



Tourism Bureau Meeting Minutes  
June 8, 2021 @ 12:00 p.m.  
via Zoom

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### **ATTENDEES**

Jasmine Foster, Jeffery Forrest, John Milburn, Keri Aaver (College of the Canyons); Dep. Benjamin Sanchez (LA County Sheriff's Dept.); Tami Stephens (Congressman Mike Garcia's Office); Memory Rudolph, Billy Dye, Shuki Koushandeh; Cassandra Finch (Embassy Suites); Margi Bertram (Hart Museum); Maria Christopher (Heritage Valley Tourism Bureau); Chuck Price, Manny White (Soundtraac Festival); Lance Deutschman, Tom Clearwater (Hyatt Regency); Matt Dugan, Heather Ramirez, Larry Bruyere (The Cube Ice & Entertainment Center); Clayton Strahan (Explore Lake Piru); Lianne Riban (Springhill Suites | Residence Inn); Jo Anne Hilario (Holiday Inn Express); Alfonzo Barajas (Hilton Garden Inn); Ari Larson (Fillmore Chamber of Commerce); Patsy Ayala (Assembly Woman Suzette Valladares); Pat Downing, Kayla Marquez, Evan Thomason, Marilyn Sourgoose, Lourdes Vallin (City of Santa Clarita)

### **WELCOME**

Guests:

- Jeffrey Forrest, Keri Aaver and John Milburn – College of the Canyons
- Chuck Price & Manny White – Soundtraac Festival
- Deputy Sanchez – Sheriff liaison to hotels

### **TOURISM OFFICE UPDATES**

- **Tourism Trolley**
  - Up and running - began Friday, June 4, ends on September 13.
  - Route: Hyatt | Westfield Valencia Town Center to 4 properties on Wayne Mills - SpringHill | Residence Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Best Western to Six Flags then Courtyard | Embassy, back to Hyatt, etc.
  - Signs should have been put up yesterday at the locations with existing bus stop signs.
  - Dropped off a few brochures to hotels along the route – will deliver more when we receive the full run. Let us know if you need more visitor guides.
- **Advertising**
  - With things opening up more, we are working with our advertising agency, Lundmark, to start planning our next digital campaign.
  - We are considering launching in August to account for anticipated capacity increase at Six Flags. (usually we start in October)
  - Target audience: drive market (within 400-mile radius)
  - Focus: "We're Open" continue with "Play All Day | Stay Your Way"
  - If you have new photos of your property/hotel – please send, we always need NEW and updated pics for our ads, visitor guide, and social media. Especially with people in them - enjoying a drink, by the pool, eating. Those are best for social media.
- **2021 Special Events List**
  - Kayla sent out the updated list
    - SCV Veg Fest was held last Saturday - if anyone had room nights associated, please let me know, so we can include the numbers on our spreadsheet.
  - Coming up: **Futures Swim Meet** – July 27 thru August 1 Aquatic Center

- If anyone has discounts/specials to add to the page we're creating for them, send it our way. The page will be hidden and specific to their attendees. Feel free to share with restaurants/other businesses that we're looking for specials
- First time we're having the Futures Meet. This is one of their bigger events, there will be people coming from different states.
- **Soundtraac Family Music Festival** – scheduled for August 7-8 @ Central Park: Chuck will provide more information about it during member updates.
- **Concerts in the Park** is returning this year (July 3 – August 28). My counterpart, Chris Page, is looking to partner with one local hotel to be the official “Host Hotel” of Concerts in the Park this summer. Specifically, we would like to identify the best rate possible on a block of 12 total room nights for the dates listed below:
  - Friday, August 20, 2021
  - Saturday, August 21, 2021
  - Friday, August 27, 2021
  - Saturday, August 28, 2021
  - In return we can offer various marketing benefits for their hotel such as:
  - Opportunity for Sponsor to have one (1) 10'x10' marketing activation space at one concert this summer
  - Inclusion in our public announcements
  - Business logo and link on the event website
  - Two (2) VIP passes to each concert this summer that can be used for staff or transferred to hotel guests
  - If you have any questions: [cpage@santa-clarita.com](mailto:cpage@santa-clarita.com) (661) 286-4030

### **GUEST SPEAKERS**

Today we have Jeffrey Forrest, Vice President of Economic & Workforce Development at College of the Canyons joining us, along with Keri and John who are going to share information about resources for employers as well as certification programs.

