

**MEETING MINUTES  
SANTA MONICA TRAVEL & TOURISM (SMTT)  
MEETING OF THE TOURISM MARKETING DISTRICT (TMD) COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2022  
Shutters on the Beach in Salon B**

**Call to Order:** Vice Chairman Jagger called the meeting to order at 8:54 am.

**Roll Call & Self Introductions:** Vice Chairman Jagger called for self-introductions. TMD Committee Members and those present provided brief self-introductions. The following persons were recorded in attendance:

**Tourism Marketing District Committee (TMD) Present:** Vice Chairman Sam Jagger, Secretary/Treasurer Aileen Carreon, Member Melissa Alvarez, Member James Graham, Member Jessica Rincon, and Member Juan Viramontes.

**Also Present:** SMTT President/CEO Misti Kerns, SMTT Chief Marketing Officer Michael Gurrieri, SMTT Chief Operating Officer Evan Edwards, SMTT Chief People Officer Rachel Lozano, SMTT Director of Global Business Development Todd Mitsuhata, SMTT Operations Coordinator Alyssa Dorn, SMTT Executive Assistant Jennifer Hover, Hotel Shangri-la General Manager Danielle Delcambre, Hotel Shangri-la Assistant General Manager Tasha Axel, Ambrose Hotel General Manager Danielle Goller, Shore Hotel General Manager Inessa Udovchenko, and Shore Hotel Chief Operating Officer Steve Farzam.

**Absent:** Chairman Younes Atallah, Member Kevin Anawati, and Member Julien Laracine.

**Public Comment:** Vice Chair Jagger called for public comment; Shore Hotel Chief Operation Officer Farzam discussed COVID-19 testing has slowed down according to 911 Health's data, supplied flyers with more information and services. They are offering continued COVID-19 testing with 360 Solution Health care in Santa Monica.

**Approval of the June 21, 2022 TMD Committee Meeting Minutes:** Secretary/Treasurer Carreon presented the Meeting Minutes. Member Graham moved to approve the minutes and Member Viramontes seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously with Chairman Atallah, Members Anawati and Laracine absent.

**Acceptance of the TMD Collections Memo:** Secretary/Treasurer Carreon presented the TMD Collections Memo. Member Alvarez moved to accept the Memo; Member Graham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously with. The motion carried unanimously with Chairman Atallah, Members Anawati and Laracine absent.

**SMTT Staff Updates:** SMTT CEO Kerns reviewed the Brown Act with the TMD Committee, reminding meetings need to follow the agenda and cannot discuss TMD business outside of committee meetings.

SMTT CMO Gurrieri updated on the past summer and upcoming marketing and communication initiatives including; a highlight video of the Santa Monica activation in Brighton promoting the Friendship Agreement between the two cities, newly refreshed Santa Monica website, images of the pier umbrellas and flags created in partnership with Buy Local Santa Monica, images from summer photo shoot and introduction of the KindTraveler program – a socially conscious hotel booking and media platform being rolled out to select hotels.

Gurrieri announced the return of the Official Santa Monica Visitor Guide and Map, both print and digital versions to be distributed beginning February 2023, the return of Extra Bedroom Campaign from November 14, 2022 - January 31, 2023, and a quick update on the status of the agency of record RFP. He shared news stories about Santa Monica driven by media and influencer FAMS from Canada, Mexico and the United Kingdom.

SMTT Director of Global Business Development Mitsuata updated on SMTT's Business Development Team as they lead their European Sales & Media mission in August, and hosted/attended five events for top clients, media, and partners across London, Manchester, Dublin, Brighton, and Paris. The mission coincided with the Brighton Activation as well as Santa Monica's Friendship Signing Ceremony with the City of Brighton & Hove, where dignitaries, top chefs, and leading artists helped generate awareness and buzz for the "pier" cities among UK consumers, trade, and top media.

On the Group Sales Front, Mitsuata discussed SMTT's recently finished events and meetings with Prestige Networking, Conference Direct, Meetings Today Live, and HPN Global, and is gearing up for IMEX America, the largest trade show in the US for the global meetings, events and incentive travel industry.

SMTT CPO Lozano reported on the Job Fair which SMTT organized for local business and job seekers on July 12th. There were twenty-three Santa Monica businesses that participated including hotels, restaurants, and retailers. Approximately fifty job seekers attended and SMTT hired a Travel Specialist. We had a lot of media coverage including Univision, NBC, Santa Monica Patch, Santa Monica Daily Press, Santa Monica Mirror, Santa Monica Outlook, Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn.

