



**MINUTES
SOLVANG TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING**

March 15, 2023.
Wednesday
3:00 p.m.

3:00 PM – SPECIAL MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber, 1644 Oak Street, Solvang, California.

ROLL CALL

Present: Committee Members: Tracy Beard (arrived at 3:25 p.m.), Kim Jensen, John Martino, Louise Smith, Chair Vashti Wilson

Absent: Committee Members: John Jakubek, Vice Chair Alexander Grenier

Staff: Interim City Manager Bradley Vidro, City Clerk Annamarie Porter

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Committee Member Martino led in the Salute to the Flag.

2. CONSENT ITEMS

a. Approve order of the Agenda, as presented

Chair Wilson asked to remove Item No. 4.b. from the agenda as there is no overall marketing plan or Marketing Manager at this time and more information is needed.

Committee Member Jensen recommended proceeding to move the item forward.

Committee Member Smith spoke about discussions during the last TAC meeting to schedule this special meeting to review Abbi Agency invoices and to form a subcommittee to review them, but none of the information needed is available.

Chair Wilson reported that copies of invoices were not provided; noted the vendor audited their own invoices and stated that Ms. Shallenberger was supposed to attend this meeting but is not in attendance.

Motion by Chair Wilson, to approve the order of the agenda, as amended, removing Item No. 4.b. and placing it on the next agenda, seconded by Committee Member Martino, and carried, 3-1, with Member Jensen, opposed and Members Beard, Jakubek, Grenier, absent.

3. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Denise El Amin commented on the need to control spending in the City.

Mark Infanti suggested that the TAC make a recommendation for City Council to consider a short-term marketing contract.

Christina Ciaccio stated she submitted a proposal.

There were no further public comments.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Discussion to review Abbi Agency Invoice Audit

Interim City Manager Vidro reported he is willing to meet with members of the TAC to review and audit Abbi Agency invoices.

Chair Wilson noted directions to staff during the February TAC meeting to present an audit of The Abbi Agency invoices, the rationale for paying the invoices in question, the repeated requests to review invoices being continued. She added that part of the TAC's duties is to review contract efficacies and provide oversight.

Committee Member Martino did not believe the TAC's duties included invoice/contract audits.

Interim City Manager Vidro listed the six duties and responsibilities of the Tourism Advisory Committee.

Motion by Committee Member Jensen, to continue this matter, seconded by Committee Member Martino, and carried, 3/1, with Member Beard abstaining, members Jakubek, Grenier, absent.

b. Discussion to review Marketing Proposals from previous RFP and new scopes of work.

4.b moved to a future meeting.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Committee Member Smith provided a timeline of TAC's consideration and actions; stated she never received any communication regarding The Abbi Agency invoices, their self-audit; the paying of the outstanding invoices, Ms. Shallenberger's resignation, the posting of the Marketing Manager position and who made decisions without consulting the TAC, and the actions lacked transparency.

Committee Member Beard spoke about the prior Marketing Contractor, and believed the City is not overseeing their Marketing Department correctly.

Committee Member Jensen expressed concerns that oversight issues are not allowing the TAC to move forward.

Chair Wilson spoke about her experience and qualifications; noted she offered her services to help fix existing problems; noted that contract non-compliance was so egregious that she had to address it; discussed the City's spending on marketing functions; addressed ownership of the City's Facebook page and the need to transfer it and felt that she has been disregarded and disrespected.

CITY STAFF COMMENTS - None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Brad Vidro, Interim City Manager