# Minutes

## Visit Morro Bay Board of Directors

**Visit Morro Bay Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, July 24, 2024

9:00 am – 11:00 am

Inn at Morro Bay

1. **CALL TO ORDER -** Board Chair Amish Patel Called the meeting to order at 9:02 am

   **PRESENT:** Board members **-** Amish Patel, Chris Kostecka, Dane Jacobs, Mark Roemer, and Andrea Lueker.

   **STAFF PRESENT:** Michael Wambolt, Elizabeth Gilson, Mariana Garcia

   **PUBLIC PRESENT:** Visit SLO CAL – Kristen Carlson, Central Caost Writers Conference - Judy Salamacha, City of Morro Bay Council member – Jeff Eckels

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)**
   City Council member Jeff Eckels thanked Visit Morro Bay for all we are doing and then announced that there is a volunteer position open on the City's Planning Commission.

| **ANNOUNCEMENTS - None** | **M. Wambolt** |
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| **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT** | **M. Wambolt** |
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3. **Executive Director Report** (20 min)
   *Staff will provide an update on current projects, reporting, and areas of focus for the months ahead.*

   Michael gave an update on the soft launch of the new website.

   **Branding:** Michael stated that the Pensara photo shoot was completed and that a lot of great shots were captured.

   **Events:** Michael stated that he would be presenting up coming events later in the meeting.

   **Finances:** Michael stated that there is $335,776.10 in the operating account and $899,816.20 in the reserve account.

   **International:** Michael spoke on his participation at IPW this year and stated that it was a good event and that international travel is picking up.

   Michael stated that the UK marketing group representing us is doing on going trainings of tour agents and operators.

   Michael stated that the German marketing company representing us brought a FAM to Morro Bay from May 18th – 20th. He stated that the trip was successful.

   **Reports:** Michael explained the TOT and STR reports. He stated that Morro Bay and SLO CAL is showing a slow down for the start of summer. There is a significant slow down in other areas of SLO County. This is the first time in four years that there has been such a slowdown.

   **Marketing:** Michael stated that the Expedia VCA Co-op is live with a spend of $60,000.00.

Michael stated that the November 2024 – June 2025 Expedia Co-op had an ad spend of $59,990.00 with room nights brought in at 4,445. Revenue was $778,500 this is a return on investment of 3 to 1.

**Promotions:** Michael spoke on the Adventure month promotion that Mariana created.

**CONSENT AGENDA** – *motion required* **M. Wambolt**

**4. Approval of May 22, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes**

Board Chair Amish Patel asked the Board if they had any questions or comments. Seeing none, he asked if anyone wanted to make a motion.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board member Mark Roemer made a motion to approve the May 2025 Board meeting minutes. Board Chair Amish Patel seconded the motion.

MOTION: Carried 5:0

**5. Approval of Visit Morro Bay Financials**

Board Chair Amish Patel asked the Board if they had any questions or comments. Seeing none, he asked if anyone wanted to make a motion.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board member Chris Kostecka made a motion to approve Visit Morro Bay Financials . Board member Mark Roemer seconded the motion.

MOTION: Carried 5:0

**BUSINESS ITEMS & DISCUSSIONS** **M. Wambolt**

**6. Visit Morro Bay Board of Directors Officer Selection** *(10min) motion required*
*VMB board of directors to select and approve officers for FY2025-26. Officer positions open: Board Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer*

Michael asked if there were any questions or comments and that he will call a special Board meeting later to interview Board candidate for hotelier open seat, 456 Embarcadero Inn Manager, Morgan Howard.

Board member Chris Kostecka stated that he was ok with the people in place now.

The Board discussed and agreed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board member Chris Kostecka made a motion that all current officers of the Visit Morro Bay Board of directors remain in their positions.

Board Chair – Amish Patel, Vice Chair – Chris Kostecka, Secretary – Robert Elzer, Treasurer Mark Roemer.

MOTION: Carried 5:0

**7. Avocado Margarita Festival Sponsorship Approval – Sept 2025** *(10min) motion required*

*Board to hear proposal from Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce, for the Avocado Margarita festival sponsorship. Board to discuss and potentially approve funds.*

Michael spoke on the history of the Avocado Margarita Festival and introduced Chamber of Commerce CEO Dina Lundquist.

Dina first took a few moments to talk about how the Chamber of Commerce is reimagining itself and what they are doing for businesses in Morro Bay.

Dina presented her proposal for bringing back the Avocado Margarita Festival this September 20th and is asking for a sponsorship of $20,000.

The Board discussed. They though it would be better if it were a two-day event instead of one.