- **Keri Aaver, Director of Job Placement**  
[keri.aaver@canyons.edu](mailto:keri.aaver@canyons.edu)  
 (661) 362-5476  
<https://www.canyons.edu/student-services/career/employer/careerconnect.jobspeaker.com/#/jobboard/jobs>
- **John Milburn, Executive Director, Employee Training Institute**  
[john.milburn@canyons.edu](mailto:john.milburn@canyons.edu)  
 (661) 362-3245  
[canyonsecondev.org/eti](http://canyonsecondev.org/eti)
- **Jeffrey Forrest, VP Economic & Workforce Development**

**Keri** – I, like everyone else, am super excited that things are opening up. I'm already marking up my calendar with all the things coming up. I went roller skating at the VegFest and that was a lot of fun. At College of the Canyons, we have a job board, it's called [Career Connect by Jobspeaker](#). If you need positions to be filled, it's a great way to connect with our students and alumni. Once you register there, you get notifications for hiring fests, job fairs that we are doing. These special events might be of interest to you. I've provided some links to get you started on Career Connect. We keep that updated with new things happening. Whenever you post a job on the job board, we immediately start sourcing for it. Connect with us to do internships. If you have any events related to career, career development, employment – anything at all, share it with me, send me flyers. I will post it to our events calendar to help our students. If you have questions let me know. There are more than 30,000 COC students and alumni registered on our Career Connect by Jobspeaker Job, Internship and Event platform.

**John** – I'm the Executive Director of [Employee Training Institute at College of the Canyons](#) and part of the Economic Workforce Development Division. Jocey Hogan is our Program Coordinator. We provide

customized training for companies. We do a PMP (Project Management Professional) certification program. Have programs for manufacturing and office, customer relationship management and a variety of technical skills for our manufacturing clients, as well as business skills and other training programs. Here's an example – we have our Customer Relationship Management course we have going on right now. It's a 24-hour course, deep dive into customer service. These courses do have a cost because we have to pay for it ourselves, its cost recovery. We do our classes in classrooms, labs, pre-covid and now. They are customized training programs, instructors are subject matter experts within the industry.

### **MEMBER UPDATES**

**Hollywood Burbank Airport** – Sahara Powell no longer working for them. Next month, Amanda Parise will be attending our meetings representing the airport.

### **Audra (Westfield Valencia Town Center)**

**June 25 – 27:** We will be hosting an event the weekend of June 25 – 27 to kick off Summer with live music in partnership with The Canyon Santa Clarita. There will also be scratchers with \$4500 worth of prizes from our retailers

**June 11 – 17:** Father's Day Sweepstakes on @WestfieldVTC Instagram

**July 4:** We will be hosting a concert in partnership with The Canyon before the fireworks celebration on Sunday, July 4.

**July 24:** Cars Under the Stars benefitting WiSH Education Foundation

**Margi Bertram (Hart Museum)** – We still do not have a date for reopening. Working on getting an approved public statement released soon. Pleased to have a Getty intern, working both onsite and remotely. She's working on developing some more background information on some of the artifacts that are important to our visitors. When we do reopen, we will have new information. For anyone who has been here before, come back, have another tour and you'll learn some new information.

**Chuck Price (Soundtraac Music Festival)** – We're excited - August 7 and 8, Soundtraac Music Festival, a family music festival. We wanted to see how much of a coming out party we could put on for the City of Santa Clarita. We reached out to Lance Sterling, with Sterling Venue Ventures. We're trying to put on a mini Coachella – we've put out a three-year plan. We've got two days from 1 p.m. – 9 p.m., over 24 signed acts. Big names from 70s, 80s, 90s, and the beginning of the 2000s. The line up is set. The beneficiary is Santa Clarita Boys and Girls Club. Throughout June, we're going through youth football, youth baseball, and high school programs that fundraise individually for them and really build a crowd based in the city limits of Santa Clarita. In July we will begin all our outsource media, that will be ABC Channel 7 and all the different venues that Lance promotes music in. There's plenty of opportunities to get involved on the hotel side. If there are any businesses in Santa Clarita that want to be part of this, we'd love to have them. This is really all about the city. You can get all of our information either from Marilyn or Evan and we can go from there.

