

SCT Board of Directors Board Meeting
January 29, 2025 at 3pm
Sonoma County Tourism Board Room
400 Aviation Blvd Suite 500. Santa Rosa, CA 95403
Meeting Minutes

Members: ***Joe Bartolomei, Jennifer Buffo, Thera Buttarro, Margaret Grahame, Keo Hornbostel, Kirstyne Lange, Kirk Lok, Crista Luedtke, Brian Marchi, Brandon Mrkvicka, Tony Pace, Bert Rangel, Caroline Shaw, Tim Zahner, Scott Alonso, Brian Sommer, Karim Ikrimah, Andrea Griffin***

Invitees: Ethan Brown, McCall Miller, Mary Roulades, Bill Arnone, Claudia Vecchio, Lori Angstadt, Kelly Bass Seibel, Jonny Westom, Frank Filice, Conrad Braganza, Jessica Quigley (recording secretary)

Public: None

Absent: ***Brandon Mrkvicka, Crista Luedtke, Tony Pace***

Agenda Item/Issues	Information	Follow Up Action	Person Responsible	Date Due
Meeting Call to Order	Meeting commenced at 3:00pm	N/A	N/A	N/A
Roll Call	<i>Roll call taken for all members</i> <i>C. Shaw is on zoom due to an unforeseen conflict.</i> Motion: K Hornbostel, Second: J Buffo to allow C. Shaw an exception to be able to vote. Ayes- 12 Naves-0 Abstain-0 C. Shaw did vote, B. Sommer & K. Ikrimah have not yet joined the meeting.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Public Comment	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A
Statement of Abstentions	None	N/A	N/A	N/A
Legal Report	B. Arnone reports that the county has notified Airbnb owners of owing BIA assessments. SCT is working with the county on messaging, as the roll out was not very smooth. B. Arnone will conduct Brown Act training at a future			

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	scheduled date.			
Approval of Consent Items.	<p>Motion: T. Buttarro S: K. Hornbostel to approve the consent items-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approval of Agenda: January 29, 2024 b) Approval of BOD Minutes: November 20, 2024 c) Governance Committee Minutes- Nov. 14, 2024 d) Revenue Generation Committee Minutes – Nov. 14, 2024 e) Marketing Committee Minutes- Dec. 18, 2024 f) Finance & Legal Minutes- Nov. 18, 2024 g) Financials- October & November 2024 <p>Ayes –15 Nays – 0, Abstentions – 0 <i>C. Shaw is now able to vote, B. Sommer & K. Ikrimah have joined the meeting.</i></p>			
Committee Items- FOR POSSIBLE ACTION Finance & Legal Committee:	<p>Financial Audit FY 23-24 L. Angstadt reports audit is underway but not yet complete. No issues or concerns.</p> <p>Sonoma County Index L. Angstadt reports on progress with the Sonoma County Index (data SCT will be collecting). C. Braganza will continue to support this project as a contract employee.</p>			

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Marketing Committee:	<p>Beta testing will begin with Windsor & Santa Rosa, in February.</p> <p>Potential Donation for Southern CA Wildfires SCT has been in communication with Southern CA DMO's to provide support. Finance & Legal committee did not make a motion to financial donation at this time. SCT has worked with lodging properties to offer discounts to fire victims and has offered crisis planning advice.</p> <p>Event Sponsorship Applications:</p> <p>F. Filice & J. Bartolomei review event sponsorship applications that have been previously reviewed by SCT Staff and the Marketing Committee.</p> <p>SCT has \$100,000 for its annual special event sponsorship program. In 2025, the program was revised to reflect a once-annual sponsorship application process.</p> <p>SCT received 25 sponsorship applications looking for over \$430+K in total funding.</p> <p>SCT staff reviewed all applications for completeness and eligibility .</p> <p>The Marketing Committee completed rating sheets before the meeting, which rated applications based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overnight Stays 			

