



VISALIA CONVENTION AND VISITORS' BUREAU
 Wednesday, January 15, 2025 • 9:00 a.m.
 Meeting Minutes
 City of Visalia Administrative Offices -220 N. Santa Fe

Chair: Steve Nelsen		Staff: Sherrie Bakke, Suzanne Bianco		
Members Present: Walter Deissler Sintia Kawaski-Yee: ex-officio Adrian Reynosa Denise Taylor -Conner John Oneto		Members Absent: Anil Chagan Brett Taylor	Present - 6 Absent – 2 Quorum – Y	Others Present/Guests: Carrie Groover, Marriott John Lollis, Assistant City Manager
TOPIC	Discussion/Recommendations		ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
Call to Order	Steven Nelsen, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00am.		Information only	Nelsen
Public Comment	<i>This time is allowed for comments on subject matters pertaining to items on the agenda. Each speaker will be allowed three minutes. No action can be taken, at this time, on items mentioned in public comments.</i>		No Public Comment	
1. Approval of Meeting Minutes	Oneto motioned to approve the December 10, 2024 regular meeting minutes, Reynosa seconded the motion. Motion approved without discussion.		Approved Minutes 12/10/24	Oneto / Reynosa

2.	Financial Report	<p>John Oneto presented the financials with the following notations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The year ended as anticipated. <p>Reynosa motioned to approve the December financials. Deissler seconded the motion. Motion approved.</p>	Approved December 2024 Financials	Reynosa /Deissler
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3	2025 Budget	<p>2025 budget was presented for approval. With the following notations:</p> <p>Income:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Visalia Contribution Flat • TMD Increased their contribution to our work plan by \$110,000 – Nearly 13% increase more than 2024. <p>Expenses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labor is split into three classes: Administration/Operations, Marketing, and Destination Development. <p>Admin and Operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2024 COV was 45% and TMD was 55%; in 2025 COV funding is covering 54% • TMD can spend up to 15% of their collected assessment on administration and operations. • Details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tracking office expenses ○ Increase in accounting and legal ○ Increase in mobile phone reimbursement from \$50 per month to \$100 per month and for all 3 employees ○ The Administrative Influencer receives a 3% wage increase – other staff remain flat in pay. <p>Marketing: TMD can spend a minimum of 69% of their funding on tourism marketing. Includes both tourism advertising and convention sales</p> <p>Convention Sales:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced convention FAM Tours and increased convention servicing – staff has found servicing to be an effective relationship building tool. Staff also recommended an increase in sales event attendance. <p>Tourism Marketing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a new Agency of Record – \$392,000 for 9 months. Found in Tourism Advertising. (7212) • Increase in media FAMS and Tourism Marketing Events <p>Memberships, Dues and Subscriptions (7340) The increase includes covering the ARES Subscription – left out of the 2024 budget and</p>	2025 Budget Approved	Reynosa/Oneto
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		<p>Website Refresh \$40,000 budgeted for a website refresh – based on new branding and AI Implementation. This is a shared expense.</p> <p>Destination Development: 15% of the TMD Funds may be allocated.</p> <p>Reynosa motioned to approve the 2025 Budget as presented, Oneto seconded. Motioned carried without further discussion.</p>		
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4	Convention Sales Incentives	<p>Oneto presented the convention sales tracking sheet, a subsidiary ledger to the CVB Financial, with a history of the pilot program adopted in 2024 and revised in August. The incentive program was funded with \$50,000 from Retained Earnings.</p> <p>Following the program guidelines:</p> <p>In 2025 \$19,820 is committed to booked business and \$12,768.80 is promised to pending business for a total of \$32,588.80.</p> <p>A total of \$65,888 has been promised in the proposals representing business in 2026-2028.</p> <p>Oneto is recommending the board increase funding to \$120,000.</p> <p>Deissler motioned to increase convention incentive funding to \$120,000 from 2024 retained earnings.</p> <p>Use of retained earnings verses incorporating incentives into the operational budget was considered with caution of budgeting for current year while selling (offering incentives) for future years when we do not have budgets approved for future years.</p> <p>The motion was seconded by Taylor-Conner as presented.</p> <p>Further discussion refreshed the accounting process to include transferring the funds from retained earnings to board designated incentives when the contract is executed.</p> <p>Moving forward, the incentive tracking form will be provided with the monthly financials.</p> <p>The motion carried.</p>	\$120,000 for convention sales incentives	Deissler/Taylor Conner
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5.	Financial Policy Update	<p>With new credit cards for the Executive Director and the Tourism Marketing Director online payments will reduce stress and the bookkeeper and mail system will help to deliver payment avoiding finance charges.</p> <p>Oneto recommended an update to the financial policy to ensure the charges on the card are reviewed prior to the online payment being processed.</p> <p>Credit Card Payments are not authorized without the approval of the treasurer, or in the treasurer's absence, an officer of the organization.</p>	Credit Card Payment process added to the financial policy	Reynosa/Deissler
		Informational Items		
6.	Combined Meeting CVB/TMD	<p>Nelsen reviewed the objectives for the combined meeting next week.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive the brand positioning recommendation from 4th Idea – and approve funding for the rebranding initiative. • Set our strategic direction for the next 1-5 years based on the Destination by Design Recommendations • Staff will send an electronic survey board to collect individual priorities and rank them before the meeting. • Review the relevance of our current Mission Statement and consider vision and values. 	Information Only	Nelsen

1.	Executive Director Report	<p>Destination Development Sequoia Legacy Tree update</p> <p>Marketing: Convention and Leisure Convention Sales: Attended RCMA – Religious Conference Management Association with the Visalia Convention Center</p> <p>In 2024 our office supported 72 RFPs (29 in 2023) for meetings in Visalia: 18 are pending, 5 canceled, 32 lost (45%) We did not have space for 10 groups. In 2024 we won 17 compared to 10 in 2023 or 24% of the proposals. In 2023 we won 35% of the proposals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No contracts executed in December. • Three FAM Trips Scheduled: Young Ladies Grand Institute, Civil Air Patrol and The Outdoor Writers Association <p>Leisure Update Suzanne – Tourism Dashboard Observations Tourism Event Supporting the Outdoor Writers Association Itineraries and Knights of Columbus in community tours.</p> <p>Admin/Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February 3, presentation to City Council on the HVS and Destination by Design studies • ED attended the City of Visalia Strategic Planning last Saturday. 	Information and discussion	Bakke
2.	Tourism Marketing District	No Update		

3. SEKI Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEKI is working on their sustainability plan with the National Park Service. Projected Federal Budget cuts have created the need to reduce SEKI's budget while balancing user experience, staff satisfaction and recruitment. Recruiting is live for seasonal positions 	Information Only	Kawasaki-Yee
Good of the Order	Deissler requested a discussion and potential action at the February Board Meeting on issuing a Letter of Intent for Visit Visalia to rent office space in the Depot/Cultural Center.	Request for February agenda item	Consensus
Adjourn	Nelsen adjourned the regular meeting at 10:08 am	Adjourn	Nelsen

The next regular meeting
Wednesday, February 12, 2025, 9:00 am – City of Visalia Administrative Conference Room