Board Chair Amish Patel asked if someone would like to make a motion.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board member Chris Kostecka made a motion to support the Avocado Margarita Festival for $20,000 with the provision that it be a two-day event.

MOTION: Carried 5:0

8. **Approval of Reserve Funds for VCA Co-op Expedia Campaign** *(10mins) motion required*
Staff to present VCA Expedia Co-op. Board to discuss and approve funds.

Michael gave his presentation and also stated how beneficial this has been and that he felt that it should be continued.

The Board discussed.

Board Chair Amish Patel asked if anyone wanted to make a motion.

ACTION: Board member Mark Roemer made a motion to approve participation in the CO-OP and funds from the reserve. Board Chair Amish Patel seconded the motion.

MOTION: Carried 5:0

9. **Approval of U.K. and Germany Representation FY2025-26** *(10mins) motion required*
*Staff to present U.K. and Germany FY2025-26 representation contracts. The board approves funds for both contracts*.

Michael spoke on our current UK and Germany representation and what has been happening. He made the recommendation that we continue and renew the contracts.

The Board discussed.

Board Chair Amish Patel asked if anyone wanted to make a motion.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board member Andrea Lueker made a motion to approve the continuance of the contracts.

MOTION: Carried 5:0

10. **Approval of SLO CAL Co-op Travel Week Tradeshow in UK** *(15mins) motion required*
*Staff to present VSC co-op opportunity for the European Travel Week tradeshow in the UK. Board to discuss and approve funds.*

Michael spoke on the opportunity and importance of his participating in the UK Trade Show.

The Board discussed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board member Mark Roemer made a motion to approve the use of funds for Michael's participation in the UK Trade Show. Board Chair Amish Patel seconded the motion.

MOTION: Carried 5:0

11. **Approval of Tempest Growth Marketing Contract FY2025-26** *(15min) motion required*
*Staff to present Tempest Growth Marketing contract. Board to discuss and approve funds.*

Michael spoke on what Growth marketing is and why it will benefit Visit Morro Bay's website.

The Board discussed

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board member Chris Kostecka made a motion the approve the Tempest Growth Marketing contract for fiscal year 2025-26

MOTION : Carried 5:0

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: At 11:00 am Board Chair Amish Patel made a motion to extend the meeting by 20 minutes. Board member Mark Roemer seconded the motion

MOTION: Carried 5-0

12. **Events Sponsorships Approval or Forming of Events Sponsorship Sub-committee -** *(15mins) motion required*
*Staff presents sponsorships for SLO Writers Conference, Tunes and Tidelands, MB Triathlon and WSL SLO CAL Open. Board to approve funds for the events or approve events sponsorship sub-committee.*

Michael presented upcoming events and commented that the Board could create an events subcommittee if they felt necessary.

The Board did not feel it was necessary to create a subcommittee at this time.

Michael then presented each event.

The Board discussed. They agreed on the amounts for all but the Central Coast Writers Conference. It was decided to give $2500. It was decided to do one vote for all the events presented at the same time.

Tunes at Tidelands – sponsorship $5,000
Morro Bay Triathlon – sponsorship $10,000
SLO Cal WSL OPEN – sponsorship $30,000
Central Coast Writers Conference – $5,000.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board member Mark Roemer made a motion to approve Tunes at tidelands for $5,000, Morro Bay Triathlon for $10,000, SLO Cal WSL OPEN for $30,000, and the Central Coast Writers Conference for $2500.00 with the requirement that they push Morro Bay a writers retreat destination.

MOTION: Carried 5:0

13. **VMB Marketing Update** *(10mins)*
*Abbi Agency to give marketing update.*

The ABBI Agency was not able to attend the meeting. Michael presented their PowerPoint update and went over the data.

14. **Holiday Lights Update** (15mins)
*Staff to give an update on holiday lights.*

Michael stated that the holiday lights as had been planned were too cost prohibitive but that a more strategically placed plan is in the works.

15. **Next Board of Directors meeting –- September 25, 2025, In person, location TBA.**

**ADJOURN.** Board Chair Amish Patel adjourned the meeting at 11:22 am

Brown Act Notice: Each speaker is limited to two minutes of public comment for items not on the agenda. Public comment for each agenda item will be called for separately and is also limited to 2 minutes per speaker. State law does not allow the Board of Directors to discuss or take action on issues not on the agenda, except that members of the Board may briefly respond to statements made or questions posed by the person giving public comment. Staff may be directed by the Board to follow up on such items and/or place them on the next Board agenda. The order of agenda items is listed for reference and items may be taken in any order deemed appropriate by the Board.

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