



VISALIA CONVENTION AND VISITORS' BUREAU
 REGULAR MEETING
 Wednesday, March 11, 2026
 Meeting Minutes
 City of Visalia Administrative Offices -220 N. Santa Fe

Chair:	Staff: Sherrie Bakke			
Members Present: Anil Chagan Denise Taylor-Connor Walter Deissler Sintia Kawaski-Yee: ex-officio Samantha Rummage-Mathias	Members Absent: Carrie Groover Cynthia Padilla-Nowakowski Brett Taylor	Present - 4 Absent -3 Quorum - Y	Others Present/Guests: John Lollis, COV	
TOPIC	Discussion/Recommendations		ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
Call to Order	In the unexpected absence of Chair Groover, Denise Connor, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:15am		Information only	Groover
Public Comment	No public Comment <hr/> <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	
	Information			

1.	SEKI REPORT	<p><u>First Cultural Burn</u> on Monday, March 9, 2026: Burn took place at Hospital Rock with participation from eight tribes. The collaboration included NPS, USFS, Sequoia Parks Conservancy and Save the Redwoods League.</p> <p><u>National Park Week</u>: No update from white house on whether this will take place in April as usual for 2026.</p> <p><u>Generals Highway</u> between the parks opens next week on 3/20.</p> <p><u>Hiring Freeze</u>: Seeking approval to hire several permanent positions.</p> <p><u>Mineral King</u>: Road construction by Federal Highways is ahead of schedule. If all goes well with paving next week there's a chance that no work will take place between Memorial Day and Labor Day, meaning no closures or delays for visitors this summer. The crew would return in the fall to finish the project. For NPS, due to short staffing in maintenance, and prioritizing all other districts in the parks, there's a chance of a delay for campground openings in this area. Too soon to say what this will look like, more to come.</p>		Kawaski-Yee
		Action Items		
1.	Approval of Meeting Minutes	Chagan motioned to approve the February special meeting minutes. Deissler seconded the motion to approve. Motion approved without discussion.	Approved Minutes February 24, 2026	Chagan/D eissler

2.	Treasurer's Report	<p>Chagan presented February 2026 financials.</p> <p>The VCVB Finances currently have more than \$90,000 in outstanding payables. As of March 6, the bank balance was \$10,000. Next payroll is this Friday for \$13,000.00.</p> <p>The first payment from the City of Visalia, for \$334,000, is being held until VCVB provides proof of the newly requested vehicle policy coverage of \$1 million. Staff is working with the insurance broker to provide the policy.</p> <p>Unless payment is received from the City this week or the TMD pays the May invoice in advance, VCVB will be unable to cover payroll.</p> <p>With consensus, the board agreed to invoice and accept the TMD's advance payment for May provided funds are not received by the City and deposited in time to cover the March 13 payroll expense.</p> <p>Chagan recommending the board delay the vote to approve the February financials.</p> <p>Rummage-Mathias motioned to postpone approval of the February financials. Deissler seconded the motion. Motion approved</p>	Postpone approval of February Financials	Rummage-Mathais/Deissler
3	Draft Professional Services Agreement	<p>Chagan motioned to ratify the execution of the professional services agreement with the City of Visalia. The motion was seconded by Deissler. Motion approved.</p>	Ratify the PSA with COV	Chagan/Deissler