Chuck Price [chuckp@maxontechnologies.com](mailto:chuckp@maxontechnologies.com) (310) 913-2479.

**Patrick Downing (Arts & Events, City of Santa Clarita)** – Concerts in the Park will start July 3rd – there will be 8 shows throughout the summer. Taking a break August 7 and 8. Fireworks show on July 4, 9:15 p.m. from Valencia Town Center.

**Larry and Heather (The Cube – Ice and Entertainment Center)** – thanks for having us, first meeting with the bureau. The Cube, here in Santa Clarita, has been open for the past couple of months. We're excited to see all the new faces and old faces. Don't have any particular events to talk about. Heather here is the Director of Events. We will give you updates soon. Keep in mind, as the city heats up, this is the coolest place in town.

**Jo Anne Hilario (Holiday Inn Express & Best Western)** – Nothing to share. We've been open for two months. If you want to see the new properties, reach out to me. You can get my info from Marilyn – I

am happy to show you around. Don't hesitate to give me call. Jo Anne  
Hilario:[sales.hixva@excelhotelgroup.com](mailto:sales.hixva@excelhotelgroup.com) (661) 284-2101

**Jeffrey Forrest ([College of the Canyons](#))** – We appreciate the opportunity to speak. I had the opportunity to go into the new Holiday Inn for the Latino Business Alliance – the breakfast is to die for and the service was impeccable. Congrats to Jo Anne and her team there. We're looking forward to being apart of the State of the County, we're going to be in Six Flags Magic Mountain. We can't wait to get there. We're really excited to be working with you all. If you need us, we're here for you. We want to make sure we can be a reliable partner to provide training and support. Whatever it is you think you need from the college, we are here and free of charge with recruitment. We are here for all of you, thank you for letting us share.

**Tami Stephens ([Congressman Mike Garcia's Office](#))** – Welcome everyone who is new. We are a federal office. We offer help and assistance with federal agencies like the SBA, IRS, post office, Social Security if you're having passport issues. We're also hosting a grants workshop. If you've never done business with the federal government, and looking for how to get grants that will be for you. If you are not signed up for news alerts, please sign up on our [website](#). You can always call me at our office (661) 568-4855 or email [tami.stephens@mail.house.gov](mailto:tami.stephens@mail.house.gov).

**Lianne Riban ([Springhill Suites & Residence Inn Valencia](#))** – We are officially open. We are going to be doing our grand opening in July, will be sending invites. Excited to have the trolley coming by. If you need anything, hotel-wise, let us know.

**Maria Christopher ([Heritage Valley Tourism Bureau](#))** – We are Santa Clarita's big back yard, located on the 126 Highway, from Valencia to Ventura. We are happy to be working with you guys. Rancho Camulos is 1 of 7 museums in Heritage Valley, open to tourists on Sundays. Lake Piru is a great campground and gateway to Sespe Wilderness by way of the Pothole Trail. [Bennett's Honey](#) – is on Visit's special offers page. [Fillmore & Western's](#) last Scenic Train will be on the 26<sup>th</sup> of this month. Still don't know the reopening date for new operators. Expected to not be a very lengthy period. In Santa Paula you'll be going by fruit stands and our favorite, [Prancer's Ranch](#). They have a lot of various activities for children. Santa Paula – First Friday's are Cruise Nights and almost weekly open-air markets. [Ventura Ranch KOA](#) is another great campground. They're opening Soaring Over Ventura Adventure Course, which will be the closest zipline to Santa Clarita. It was only open to campers, but now they are doing day activities. They also have a Rock Maze, and other neat stuff. Check out their website. Scott of [Ventura Ranch KOA](#) is inviting the Santa Clarita Tourism folks to come out for midweek trip. To see what the area has to offer and especially interested in the hotels coming out, you can direct people to come out. Go get your kicks at Highway 126, visit the Heritage Valley.