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ROI • Capacity • Completeness and Clarity <p>During the meeting, the Marketing Committee discussed priority order based on completed rating sheets.</p> <p>Discussions centered on ratings, overall impact of project for tourism and past funding history.</p> <p>The recommended events/sponsorship totals are:</p> <p>Healdsburg Food & Wine Experience - \$25,000</p> <p>Gravenstein Apple Fair - \$12,000</p> <p>Sonoma International Film Festival - \$12,000</p> <p>California Artisan Cheese Festival - \$10,000</p> <p>Healdsburg Winter Jazz Festival - \$8,000</p> <p>Sebastopol Documentary Film Festival - \$6,000</p> <p>Winter WINEland (Wine Road) - \$5,000</p> <p>Barrell Weekend (Wine Road) - \$5,000</p> <p>Taste of Sonoma – (SC Vintners) \$5,000</p> <p>Sonoma County Wine Celebration (SC Vintners) - \$5,000</p> <p>Valley of the Moon Vintage Festival - \$2,500</p> <p>Windsor Half Marathon/10k/5k - \$2,500</p> <p>Passport to Dry Creek Valley - \$2,000</p> <p>Motion: K. Hornbostel. Second: J. Bartolomei to approve the recommended event sponsorships as presented by the marketing committee: Ayes-14 Nays-0 Abstain-0</p>			

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	<p>THIS IS WINE COUNTY + Creative F. Filice gives update on upcoming campaign initiative and previews the creative for the BOD.</p> <p>Approve additional funding of either \$100,000 or \$150,000 for marketing programming to support/extend the This is Wine Country campaign</p> <p>Summary: The Marketing Committee identified two key areas for incremental funding: Strategic Media Buy Market Expansion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chicago and New York are key markets for Sonoma County, with high-value travelers seeking Wine Country experiences. • Increased investment ensures stronger presence and engagement for Sonoma County with these potential visitors. • High ROI Potential: Longwoods reports have shown Chicago and New York visitors to Sonoma County support longer stays, and higher visitor spending. • Influencer Impact & Content Longevity: • Increased funding allows us to secure high-reach, credible influencers who generate authentic, evergreen content that extends beyond the campaign period. 			

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-Channel Synergy: Enhancing paid media alongside influencer partnerships maximizes exposure and engagement across digital, social, and traditional media channels. Additional funding would allow us to target two key markets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chicago • New York Additional Influencer Funds would support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional influencers to help amplify the campaign • Chicago Activation – From Taste to Toast • Host influencers at Chicago event, then have them visit Sonoma County • Boosted Paid Media Amplification • Utilizing Social Media paid advertising to amplify existing influencer stories • Access to higher-impact influencers • Extend content longevity Total Incremental Spend \$100K <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid Media Market Expansion: \$100K Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital media buy in key markets • Measurable ROI built-in with tracking • Chicago and New York markets added to the buy Total Incremental Spend \$150K <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid Media Market Expansion: \$100K • Additional influencers and amplification added to the 			

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Governance	<p>campaign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$50K Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Digital media buy in key markets (Chicago and New York) o Measurable ROI built-in with tracking • Influencer Partnership Expansion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Chicago Influencers o Other high-impact influencers <p>Motion: B. Marchi. Second: T. Zahner to amend this request and approve \$200K for the marketing team incremental spend.</p> <p>Ayes-14 Nays-0 Abstain-0 C. Shaw and left the meeting</p> <p>Public Relations Update: SCT's communication and public relations team, B. Vaughn, C. Vomvolakis, T. Clancey, provide an update on recent PR coverage. The team is working to support the Strategic Plan with High impact initiatives and strengthening partnerships.</p> <p>Application for Business Development Committee: The Governance Committee has voted to approve the Business Development Committee application for Jamie Diaz. Board of directors reviews her application.</p>			

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Strategic Planning FY25-27 Timeline/Process Mid Year Update FY24-25	<p>Motion: K. Hornbostel Second: Brian Sommer to approve Jamie Diaz’s application as accepted by the Governance Committee: Ayes-14 Nays-0 Abstain-0 C. Shaw and left the meeting</p> <p>C. Vecchio updates the board on the opportunity to work with Bill Giest for Strategic Planning. Focus group meetings will be on 2/26/25 and the board will meet with Bill for an afternoon workshop on 2/27/25.</p> <p>In the interest of time C. Vecchio asks board to review updates in the board packet. Some items are ahead of schedule and some have been delayed.</p>			
What’s New and Noteworthy?	SCT will hold a partner session on 2/18/25 to introduce THIS IS WINE COUNTRY with a reception at J. Winery to follow. Mixer & Collab 2/6/18 in Sebastopol, SCT Staff encourage board members to attend.			
Next Meeting	Annual Meeting, February 26, 2025 at SCT Board Room.	RSVP in BoardEffect	Members	3 days prior in BE; or 1 week prior if virtual for posting requirements
Adjourn	4:52pm			