



## **JOINT MEETING JPA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & VISIT GREATER PALM SPRINGS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES**

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### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 8:39 a.m. by Gary Gardner, JPA Chair, at the Palm Springs Convention Center in Palm Springs, CA.

### **Roll Call**

The roll call is recorded on the following page.

**DECEMBER 13, 2024**

Location: Palm Springs Convention Center  
 Room: Primrose B  
 277 N. Avenida Caballeros,  
 Palm Springs, CA 92262  
 December 13, 2024  
 8:30am – 10:00am

JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY

**Gary Gardner, Chair**  
 City of Desert Hot Springs

**Waymond Fermon, Vice Chair**  
 City of Indio

**Mark Carnevale**  
 City of Cathedral City

**Dr. Frank Figueroa**  
 City of Coachella

**Greg Sanders**  
 City of Indian Wells

**Linda Evans**  
 City of La Quinta

**Jan Harnik**  
 City of Palm Desert

**Jeffrey Bernstein**  
 City of Palm Springs

**Steve Downs**  
 City of Rancho Mirage

**V. Manuel Perez**  
 County of Riverside

VGPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Rolf Hoehn, Chair**  
 Indian Wells Tennis Garden

**Peggy Trott, Vice Chair**  
 Kimpton Rowan Palm Springs

**Tom Scaramellino, Secretary**  
 Westin Rancho Mirage Golf  
 Resort & Spa

**Affab Dada, Treasurer**  
 Hilton Palm Springs Resort

**Kate Anderson**  
 Agua Caliente Band of  
 Cahuilla Indians

**Lorraine Becker**  
 Cabot's Pueblo Museum

**Sejal Bhakta**  
 Hampton Inn & Suites

**John Bolton**  
 Oak View Group

**Celeste Brackley**  
 The Line & Saguaro Hotels

**Gary Cardiff**  
 Cardiff Limousine &  
 Transportation

**Kenny Cassady**  
 Acme House Company

**Jay Chesterton**  
 Fantasy Springs Resort Casino

**Dermot Connolly**  
 La Quinta Resort and Club

**Tim Ellis (Emeritus)**  
 Ellis Hospitality Services

**Eddy Estrada**  
 Smarter Property Management

**David Felman**  
 VRON of Palm Springs

		PRESENT	NOT/YTD
CITY OF DESERT HOT SPRINGS	Gary Gardner, Council Member, <b>Chair</b>	x	
	Roger Nunez, Council Member		
CITY OF INDIO	Waymond Fermon, Council Member, <b>Vice Chair</b>	x	
	Elaine Holmes, Council Member		
CITY OF CATHEDRAL CITY	Mark Carnevale, Mayor		x
	Nancy Ross, Mayor Pro Tem		x
CITY OF COACHELLA	Dr. Frank Figueroa	x	
CITY OF INDIAN WELLS	Greg Sanders, Mayor	x	
	Ty Peabody, Council Member		
CITY OF LA QUINTA	Linda Evans, Mayor	x	
	Steve Sanchez, Council Member		
CITY OF PALM SPRINGS	Jeffrey Bernstein, Council Member	x	
	Ron deHarte, Mayor Pro Tem		
CITY OF PALM DESERT	Jan Harnik, Mayor Pro Tem	x	
	Karina Quintanilla, Mayor		
CITY OF RANCHO MIRAGE	Steve Downs, Council Member	x	
	TBD		
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE	V. Manuel Perez, Supervisor, 4th District	x	
	Joaquin Tijerina, Economic Development Manager		
VISIT GPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS ROLL CALL		PRESENT	EXCUSED
	Rolf Hoehn, <b>Chair</b> - Indian Wells Tennis Garden	X	
	Peggy Trott, <b>Vice Chair</b> - Kimpton Rowan Palm Springs	X	
	Tom Scaramellino, <b>Secretary</b> - Westin Rancho Mirage Golf Resort	X	

VGPS Board of Directors  
(continued)