**Memory Rudolph ([Embassy Suites](#))** – I'm the Director of Sales. One big thing for us, we reopened our restaurant and are serving dinner and drinks. We're open 5 p.m. – 10:30 p.m., except for Sundays. We've seen a good turnout but would love for you to check it out. We have a new menu that was supposed to come out before the pandemic hit – it's amazing, it's delicious, and best of all its affordable!

**Ari Larson ([Fillmore Chamber of Commerce](#))** – Gearing up to have a great Fourth of July. Booths are made up of only non-profits, and that really helps our community. A lot of the funds are used for scholarships, so come on out to support. We don't sell anything that shoots up in the air – we only have small ground fountain, sparklers, things like that. If you would like to come out, have a little picnic, and have fireworks at our city parks, you are welcome to.

**Tom Clearwater ([Hyatt Regency Valencia](#))** – We're just gearing up to fully open with no restrictions on June 15. Restaurant has been open at 50% capacity. Business is really picking up - looks like we're going to have a good summer and part of that is because Six flags has been drawing in a lot. Come by and take advantage of our indoor and outdoor dining.

**Clayton Strahan ([Explore Lake Piru](#))** – Chief at Lake Piru Recreational Area. I'm in charge of the day-to-day management here at our facility. Like many folks in the outdoor industry, we're experiencing record visitation this year, especially with the opening of new amenities like the Pothole Trail parking area and adding Wi-Fi to our facility. We did that for public safety. Has drawn in a lot of folks from the Valencia, Santa Clarita area. 275% increase in our day use activity, compared to our record high year of 2019. Camping revenue is up 19% since the highest revenue. Doing a lot of outreach and effort to bring in more of the city crowds that are closer to Los Angeles. We are fully open to boating, swimming, frisbee golf – all the activities you can imagine. We will be hosting sometime in July, the date is yet to be determined, a community hike with the Piru Neighborhood Council, Heritage Valley Tourism Bureau – provide a little history on Lake Piru, the activities we provide and the importance of Lake Piru as a water resource in Ventura County. Hope that when we have that date that you all can come by. The hike will be led by myself and our senior hydrologist. Come visit us and enjoy the day.

**Jasmine Foster ([College of the Canyons](#))** – Happy to see all the new faces. I am the Director of Community Relations. Graduations are over. They happened over a four-day period and students had the option of morning or evening. Feedback we got was phenomenal. They loved the personal aspect of it, as they were able to come up to the stage to get a professional photo. Summer sessions have starts. Our School of Professional Learning offers free certifications, non-credit. Just added hotel front desk etiquette. [canyons.edu/free](http://canyons.edu/free) All on your own, at your own pace. Wednesday Wellness Zoom event: Eating healthy workshop, Wednesdays 2-2:30 p.m. Glad to see the other COC people on here.

**Alfonzo Barajas ([Hilton Garden Inn](#))** – New sales manager here at the Hilton Garden Inn. We have no new updates other than that we are open for breakfast Monday-Sunday 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. We have a new menu as well.

**Patsy Ayala ([Assembly Woman Suzette Valladares](#))** – Hello, I am here today on behalf of Assembly Woman Suzette Valladares. She's really happy to serve our community. You can contact us via email and telephone number. ([patsy.ayala@asm.ca.gov](mailto:patsy.ayala@asm.ca.gov) (661) 286-1565) You can go to our website for any help with the state. We can give you guidance with Restaurant Revitalization Fund, Economic Disaster Loan EDD, Labor and Workforce Support for businesses and how to help get your employees vaccinated. We are also getting a lot of calls about EDD, we can help you as an employer or employee. We are happy to assist you and to take opinion to the assembly regarding legislations. Happy to be the liaison with the state. We also provide certificates of recognition for grand openings, graduates – we've had a lot of graduations and things like that.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

Date: Tuesday, July 6 @ noon

Location: TBD

We are hoping to hold an in-person Tourism Bureau lunch in July. Will let you know as we get closer. Thank you for joining us today, see you next month!