County Tourism Industry Performance Discussion</b></p>	<p>compelling.            d. Discussions with the Advisory Council.            We anticipate this first phase being completed before the middle of December.            7. Once the first phase of the study is completed, the results will be analyzed to determine the overall viability of a Center in Sonoma County and potential locations that meet the criteria outlined in the HVS evaluation matrix.            8. SCT will determine the communications strategy based on the results of the first phase. (No external communications at this point.) Meetings with key stakeholders and potentially with organizations, government leaders and agencies associated with the potential locations. This phase will likely extend through the end of the calendar year – TBD.            9. Once SCT, the Advisory Council and Board of Directors feel the time is right, HVS will move to phase two of the feasibility study. This will better identify the scope of the facility.            10. As HVS conducts its Phase two study, SCT will work on a go-forward/communications strategy and determine how to continue the project once phase two is completed.</p> <p>a. Level Set- YTD/Upcoming Performance Review- Conrad Braganza            Review of current Travel Click forward facing bookings pace for November 2023. Information on upcoming Non-Visitor Study rationale and key outcomes. To be presented in January 2024.</p> <p>b. Leisure Marketing Campaign- Todd O’Leary</p>			

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	<p>Presentation of current campaign- More than a Stay- “Discover your &amp;” Nov 1-April 30. Objective- to drive visitation off peak and mid week. Audience- Luxury travelers within key pillars. Markets- Key drive and fly. Paid Advertising- Travel endemic display, OTA’s, Concenter Marketing and Distribution. Public Relations- story idea and pitches, media mailers, deskside visits, influencers. Owned- Website inclusion, consumer e-newsletters, special media, app.</p> <p>Update on upcoming Parter Education Session and</p> <p>c. Destination Sales Programming- Jonny Westom Provides update on Travel trade- destination sales overview- supporting local partners. Strengthening industry relationship, advertising &amp; OTA campaigns. International Efforts- UK, Germany, Australia, Canada &amp; Mexico. Tour operator promotions. And upcoming travel- Go West Summit, Australia Visit the USA Sales Mission, IPW Los Angeles, Visit California partnership. Update from Imex. And information on sales campaigns and programs- Connection in the Open and planner incentive programs.</p> <p>d. Board Discussion with Tom Floyd, Preparing for this winter.  Board Members break into groups by District and discuss strategy for winter messaging. Robust discussions on joint messaging and how to survive the winter weather.</p>			
<b>What’s New and Noteworthy?</b>	<p>C. Luedke announces the closure of Guerneville restaurant, BROT.  Reminder of SCHA Holiday Party  And discussion around Sonoma County needing more</p>			

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	Welcome signage.			
<b>Next Meeting</b>	January 24, 2024 at 3pm	RSVP in BoardEffect	Members	3 days prior in BE; or 1 week prior if virtual for posting requirements
<b>Adjourn</b>	Meeting Adjourned 5:15pm			