**Shannon Gilbert**  
The Ritz-Carlton, Rancho Mirage

**Mark Girton**  
Goldenvoice & Empire Polo

**Rob Hampton**  
Palm Springs Convention Center

**Dan Johnson**  
Grand Hyatt Indian Wells Resort & Villas

**Jerry Keller**  
LULU California Bistro

**Patrick Klein**  
The Gardens on El Paseo

**Kelly McLean**  
MJM Holdings, Inc.,  
McLean Company and Poppy

**Nusrat Mirza**  
JW Marriott Desert Springs

**Allen Monroe**  
The Living Desert

**Lee Morcus (Emeritus)**  
Kaiser Restaurant Group

**Michael Murray**  
Hotel Paseo

**Liz Ostoich**  
FARM and Tac/Quila Palm Springs

**Brad Poncher**  
Homewood Suites by Hilton, La Quinta

**Greg Purdy**  
Palm Springs Aerial Tramway

**Tim Pyne**  
Renaissance Esmeralda Resort & Spa

**Saverio Scheri**  
Agua Caliente Casinos

**Bob Schneider**  
Desert Consulting

**Ankit Sekhri**  
Two Bunch Palms

**Barb Smith**  
Eventis Destination Services

**Boris Stark**  
Palm Desert Vacation Properties

**Joseph Tormey** CSU  
San Bernardino Palm Desert Campus

**Doug Watson**  
Strategy | Innovation | Co.

	PRESENT	EXCUSED
Aftab Dada, <b>Treasurer</b> - Hilton Palm Springs Resort		E
Kate Anderson, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians		E
Lorraine Becker, Cabot's Pueblo Museum	X	
Sejal Bhakta, Hampton Inn & Suites, Palm Desert and Indio	X	
John Bolton, Oak View Group		E
Celeste Brackley, The Line & Saguaro Hotels	X	
Gary Cardiff, Cardiff Limousine & Transportation	X	
Kenny Cassady, Acme House Company	X	
Jay Chesterton, Fantasy Springs Resort Casino		E
Dermot Connolly, La Quinta Resort & Club	X	
Tim Ellis (Emeritus), Ellis Hospitality Services	X	
Eddy Estrada, Smarter Property Management	X	
David Feltman, VRON Palm Springs	X	
Shannon Gilbert, The Ritz-Carlton, Rancho Mirage	X	
Mark Girton, Goldenvoice & Empire Polo	X	
Rob Hampton, Palm Springs Convention Center	X	
Dan Johnson, Grand Hyatt Indian Wells Resort & Villas		E
Jerry Keller, LULU California Bistro		E
Patrick Klein, The Shops on El Paseo	X	
Kelly McLean, Poppy		E
Nusrat Mirza, JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort & Spa		E
Allen Monroe, The Living Desert	X	
Lee Morcus (Emeritus), Kaiser Restaurant Group		A
Michael Murray, Hotel Paseo		E
Liz Ostoich, FARM and Tac/Quila Palm Springs	X	
Brad Poncher, Homewood Suites by Hilton La Quinta	X	
Greg Purdy, Palm Springs Aerial Tramway	X	
Tim Pyne, Renaissance Esmeralda Resort & Spa		A
Saverio Scheri, Agua Caliente Casinos		E

Bob Schneider, Desert Consulting	X
Ankit Sekhri, Two Bunch Palms	X
Barb Smith, Eventis Destination Services	E
Boris Stark, Palm Desert Vacation Properties	E
Joe Tormey, CSU San Bernardino Palm Desert Campus	X
Doug Watson, Strategy   Innovation   Co.	E

**A quorum was reached. 23 BOD and 9 JPA.**

#### STAFF/ATTORNEY

Scott White, President and CEO  
 Bill Judson, VP, Finance and Administration  
 Brian Kelty, Director of Finance  
 Colleen Pace, Chief Sales and Marketing Officer  
 Davis Meyer, Senior Director of Community Affairs  
 Julie Sinclair, Director of Brand Communications  
 Lauren Bruggemans, Dir. of Sustainability & Community Engagement  
 Samuel Thompson, Director of Indian Wells Tourism  
 Sean Smith, Director of Economic Development

