



**Minutes of Meeting of the SV-TMD  
Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce**

**40 W. Cochran Street  
Suite 100  
Simi Valley, CA 93065  
Thursday, December 12, 2024  
10:00 AM**

**I. Welcome/Call to Order**

Anthony Angelini called meeting to order at 10:15 AM.

**II. Roll Call**

Anthony Angelini (Simi Valley Chamber), Laura Ballantoni (RSRPD), Luis Garibay (City of Simi Valley), Melissa Giller (Ronald Reagan Presidential Library), Tricia Legaspi (Ronald Reagan Presidential Library), Amilcar Rivera (Best Western Posada Royale), Kathi Van Etten (Simi Valley Chamber),

**III. Public Comments**

**a. Melissa Giller**

Melissa Giller from the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library gave a report on the new exhibit featuring 8 authentic Dead Sea Scrolls and over 200 artifacts from the Second Temple period. A highlight of this exhibit is a segment of the original Western Wall, which offers visitors and pilgrims a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see and touch the artifact outside of Israel. Giller also reported that the library has reached about 66% of its pre-covid numbers, with about 258,000 visitors in 2024.

**b. Laura Ballantoni**

Ballantoni reported on a soccer tournament at the Park District on January 11 and 12.

**IV. Executive Director's Comments**

Anthony Angelini presented the 2024 yearly marketing report on behalf of Searle Creative Group, providing an overview of their activities throughout the year. He highlighted key initiatives and campaigns while walking the group through the social media performance for both the month and the full year. Angelini reported significant growth across nearly all social media metrics, reflecting the success of their efforts to promote Simi Valley.

Angelini also reported on his recent tourism marketing trip to China and South Korea as part of a delegation with Visit California. He engaged with top-tier media outlets such as National Geographic Traveler China and Beijing Youth Weekly to understand post-pandemic travel trends. He held over 40 individual meetings with Chinese and Korea travel media and social media influencers, including Sina Weibo Travel and Cosmopolitan, to share updates on Simi Valley's scenic beauty, family-friendly environment, and proximity to major Southern California destinations. Anthony emphasized the importance of platforms like Weibo and RED (Xiaohongshu) for connecting with Chinese travelers and highlighted key attractions such as hiking trails, cultural landmarks, and the city's film production history. He noted that Chinese audiences value storytelling, authenticity, and cultural immersion, and recommended exploring influencer collaborations and tailored campaigns to enhance Simi Valley's visibility in this market.

Finally, Angelini reported on the October occupancy rates. Simi Valley's occupancy in October was 74.6%, which was in-line with regional trends in Los Angeles (76.8%), Thousand Oaks (73.6%), and outperforming statewide and national trends (California 70.7%; United States 67.3%).

**V. Action Items**

**a. Approval of Minutes**

Luis Garibay moved to approve the minutes from October. Amilcar Rivera seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**b. Approval of increased rates for Searle Creative Group, LLC**

In response to proposal submitted by Searle Creative Group December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, committee discussed an increase in hourly rates for 2025 and increase in total allotted hours per month. New hourly rate would increase from \$110/hour to \$115/hour. New allotted monthly hours would increase from 115 hours per month, to 125 hours per month. Committee agreed that while the rate increase is not out of the ordinary, there are potential opportunities to cut hours, and the allotted monthly hours are adequate as they currently are.

Laura Ballantoni moved to approve an hourly rate of \$115/hour for Searle Creative Group, and maintain a monthly allocation of 115 hours per month. Melissa Giller seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**c. Approval of Amended Annual Budget to accommodate rate change and to adjust for other mid-year spending updates**

Angelini presented an amended version of the FY 24/25 budget. Luis Garibay moved to table the approval of the budget. Kathi Van Etten seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**d. Accept recommendations from board on plans to update Management District Plan to include Short Term Rental properties**

Angelini presented a proposal to update the Management District Plan to include STR properties within the assessment of local businesses in the Tourism Management District. Tricia Legaspi moved to table the motion. Laura Ballantoni seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**VI. New Business**

**VII. Adjourn**

Anthony Angelini adjourned the meeting at 11:45 AM.