**Santa Maria Valley Tourism Marketing District (SMV TMD)**

Advisory Committee Minutes

September 21, 2023

11am | Radisson

DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED

Advisory Committee: Cherag Patel, Ketan Panchal, Seth Foster, JP Patel, Gilda Cordova, Jerry Patel, Ryan Swack

City Staff:

Chamber|Staff: Emily Kitts, Jennifer Harrison, Glenn Morris, Nathan Tousch, Cheryl Cuming

Guests: Dennis Smitherman, City of Santa Maria

KPS3 | Team: Rob, Brittany, Julia

**Call to Order** by Cherag at 11:03a

Roll call – all present.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Consent Calendar (minutes, STR, TOT and financials)**:

Cheryl noted error in TOT report included in packet and provided a copy of current TOT. It was noted TOT is down, and Seth said CA is seeing 7 – 10% decrease Y/Y. Glenn said STR shows flat in YTD numbers. Gilda asked about pre-COVID numbers and Glenn noted STR compares 2023 to 2019 – ADR is up and occupancy is flat. JP mentioned we should consider placing contingency monies in high-yield CD; Glenn will research.

Motion to accept minutes: Seth moved; Ryan 2nd. Motion passed.

Motion to accept financials: Gilda moved; JP 2nd. Motion passed.

**Business Items**

***Discussion & Action Items:***

**Presentation:** Dennis Smitherman, Rec Services Manager of Santa Maria City Rec & Parks, walked the AC through a sports facility update including Hagerman Sports Complex, Paul Nelson Aquatic Center and Preisker Park Disc Golf Course. Dennis also touched on future projects including pickleball courts, lawn bowling green, tennis courts and a new sports complex (currently in the design phase). Additionally, the Vet’s Memorial Plaza continues to expand with the hopes of holding 40-50 events. JP asked how we could help support their efforts in allowing more out of area reservations of these facilities, and Cherag suggested a booking platform. Dennis noted it was a staffing issue. Ryan suggested working with NCS around youth baseball. Dennis mentioned there is a research RFP currently under way to assess facilities and usage.

All agreed to support a conversation and additional collaboration with the Rec&Parks and the Chamber on how we can better connect tourism efforts to these facilities. Gilda noted this type of discussion may be best had with City Council and encouraged those interested to participate in public workshops around the development of the master plan.

**Citywide Event Focus**

Jenn shared what she learned after attending the Reno balloon festival and race. Other event interests include Concert | BBQ Festival and Pop-ups similar to events that Atascadero has been successful with over the last couple of years. Jenn & Nathan are meeting with event management companies and will provide more details at the next AC meeting.

**KPS3 Report**

**FY 2022 | 2023 Marketing Recap**

KPS3 Team reviewed marketing recap for 2022 | 2023 FY including:

* Goal snapshot
* Organic and Paid Social Media
* Influencer Marketing
* SEO Wins
* PR and media FAMs
* Email Marketing

Note: full report is available.

**FY 2024 Progress**

Brittany shared progress to FY 24 goals noting we are on track with about 100,000 website sessions, 62 stories placed and focus on increased hotel referrals with a goal of 10,000 or up 15% Y/Y.

Julia reviewed overall paid media focus with SEM | search, always-on Meta campaigns, remarketing, mini on-line efforts and supplemental influencer marketing.

SEO will focus on CA Trip Planning with priorities including:

* Maintaining #1 rankings for branded searches for wine, BBQ and lodging
* Continue to improve rankings for key wine terms for SB and Central Coast
* Prioritize keywords within CA Trip Planning category to generate top rankings

**Mid-week Promo Update**

We’ve received some solid PR pick-ups from AP News and Yahoo with 268 thus far. Launch was slow, however, once we removed restrictions on the booking window, we have seen a steady stream of reservations. Additional efforts will generate more bookings with Cyber Monday and Holiday Family offers.

***Information Items:***

**VB | TMD Director Report:**

Jenn asked for feedback and interest level in participating in the Santa Barbara IPW 2024 effort requiring $25,000 buy-in. Gilda noted that Lompoc choose not to pursue as it was determined it would be an additional $48,000 in build-out and staff costs. Overall, the AC was concerned about ROI and visibility for Santa Maria. It was suggested that we look at our own space and place this item on the November agenda.

**Updates:**

**Chairperson/Committee Member Reports:**

Cherag inquired about progress to get on-line payments for TOT and portal is not yet live. Glenn noted that the City responded that they are still working on the reporting.

**Future Agenda Item**

* Mid-week promo progress
* IPW 2024
* Airport update

**Adjourn** at 1:03pm

**Next meeting:**  November 16, 2023 2 – 5pm with board

social to follow at the Guadelupe Social Club