Stefanie Kilcoyne, Director of Operations  
 Halle Wells, Communications Coordinator  
 Sarah Goslin, Executive Assistant & Board Administrator  
 Kimber Foster, Director of Palm Springs Tourism  
 Andy Cloutier, Director of Human Resources  
 Bruce T. Bauer, Legal Counsel  
 Todd Burke, VP Communications  
 Joyce Kiehl, Director of Communications  
 Carolina Viazcan, VP Sales  
 Celena Correa, Digital Database Specialist  
 Bob Wilson, Brand Communications Specialist  
 Marta Battle, Destination Experiences Manager

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

JPA Chair, Gary Gardner, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

JPA Chair, Gary Gardner, asked whether there were any changes to the agenda. Hearing none, the agenda was confirmed.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

This Public Comment period is for items that appear within the Consent Calendar or matters that are not listed on the agenda.

JPA Chair Gardner called for public comments.

Public Comment by Brad Anderson – addressing our local city representatives. Mosquito Vector Control concern.

#### Presentation

Jake Ingrassia and Victoria Carpenter with Palm Springs International Airport gave an update on the airport renovations.

- We are working on a master plan and that is a federally required document that helps the FAA plan for funding through the airport. It also helps us plan strategically for the projects that we may need over the course of the next 20 years. The most important thing to understand about the master plan is that it is only a plan. It's a flexible guiding document with plenty of

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opportunities over the course of these multiple projects. It's for public input as well as each project being individually scoped, funded, and approved. We needed an airport master plan because PSP is rapidly increasing in popularity. Coming out of Covid, we've had two back-to-back record-breaking years.

We had 3.2 million total passengers in 2023, we're on track to have about that or better this year. By 2027, just in the near future, 4 million passengers. And by the end of this airport master plan, the 20-year period (2042), we're expecting over 6.4 million passengers. That's double what we had last year. That means that we need to plan for all of that projected growth starting today so that we're ultimately able to accommodate it.

- There are four phases of the master plan process. First, pre-planning, second, investigation, third, solutions, and fourth, implementation. And so right now we're roughly between phase two and phase three. We are investigating all of the potential solutions and public outreach has been a key component through all the course of this master plan process. We've been at it for about a year now. We've held dozens of community group meetings, really trying to get a feel for what the community wants to see reflected for the vision of our airport's master plan.

The last remaining item that we're working on is the location of the rental car center, and we have three alternatives (all can be found on [Palmspringsairportmasterplan.com](http://Palmspringsairportmasterplan.com)). Community outreach sessions have all said they want to preserve the current ease of getting from the planes, into the airport and to the rental car areas.

- Alternative one is the rental car center to the north of the airport. Based on community feedback, this option preserves the character of the airport as it is right now, as well as the ease of use that people have come to know and love by allowing people to walk off the plane, grab their bag and walk right into the rental car center to pick up their vehicle.  
It's proposed right now as a five-story building with two below grade, two above grade and rooftop parking.
  - Alternative two is a south site rental car center. This option would require a shuttle bus operation. We would have a couple of buses running on a loop throughout the time that we have flights operating. The trip would be roughly a 20-minute round trip and would carry them from the terminal to the rental car center on the south side of Kirk Douglas Way.  
That is proposed as a five story above grade building.
  - Alternative three is a hybrid model. This alternative was introduced to address concerns from the community that we heard regarding the size and scope of this rental car center, as well as views that could potentially be obstructed to the north in that north alternative.  
This alternative would possibly be two buildings, the first being on the north side with three levels - two below grade, one above grade and rooftop parking. The second building would be on the south side which we would build as demand indicates later in the future.
  - The hybrid alternative is the model that has been recommended by our airport commission and it will now go to City in January. We're continuing to collect these pieces of feedback and that will all be presented to City Council for a vote next month.
- We have changed all of our concessions at the airport, as we've had the same retail and food and beverage concessions for about 20 years. The last three, Trio, Vino Volo, and the Pink Door are all coming in early 2025.
  - FIS is our federal inspection system that we are trying to get at the airport. We recently completed a feasibility study through a consultant, and we are now working with Customs Border Patrol (CBP) so that we can get police or CBP officer allocation to the Palm Springs area. That is a federal mandate for us to work through CBP. They have to be able to have staffing and allocation. So, our next phase is getting letters of support from our airlines that want to come into Palm Springs market and preparing to present our capability study to headquarters and the LA Office. Once approved, we can then have our FIS for international flights. We think
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we have opportunities for up to four daily flights from cities south of the border, and there are some suggestions for one daily nonstop to the Western Europe region.

