

**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
TOURISM BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (TBID) ADVISORY BOARD  
MONDAY, JUNE 27, 2022, 3:30 PM  
ARROYO GRANDE CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM BOARD ROOM / ZOOM WEBINAR  
300 EAST BRANCH STREET, ARROYO GRANDE**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Board Chair Dasmann called the Regular AGTBID Advisory Board Meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL AND FLAG SALUTE**

Board members present: Sean Dasmann, Yvette Eagles, and April Schirmer.

Board members absent: Myraline Morris Whitaker.

City representatives present: Mayor Caren Ray Russom, Accounting Manager Lynda Horejsi, and Deputy City Clerk/Communications Coordinator Sarah Lansburgh.

Chamber representatives present: CEO Kathy Moore, Interim CEO Nicole Moore, and Marketing/Tourism Coordinator Holly Leighton.

Verdin Marketing staff present: President/Chief Strategy Officer Mary Verdin, Partner & VP of Client Services Ashlee Akers, and Account Manager Natalie Bovee. Verdin Marketing Creative Director Megan Condict.

Destination Innovate present: Founder Jennifer Barbee.

Visit SLO CAL staff present: Project Manager, Destination Management Melissa Murray.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Visit SLO CAL Project Manager Melissa Murray stated Visit SLO CAL renamed the customer service training for the travel and tourism industry. A fall launch is expected for the program. Register for the training at [slocal.com](http://slocal.com).

Ms. Murray stated the October 23-26 Luxury Forum hosted by Visit SLO CAL and Visit California will showcase the finest products and services of this region. Visit SLO CAL is still looking for businesses to designate with SLO CAL Crafted Certifications.

Chamber Interim CEO Moore introduced the new CEO for South County Chambers, Kathy McCorry.

**4. APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 25, 2022 REGULAR BOARD MEETING, MAY 23, 2022 SPECIAL BOARD MEETING, AND MAY 31, 2022 SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

Moved by Board Chair Dasmann to approve April 25, 2022 Regular meeting minutes

Seconded by Board Member Eagles

Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote

Moved by Board Chair Dasmann to approve May 23, 2022 Special meeting minutes

Seconded by Board Member Eagles

Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote

Moved by Board Chair Dasmann to approve May 31, 2022 Special meeting minutes

Seconded by Board Member Schirmer

Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote

**5. REVIEW AND FILE FINANCIAL STATUS REPORTS JULY 2021 THROUGH MAY 2022 WITH REVENUE RECEIVED FOR TBID PAYMENTS FROM JULY 2021 THROUGH APRIL 2022**

Accounting Manager Lynda Horejsi presented the financials for the City of Arroyo Grande. Accounting Manager Horejsi stated TOT is trending higher than last year, and the fund is operating at a net profit.

**6. DISCUSS PLANNING PROCESS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023 WITH VERDIN MARKETING**

Verdin Marketing President/Chief Strategy Officer Mary Verdin introduced Destination Innovate Founder Jennifer Barbee.

Verdin Marketing Creative Director Megam Conduct led a “tone check” session. AGTBID Board members present took the 35-question survey during the meeting. Board members’ responses were narrowed down to six words to define the personality of Arroyo Grande. Ms. Conduct reviewed the survey results and stated the six unanimous words chosen by the AGTBID Board are artistic: emotional, organic, laid back, relatable, and welcoming. Board Member Schirmer suggested adding “adventurous” to the list. Mayor Ray Russom recommended combining “welcoming” and “relatable” to “inclusive” to allow the word “adventurous” to be the sixth word. Verdin Marketing will develop a tone sheet for future messaging and content development.

Account Manager Natalie Bovee shared Destination Analysts’ recent report on travel trends.

Verdin Marketing Partner & VP of Client Services Ashlee Akers discussed the 2021-2024 strategic plan. The target audience for tourism marketing is the purposeful traveler. The discussion included two key requests: website development and functionality of the website. Board Chair Dasmann, general manager of The Agrarian Hotel, preferred internal bookings. Visit SLO CAL Project Manager Murray stated big hotels prefer internal bookings, and small hotels may prefer a booking widget due to less staff at their lodging property. Mayor Ray Russom, an Arroyo Grande vacation rental owner, stated small vacation rentals do not want a widget as bookings need to be redirected anyway.

Board Member Eagles requested adding events to the Visit Arroyo Grande website. Ms. Akers stated event framework will be developed as part of the strategic plan. Ms. Murray stated an events and festivals strategy is being developed at the county level. Ms. Akers stated examples of how other cities and Visit SLO CAL have vetted events may be provided. Ms. Verdin suggested a criteria list for how things are added to the website. Board Member Eagles requested outreach to let businesses know how to submit information and events for Visit Arroyo Grande.

Board Member Eagles requested KPIs (key performance indicators) in the form of hard numbers—not percentages. Board Member Eagles also stated historical reports would be helpful alongside each quarterly marketing report from Verdin. Board Chair Dasmann requested the addition of influencers and a campaign to mid week to help with conversion tactics. Ms. Bovee stated she is vetting influencers to see if they are a good fit for the Visit Arroyo Grande brand.

Board Chair Dasmann suggested a TBID-specific email address to demonstrate no connection to the South County Chambers of Commerce.

Ms. Conduct reviewed the results of the “Time Well Spent” campaign. The visitor tracking tactic showed over 11,000 visitors coming to the destination. Board Member Schirmer stated she would like more information about geofencing details (how long a visitor needs to be in the area to be considered a visitor). Ms. Conduct discussed expansion opportunities: additional asset development (photos and videos), diverse talent, website integration, social content building, and influencer program. Ms. Conduct suggested CrowdRiff, a visual marketing software, offers free content builders when there is access to the Neighborhood platform (free through Visit California).

Ms. Akers discussed paid media. The blueprinting campaign tracked 11,453 visitors between September 15, 2021 and May 29, 2022. Board Member Eagles requested a retargeting campaign be added to the marketing goals for Visit Arroyo Grande.

Ms. Akers stated Verdin will come back with recommendations for paid media opportunities.

Ms. Bovee discussed email marketing and social media. The Visit Arroyo Grande TikTok handle is currently available.

Board Member Eagles stated she would like to see growth in the collection of out-of-market emails.

Ms. Barbee discussed the Visit Arroyo Grande website. Ms. Barbee stated the website needs to be built for engagement. Ms. Barbee suggested a ‘swiping’ feature to ask site visitors what they would like to do (personality test) to match an itinerary. A link to the personality test can also be shared on social media to collect email addresses. Ms. Barbee recommended the “stay” list on the website not be all inclusive, so the destination does not appear small. A wedding section or social event section should be considered for the website. Board Chair Dasmann would like to see a modern website.

**Minutes: Arroyo Grande Tourism Business Improvement District Regular Board Meeting**

**Monday, June 27, 2022**

**Page 3**

Speaking from the public was Gaea Powell. No further public comments were received.

**7. BOARD MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS**

The Board requested a discussion at a future meeting to evaluate the framework for events and businesses to be added to the Visit Arroyo Grande website.

Board Member Schirmer suggested an additional meeting to review revised budgets and proposals.

**8. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

Chamber CEO McCorry shared some of her background and experience regarding tourism.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the AGTBID Advisory Board, Board Chair Dasmann adjourned the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Approved by Board on \_\_\_\_\_