Lozano discussed the SMTT presence at this year's Santa Monica Police Department's National Night Out on August 2nd, our Travel Specialists tabled at the event and the theme this year was Behind the Badge. Finally, Lozano shared that American Film Market (AFM) would return in person to Santa Monica this year November 1st-6th. SMTT hosted the AFM Kick-off meeting on Tuesday, August 23rd on zoom. The AFM welcome activation would take place in the front of Loews hotel on Tuesday, November 1st and the Wrap Party would be on November 8th. Lozano said more information would follow via email.

SMTT COO Edwards gave an update on the upcoming TMD collection rate increases for calendar year 2023. She talked about the notification process for the hotels. She then gave an update on the TMD Committee 2023 election process and how to serve as a committee member. Edwards then gave a process report on the TID pilot program that provides outdoor cleaning support around 5 hotels near the pier (Casa Del Mar, Shutters on the Beach, Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel, Le Merigot, and Bayside). The program was at the 6-month mark and the next step in the process to determine permanency of the program would be a meeting with participating hotels, then a discussion with City staff.

She then gave an update on some key internal dates that relate to Lane 5 of the strategic plan that includes recruiting efforts for a Communications Manager, Director of Communications and Travel Specialists; reduced costs by switching tech support vendors and the upcoming 2021-2022 fiscal audit dates. Edwards talked about the upcoming CARES activities that include the annual sock collection drive, SOCKtober, the gently used clothing drive and a volleyball tournament.

**CEO Update:** SMTT CEO Kerns informed the TMD Committee of upcoming items on November's Election ballot including a potential TOT increase of 1%, which is likely to pass, the city agreed to an oversight committee including hotel representatives. Funds would be dedicated to safe and clean initiatives, like the Community Response Unit teams to 24 hours. Noted that other cities are likely to increase their TOT tax as well. Kerns discussed the Chamber of Commerce voted to support the TOT tax; the consensus is to increase by 1% all at once, rather than two .5% increases. These increases would not go into effect until 2023 if passed.

Kerns reviewed the collective efforts taken to create the Experience Management Plan (EMP) in 2019-2020, including extensive research and brainstorming on what the Santa Monica experience should be in the future. She further explained the importance of aligning across the community for a collective impact larger than any individual effort to enhance the experience in a proactive manner. Kerns also expressed excitement for hotels' efforts to refresh as well as community innovations that are already going toward the Plan's goals.

Kerns defined the EMP as a shared roadmap of ideas, Strategies, and Courses of Action we can take to elevate and steward the Santa Monica experience, as well as explaining the Plan's guiding principles of stewardship (support for the local economy, residents' quality of life, and the natural environment),

sustainability, and supporting DEIA (diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility). To these ends, those involved in the EMP can ideate and work toward improvements to the Santa Monica experience such as the potential for beach dining. The EMP is a flexible and an adaptable plan, supporting and interacting seamlessly with the City's brand and identity. The EMP is also designed to be a vehicle for better communication across the community, by involving diverse community groups, so community efforts for positive change can be more readily shared and supported. Through this communication flow, different entities with similar programs can also support one another rather than working separately and repeating the same work. Additionally, Kerns reviewed the EMP Strategies to focus on in the first year and some proposed courses of actions for each, in addition to going over next steps such as committee formation.

Kerns informed about the release of SMTT's "Sea the Good" newsletter that highlighting histories, stories, and the human side of the good in the community, please provide SMTT good news stories to share. Michelin has partnered up with Visit California for Winter publications. Local's Night at the Pier will take place on Thursday, September 15th, with nickel rides on the Merri-go-round in honor of the horses turning 100 years old.

Secretary/Treasurer Carreon asked how the KindTraveler program connects with the EMP, SMTT CEO Kerns advised that the funds donated through the program to Santa MoniCARES to positively impact livability charities and nonprofits in the community. Additionally, CMO Gurrieri advised that KindTraveler is an opportunity to give power/ choice to have a positive impact for those socially conscious travelers, especially from the International and young Luxury traveler groups who make decisions based on sustainability.

**For the Good of the Order:** Vice Chairman Jagger called for any items for good of the order, there was none.

**Adjournment:** Vice Chairman Jagger called to adjourn the meeting; Member Graham moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Secretary/Treasurer Carreon and with all in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 am.