4	2026 Budget	<p>Staff provided a draft monthly cash flow budget along with a draft annual budget</p> <p>Annual Budget reflects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40% of COV Funds dedicated to tourism marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o This is accomplished by TMD funding 50% of the sales position and COV funding 50% of the Tourism Marketing Position. <p>Increase in rent beginning in July</p> <p>Reduction of administrative support beginning in April</p> <p>Increase in sales staff in July</p> <p>Monthly Operational cost – including all salaries and benefits average \$40,000. Contributions from TMD is 50% or \$20,000</p> <p>Twelve month conservative budget allows for \$64,000 carry over to 2027. Monthly budgeting reflects two months of operational sustainability – through February 2027.</p> <p>60% of COV funding budget for sales is: \$216,000.</p> <p>Payroll expense includes Administration: \$17,500 and Sales: \$145,000 totaling \$162,000.</p> <p>Additional discussion stipulated, the \$189,000 needed to fund the program of work in 2026 will not be funded by the City in 2027.</p> <p>The board will continue to review the 2026 budget post receipt of the City's first payment of funding.</p> <p>Rummage-Mathias motioned to postpone approval of the 2026 Budget. Deissler seconded the motion. Motion approved</p>	Postpone Budget Approval	Rummage-Mathais/Deissler
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5.	2026 Marketing Plan	<p>Staff updated the Visit Visalia Sales and Marketing Plan to reflect the PSA from the City of Visalia and specify the Sales and Marketing Plan is for the Visalia Convention and Visitors Bureau.</p> <p>The outcomes listed in Exhibit A are included in the plan. In addition to the sales and marketing plan, the 2026 PSA requires 4 additional marketing plans: Sequoia Shuttle, Majestic Mountain Loop, a plan to effectively promote events when they could be used to generate overnight stays, and a plan for target marketing new local travel itineraries/micro adventures.</p> <p>The plan demonstrated the COV's investment toward advancing both group and leisure travel.</p> <p>Group review of the Sales and Marketing Plan included the history of VCVB marketing of the Sequoia Shuttle for tourism and City Transit marketing for local ridership. City Transit has not historically participated in the marketing plan due to timing and unique audience. John Lollis, Assistant City Manager, explained this is not accurate.</p> <p>Board members requested a meeting with Transit to discuss sales promotion in partnership with hotels.</p> <p>Staff were instructed to include: coordinating the Sequoia Shuttle Marketing Plan with City Transit in the Sequoia Shuttle Marketing Plan tactics.</p> <p>Staff is challenged by the expectation of creating new itineraries. There are several itineraries to extend stay and without new assets/features developed meeting the new itineraries will be difficult.</p> <p>Board members received the Sequoia Shuttle and MML Plans. In April, board members will receive the plans for marketing events and itineraries.</p> <p>Chagan motion to approve the Sales and Marketing Plan, with the addition of the Sequoia Shuttle tactic. Rummage-Mathais seconded the motion. Motion Approved.</p>	2026 Marketing Plan	Chagan/Rummage-Mathais
		Discussion/Informational Items		

<p>1. Staff Report</p>	<p>Sales and Tourism Dashboard</p> <p>34 new room nights contracted Just under 4000 new room nights with sent proposals. Lost 2087 new room nights Rebooked 1360 room nights. (not included in the goal.) Assists: 1025 room nights (50% of goal?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Open Proposals – lead not generated by CVB: just under 300 – no new assist leads in 2026. ○ New CVB Leads – in 11 weeks. CVB has generated 2645 new leads in 2026 – or around 900 room nights a month. ● Prospects: 70+ on the working list ○ Pending site visit with California Association of Health Facilities (SNF) – calling on them since July of 2024 ○ Meeting next week with California Association of Community Managers (HOAs) – on the prospect list since August of 2024. ○ New RFP, not reflected on the sales report requested site visit next week. Discouraging because staff has been working on this lead for a few months, however the lead doesn't qualify for a "City wide" - 500 people and only 240 room nights due to quad occupancy with peak rooms: 115. The VCC does not have availability in 2026 and we request to propose for 2027. <hr/> <p>Last Month - Group sales discussion with property Representatives. Highlights: Deploying a Visalia based concierge college, working together to earn a large group the first week in June – understanding rates and the planner sources their own room blocks. Response time for proposing on leads and returning Add-On agreements</p> <p>This group wants the STR Report – created a dashboard with STR, Convention Calendar and VV Newsletter</p> <p>Administration Annual performance reviews completed – Bianco and Manzo Veronica submitted her resignation as of March 31, 2026 – to continue developing her own event planning and social media businesses.</p>	<p>Information Only</p>	<p>Staff</p>
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		Holding off creditors Status of new Insurance requirements of PSA Suzanne is attending the Visit California Outlook Forum PBS has scheduled the Wowsabout Premier for Sunday, April 26		
5.	Board of Director Nominations	The VCVB has two member vacancies. Potential nominees were discussed. The board would like to bring back the discussion in April.		
	Adjourn	Taylor-Conner adjourned the regular meeting at 10:10am.	Adjourn	Groover
	Executive Committee			
		Meeting opened at 10:10am <u>Interim funding plan</u> with TMD advance payment to cover payroll provided City funding is not received. <u>401K</u> : Direction was given to staff to negotiate with the administration to discontinue the 3% contribution. <u>Sale Position Job Description</u> : Executive Committee requested an electronic copy of the red line to review on their own. Salary range is \$75,000-\$85,000. Meeting adjourned at 10:30am		

The next regular meeting

Wednesday, April 8, 2026, 9:00 am – City of Visalia Administrative Conference Room