- We have installed a new courtyard shade structure just outside the TSA checkpoint, with another being installed at the nine cities restaurant.
- Over the next few months, you're going to see an activation space with a nice seating area and places for you to plug in to use our recently upgraded Wi-Fi.
- The Wi-Fi is being upgraded in three phases. Phase one and two are both completed in the Bono concourse, Agua Caliente concourse, and the center terminal. The third phase is the outdoor areas, and the airport will be completely upgraded.
- A new TSA 7<sup>th</sup> lane with reconfigured checkpoint installed before Thanksgiving has been successful thus far.
- We will be installing terminal or Terraza flooring throughout the whole terminal within the next year, to year and a half.
- We will be expanding our baggage claim sometime in the next 3-5 years.
- Finally, we will also be replacing the revolving doors from the courtyard to the main lobby with a more state-of-the-art system that will improve the flow of passenger traffic from the courtyard into the baggage claim.
- New grants for emissions vehicles?  
Passengers are up by 8-9% from last year – the most the airport has ever had during season.
- The airport was recently awarded a six-million-dollar grant for upgrading our outbound baggage handling system. We've also received a grant to convert our vehicles to zero emission vehicles.
- Air Service Update for December through 2025:
  - We are on track to do about the same as we did last year. 3.2 million passengers in total in 2023. November was slightly down primarily due to the loss of JetBlue, but with the addition of five new routes and two new airlines in December, we are expecting a 1% increase this month.
  - March and April is up about eight to nine percent from last year, and is thanks to all of the new air service that we're bringing in, which is actually the most air service that PSP has ever offered to date.

We just launched a new airline yesterday, Porter, with non-stop service seasonally to Toronto, and today, Frontier is coming in with year-round, nonstop service to SFO and Denver. Some say Palm Springs is more expensive than our competitor airports, so this introduces some pricing competition (a more affordable option) for people who might be looking for a lower price point.

Next week we are launching United non-stop to Washington Dulles, which not only connects us with Washington DC and the nation's capital, but also over 230 connection opportunities for international travel.

Next Saturday, Delta is coming in with another non-stop to JFK.

We launched Alaska's non-stop to JFK this year and so this will be the second non-stop route to New York City.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES (All Vote)

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## JPA – VGPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS JOINT MEETING MINUTES DATED September 27, 2024 (all vote)

The JPA Executive Committee and VGPS Board of Directors Joint Meeting Minutes dated September 27, 2024, were presented for approval. JPA Chair Gardner asked for a motion. Steve Downs with City of Rancho Mirage made a motion to approve, Waymond Fermon with the City of Indio seconded. No abstentions. There was no further discussion, and the minutes were approved based on the roll call at the beginning of the meeting.

