



Minutes

Visit Morro Bay Board of Directors

Visit Morro Bay Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 25, 2025

9:00 am – 11:00 am

Visit Morro Bay Office - 695 Harbor St. Morro Bay

1. CALL TO ORDER – Board Chair Amish Patel called the meeting to order at 9:01 am

PRESENT: Board members - Amish Patel, Chris Kostecka, Dane Jacobs, Mark Roemer, and Andrea Lueker, Robert Elzer and Morgan Howard

STAFF PRESENT: Michael Wambolt, Elizabeth Gilson, Mariana Garcia

PUBLIC PRESENT: Visit SLO CAL – Kristen Carlson, City of Morro Bay Council members– Jeff Eckels and Zara Landrum, Rob and Robbie Revel – Winter Bird Festival, and ABBI Agency staff –

2. PUBLIC COMMENT: City Council member Jeff Eckels thanked Visit Morro Bay for all we are doing

ANNOUNCEMENTS

M. Wambolt

Board member Andrea Lueker stated that she was sorry but she would have to leave the meeting at 10:00 am

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

M. Wambolt

3. Executive Director Report (20 min)

Staff will provide an update on current projects, reporting and areas of focus for the months ahead

Website: Michael stated that the new website created by Tempest is up and running, that we have received some good figures from the first Tempest growth team report and they are currently updating a number of pages to enhance SEO.

Events: Michael updated the Board on these current and upcoming events

Tunes at Tidelands has been successful so far. One date was moved to the first Thursday in October due to bad weather.

The Morro Bay Triathlon will be happening November second and the new group that has taken over is right on track.

The Witches and Warlock Paddle will be on Saturday October 25th at noon. We are expecting a record number of participants.

The Lighted Boat Parade is happening on the second Saturday of December and not the first as in past years due to tidal issues. Visit Morro Bay staff has reached out to hoteliers and vacation rentals so that they are aware.

Finances: Michael stated that the operating account has \$183,999.58 and the reserve account has \$938,649.75.

International: Michael stated that our German marketing company will be attending a tradeshow on our behalf and the UK marketing company is training travel agents this week.

Reports: Michael went over the current numbers from the weekly and monthly STR reports as well as the current TOT revenue. He stated that Morro Bay and SLO Cal in general is showing a slow down for the start of the summer.

Marketing: Michael stated that the Expedia VCA Co-Op is currently live.

Promotions: Michael stated that Mariana and ABBI have been working on promoting the September Wine Month and the Seceret Season October through December.

CONSENT AGENDA – <i>motion required</i>
--

M. Wambolt

4. Approval of July 25, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes

Board Chair Amish Patel asked the Board if there was any questions or need for discussion. There was none.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board member Mark Roemer made a motion to approve the July 25, 2025, Board meeting Minutes. Board member Andrea Lueker seconded the motion.

MOTION: Carried 7:0

5. Approval of Visit Morro Bay Financials

Board Chair Amish Patel asked the Board if there was any questions or need for discussion. There was none.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board Chair Amish Patel made a motion to approve the Visit Morro Bay financials.. Board member Dane Jacobs seconded the motion.

MOTION: Carried 7:0

BUSINESS ITEMS & DISCUSSIONS

M. Wambolt

6. VMB FY 25-26 Financials and Rollover Funds Approval - (20 mins) *motion required*

Staff to present FY24-25 rollover funds and present programs. Board to approve rollover funds.

Michael spoke on the 2025-26 budget and stated that Jul 2025 TOT was under and that \$149,000 in funds from the 2024-25 budget could be rolled over to the 2025-26 budget to bolster finances.

The Board discussed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board member Chris Kostecka made a motion to approve the rollover of the \$149,000 to the 2025-26 budget. Board member Mark Roemer seconded the motion.

MOTION: Carried 7:0

7. Morro Bay Holiday Lights Presentation and Approval (20 mins) *motion required*

Staff and SLO Holiday Lights will present proposal for holiday lighting of Morro Bay. Board to discuss and potentially approve.

Michael introduced Aaron King of Unforgettable Holiday Displays.

Aaron gave a presentation on what he envisions for decorations on portions of Morro Bay Blvd. Main St. and the Embarcadero and went over the costs associated.

The Board discussed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board member Chris Kostecka made a motion to form a subcommittee

MOTION: Carried 7:0

Board members Dane Jacobs, Chris Kostecka and Amish Patel volunteered to be the subcommittee.

*** Board member Andreall Lueker left the meeting at 10:00 am**

- 8. Morro Bay Bird Festival Sponsorship Presentation and Approval (15 mins) *motion required***
Morro Bay Bird Festival to present bird festival sponsorship. Board to approve sponsorship.

Michael introduced Robbie and Rob Revel of the Winter Bird Festival.

Robbie and Rob Revel gave a presentation about the Winter Bird Festival and sharing data that they collected from participants last year to justify their request for a \$13,000 sponsorship.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board member Mark Roemer made a motion to approve the \$13,000 dollar sponsorship of the Winter Bird Festival. Board member Morgan Howard seconded the motion.

MOTION: Carried 6:0

- 9. Approval of Reserve Funds Additional Marketing Sub-Committee (10 mins) *motion required***
Staff recommends approval of sub-committee for additional marketing funds. Board to approve sub-committee.

Michael explained the request for a subcommittee to explore additional marketing with monies from the Reserve Fund.

The Board discussed

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Board member Chris Kostecka made a motion to approve a subcommittee to explore the use of \$400,000 dollars for marketing purposes. Board member Mark Roemer seconded the motion.

MOTION: Carried 6:0

Board members Morgan Howard, Dane Jacobs and Mark Roemer volunteered to be the committee.

- 10. Visit Morro Bay Executive Director Bonus Discussion (20 mins)**
Board to discuss bonuses for Executive Director and give next steps.

Michael spoke on the history of the bonus and what he is asking the board to decide.

Board Chair Amish Patel asked Michael to leave the room.

The Board discussed.

A declaration was made to have a future vote on the bonus at the November meeting.

- 11. Abbi Agency Update - (25min)**
Abbi Agency to give marketing update.

Michael introduced the ABBI Agency staff.

The ABBI Agency Staff gave their marketing update.

12. Next Board of Directors meeting – November 20, 2025 – 9:00am – 11:00am – Visit Morro Bay Office

ADJOURN. Board Chair Amish Patel adjourned the meeting at 11:34 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 member 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.

ADA Notice: Meeting facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. If you require special assistance to participate in the meeting, notify Liz Gilson at (805) 225-7411 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.