

Santa Maria Valley Tourism Marketing District (SMV TMD)

Advisory Committee Minutes

March 14, 2018

3:00 p.m. (Santa Maria Inn)

DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED

Advisory Committee: Jean-Luc Garon, Ryan Swack, JP Patel, Susan Garcia, Jerry Patel

Absent:

City Staff: Jason Stilwell

Chamber|Staff: Chris Slaughter, Glenn Morris (excused), Jenn Harrison, Terri Prouty, Cheryl Cuming

Guests: Seth, Ricardo Herrera, Mickey

KPS3: Rob Gaedtke, Rachel Curran

Call to Order by Chair Jean-Luc Garon at 3:00 p.m.

Public Comment None

Consent Calendar: Minutes and Financial Report

Cheryl reviewed new financials format.

Minutes and financials accepted. Motion: Susan and 2nd Jean-luc. Motion carries.

Business Items

KPS3 Team Report: Rob reviewed areas of success and areas of opportunities and provided details on overall web performance. Leads to hotels are up 11% and we have seen a 35% increase in organic traffic as we move from a strategy of acquisition to a strategy on engagement.

Rachel reviewed the social media stats and PR highlights including coverage in Sunset and Touring&Tasting, and she also touched on advertising within Vintages Magazine, CCTC Original Road Trip map and CA RoadTrips.

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Jenn reviewed details for World of Pinot Noir with over 1,000 attendees. Rob chimed in that WOPN was a 'living and breathing' presentation of our SMV brand.

Discussion Items

2018|2019 Marketing Plan: Cheryl led a discussion around the upcoming FY marketing plan. Mickey asked about where the traffic is coming from and Cheryl confirmed that our web stats show a focus on LA and SF. Rob noted that LA is our largest digital audience, with SF 3rd and Bakersfield ranked 5th. We have had a concerted focus in northeastern LA (near Santa Clarita). Seth noted that he was concerned that his properties were seeing a decline in interest from Bakersfield and Fresno, and Jean-luc noted that he had seen an increase. Susan added that for her property that Bakersfield is mostly leisure business, and that it comes more organically. Jean-luc would like to continue to support messaging within the Central Valley during the shoulder season and remind them that SMV is the ideal home base. Lodging also noted a pick-up from the Bay area with corporate and government agency business. Northern LA and the greater San Jose area (including Gilroy and Salinas) would also be of interest.

JP feels that our wine region is still our biggest draw and noted that we need more cooperation with the wine industry. Chris agreed and said that 'it is time to tell our story' and we need to continue to spread the word through social media. Chris suggested we should look to create a local voice through brand ambassadors who would create and post more content. Jenn addressed how our wine partnership has grown in recent years, and Ricardo noted that locals do not seem to be aware of all there is to do in/around SMV. Jason reiterated the importance of gathering locals to support our efforts. JP reminded the AC that the focus of the TMD is out of area.

Rob discussed our goal on digital enhancement around website and SEO. He recommended we look to expand content with more landing pages devoted to deeper content. Rachel also highlighted our focus on SEO and how we will drive content based on questions that appear on Goggle. KPS3 touched on print media, and that we may consider a decreased investment in opportunities that provide trackable results, keeping in mind that our ability to drive organic growth is primarily done through our digital investment. Cheryl noted that we will delve further into content curation, leveraging our audience that is already engaged in our brand and building assets.

Event Discussion: Cheryl provided a discussion overview to get guidance on how to invest the \$20,000 in seed money. Chris shared the details around the Mars Mission coming to SMV on May 5, and the opportunities to draw out of area visitors. JP noted that we need more promotions around our space offerings and asked if there was a co-op partner that could help support additional overnight stays based on the Vandenburg draw, and Jason noted the city's interest to do the same.

Other events that were noted a that could create an out-of-area draw included Airshow,

craft food movement, and a wine festival with a specific focus (ie; RootStock).

Action Items

Support of Event Sub-Committee: AC asked that this be explored through the CVB and will discuss additional seed money as they prepare the 2018|2019 draft budget.

Updates

- Chairman's Report: Glenn was absent, so no report is given.
- VCB/TMD Report: Jenn provided several updates:
 - New Visitor Guide is done and being distributed to hotels, wine tasting rooms, at trade shows and to anyone who asks for additional information.
 - There will be another Social Media training in May
 - Shared the City mid-year report

Committee Member Reports: None

Good of the Order: None

Future Agenda Items:

- Jerry asked about pole banners
- Media contingency spend parameters

Adjourn at 4:53pm

Next meeting: Wednesday, May 17 at 3pm

Note: Future AC meetings will occur on the 3rd Wednesday, every other month