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## CONSENT CALENDAR (only JPA Executive Committee votes)

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1. Warrants and Demands Dated September 2024
2. Warrants and Demands Dated October 2024
3. Warrants and Demands Dated November 2024

The Warrants and Demands dated September, October, and November 2024 for Pacific Premier Bank were presented for approval. JPA Chair Gardner asked for changes or abstentions. No changes or abstentions. Linda Evans with the City of La Quinta made a motion to approve. Jeffrey Bernstein with the City of Palm Springs seconded. The Warrants and Demands were approved based on the roll call vote at the beginning of the meeting.

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## JPA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATES

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- Gary Gardner with the City of Desert Hot Springs:
  - The DHS Christmas lighting and parade is tomorrow at 5:00 pm
  - Food truck Friday nights on Pearson resumes in January
- Jeffrey Bernstein with the City of Palm Springs:
  - Palm Springs has over 150 events from Thanksgiving to January 6<sup>th</sup>.
  - Today through Sunday the Musical Theater University students will be downtown next to the Rowan performing.
  - The Palm Springs International Film Festival looks like it will have the most star power to date.
- Linda Evans with the City of La Quinta:
  - The AMEX Golf Tournament takes place January 16-19
  - Next year's Ironman will be a La Quinta only event.
- Jan Harnik with the City of Palm Desert:
  - The Living Desert Holiday Lights event is a must see.
  - Restoration Hardware has newly opened on El Paseo.
- Waymond Fermon with the City of Indio:
  - The Indio Magic of Lights still going on at Empire Polo.
- Sejal Bhakta:
  - Our property in Palm Desert just installed a beer & wine wall and sweet shop.

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## VGPS BOARD (BOD Vote Only)

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1. Tim Ellis presented the VGPS Board of Directors Officers Renewals which included: Rolf Hoehn for Chair, Peggy Trott for Vice Chair, Tom Scaramellino for Secretary, and Aftab Dada for Treasurer.

Bob Schneider made a motion to approve, and Gary Cardiff seconded. No abstentions. All approved based on the roll call at the beginning of the meeting.

2. The VGPS Board of Directors voted on the 2025-2027 Directors Renewals which included: Aftab Dada, Rolf Hoehn, Sejal Bhakta, Celeste Brackley, Gary Cardiff, Jay Chesterton, Eddy Estrada, David Feltman, Allen Monroe, Michael Murray, Liz Ostoich, Brad Poncher, Greg Purdy, Tim Pyne, and Boris Stark.

Peggy Trott made a motion to approve, and Kenny Cassidy seconded. No abstentions. All approved based on the roll call at the beginning of the meeting.

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## JPA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (JPA Vote Only)

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1. The JPA Executive Committee voted to approve Resolution No. JPA 2024-011 – Intention to Modify TBID to include City of Coachella

Dr. Frank Figueroa with the City of Coachella made a motion to approve and Jan Harnik with the City of Palm Desert seconded. No abstentions. A representative from the City of Cathedral City was not present to vote. All approved based on the roll call at the beginning of the meeting.

2. The JPA Executive Committee voted to approve the Officer Elections for 2025-2026 which included: Waymond Fermon with City of Indio for Chair, and Linda Evans with City of La Quinta for Vice Chair

Jan Harnik with the City of Palm Desert made a motion to approve and Dr. Frank Figueroa with the City of Coachella seconded. No abstentions. A representative from the City of Cathedral City was not present to vote. All approved based on the roll call at the beginning of the meeting.

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## CEO / PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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The complete Board Packet can be viewed on our website [here](#), and a direct link to the presentation also available on our website is [here](#).

### Scott White:

1. We are involved with the Jack and Jill Foundation, which is a foundation that works with oncologists around the country to provide the opportunity for terminal cancer patients to have a family vacation of their choice wherever they want to go. They partner with different destinations around the country. We volunteered for that program and have already had a family here about a year and a half ago. The foundation came back to us with another family that's very interested in coming to the destination in early January. The team has put together a nice itinerary for them and thank you to Nusrat and the JW for hosting the rooms for this family. And thank you to a lot of our partners for stepping up as well.
2. As you know, we work with a company called FiredUp! Culture, which is an organization that really tries to help organizations such as ours with coaching, team building, and cultural enhancements.

We have coaching available to our staff throughout the entire year to talk about opportunities or things that help them become better leaders within their departments. It's been widely successful. And then every so often we like to do a cultural survey. So, we're just wrapping up our culture survey for 2024. We have a lot of new employees that have come on board, and we thought it important to hear from them to make sure that what we're doing and how we're managing the day-to-day, the processes, everything that's happening within the organization is spot on. FiredUp! Will be in our office in January to meet with our staff and go over the survey results and continue our team building. We will have a full report to share with you at the January Board Meeting.

3. Update on progress and updated timeline for VGPS Board Priorities with Coraggio, the consultation group hired to facilitate our Board Strategy Sessions to set our 2025-2027 Board Priorities.

We had 31 Board Members and 10 JPA attend our strategy session on November 13<sup>th</sup> at the Thompson, which went very well, and we received great feedback from everyone. It was clear to us that the priorities continue to really resonate around regional collaboration off peak. You can redefine summer to off peak, which is May through December, and how do we continue to enhance that and stewardship of the industry and the area as well.

Coraggio then did a session with our leadership team on property at Visit Greater Palm Springs.

Afterwards, as they were presenting the deck that would be presented to you during the scheduled virtual meeting, we felt that there wasn't enough substance there that really warranted for you to take time out of your day to essentially be given a recap, which I'm giving



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you right now. So, we canceled the virtual session to give them some more time to really distill the information that they received from you all and from our leadership team. We will be going through that with them next week. Our goal is to make sure we have all this wrapped up by the end of January. We will present results at the January 31<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting.

4. We were in Osaka for IGLTA, where representatives from over 50 countries were in the destination. Mayor Jeffrey Bernstein and Rob Hampton joined us as well. We are very excited for their conference in Palm Springs in October 2025, where we're hearing may have attendance of upwards of 1500 attendees or more.

John Ella is the President & CEO for IGLTA. He's buying a house in our destination, so he's becoming a permanent resident of Palm Springs.

We have our planning committee starting next week on the 17<sup>th</sup>, with Danny Guerrero as the facilitator of that. We have 20 stakeholders - thank you Rob and the Convention Center for hosting the first meeting. This will really give us an opportunity to work with this committee and to work with the IGLTA staff. There is about 10 IGLTA staff coming in as well, which are remote all over the world, so it's nice if they're coming in to be committed to this destination.

#### **Colleen Pace provided updates on Marketing and Travel Trade:**

##### Marketing:

1. Thank you to the Westin and the City of Rancho Mirage for sponsoring and hosting the LIVE with Kelly and Mark show.

Preliminary numbers are above expectation, but they will be providing us with a full report. We received seventeen million dollars in estimated advertising value from these four shows that ran in November. We had almost nine million unique viewers. One hundred and five million reach from the earned media, four point seven million video views across all of their platforms. Seven point eight million impressions, and two hundred fifty million engagements on social. On our own channels we had one point one million video views, over sixty thousand engagements, and five hundred fifty thousand impressions. So, for that short period of time, that is an incredible amount of engagement.

2. NCAA Acrisure Classic Sponsorship had over 14,455 total attendances. 19 games over 4 days with over 1450 contracted room nights and 1.3 million views.
3. We're promoting all the 2024 Holiday events, including Wild Lights, Magic Lights, and Palm Springs Holidays. These and all the other holiday events are on the VGPS website and consumer newsletter. Holiday blogs are our highest viewed blogs currently, with over 15,000 views in just a very short period of time.
4. We support signature and destination events. Here are a couple of videos showing a few of the events we supported in 2024 and some of the upcoming in 2025.
5. Two new Video Series launching: Your Guide To – Season 3 just launched, and DineGPS will launch in January.
6. PR/Communications participated in two recent media missions with Visit California. One with South Korea, Korea and China, meeting with 40 traditional media, and 30 content creators, engaging with the top social media platforms that we're considering reengaging with. The other was ILTM in Paris, with a lot of great one-on-one meetings. They brought in 20 influencer digital creators as well.

#### **Carolina Viazcan gave the Sales & Events Report Out:**

1. We are at 87% of our goal, with plenty in the funnel to achieve it. Future pace 2024-2027 shows: 17% ahead of our pace target for this year and 38% ahead for 2025. 2026 is flat and our focus continues to be for the years 2027 and beyond, which is currently about 20% behind.

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2. We are hosting two FAMs from December 19, 2024 – January 5, 2025, which include the Inaugural New York Flight FAM, (hosting 15 clients with guests including meeting planners, travel trade and media) thank you to La Quinta Resort for rooms host hotel, and the Palm Springs International Film Festival FAM (hosting 27 clients plus their guests) thank you to Thompson Palm Springs for rooms host hotel.
  3. We are hosting Go West Summit at PSCC and Renaissance Palm Springs, January 6-9, 2025 – where we will see 180 buyers and media representing over 16 countries.
  4. We are also hosting the Airport Roundtable Series at Omni Rancho Las Palmas Resort, January 8-10, 2025 – 65 attendees representing 9 airlines and different representatives from the airports throughout the US.

**Sean Smith gave economic development updates:**

1. At an October 22nd meeting, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors approved a contract with a consultant, the Natelson Dale Group, for the completion of a countywide economic development strategic plan. As part of the scope of services that the consultant will be working on for the overall region of the county, which is one of the fastest growing regions in all of California, we will be receiving an enhanced plan specific to Greater Palm Springs, which will be a great resource for us moving forward. The county representatives have indicated that those plans should be complete by fall of 2025.
2. As our work with North Star Consultants continues, they completed their initial phase of a significant amount of data collection and research, and we are now moving into the brand creative phase of the work, utilizing all the data collected from that initial phase. This will help identify who we are and reflect who we are as a regional economic development organization.

The creative committee facilitated by the North Star group, have completed two meetings to date. The first was held on October 31st, which was an introduction to the process. The group was shown a number of design elements from other organizations and agencies for feedback. The next meeting was held on December 5th, where we went through some straplines and messaging opportunities for consideration. The next meeting will be in January (date is to be determined), but we're a few months away from being able to actually launch our branding.

3. The Inland Economic Growth & Opportunity and Inland Empire Labor Institute have combined efforts to implement the first California Jobs First initiative on a regional effort. We've been asked to be their backbone organization, which essentially means we will be reaching out to a variety of stakeholders through the Valley to discuss workforce development and job creation. This gives us an opportunity to be a resource to those stakeholders, primarily in areas of sustainability and in populations that are traditionally underserved, to potentially connect them with grant funding as well as resources at the regional and the state level. We've agreed to take on that role, given it's in line with some of the work that we're already doing. This initiative has just started, but we'll certainly be providing updates as we move forward.

**Davis Meyer gave partnership updates:**

1. The Leadership Institute Certificate program with College of the Desert, previously the Emerging Leaders, schedule has been posted for 2025. There's two series of courses that are going to be available in February and March. This is an incredible opportunity, if you're not familiar with it, for people who are going into their first supervisory roles or new leadership positions in hospitality. It's a seven-part in-person rigorous leadership training course. We've received great feedback from a lot of our hotel partners and people that have participated so far. We are continuing to offer scholarships for this through the Tourism Foundation. If you have staff that you feel would benefit from this training and help advance them in your organization it, it's about a thousand dollars cost. The Tourism Foundation does cover that, and you can apply at [goteamgps.com](http://goteamgps.com) for scholarships. We are also working on the next evolution of this, which is a Visionary Leadership Certificate Program for people who are more seasoned in their hospitality leadership careers. We will be reaching out to a lot of you the first quarter of 2025 to audit that course and give us feedback.

2. Thank you to everyone that helped with and attended the 2024 Champions of Hospitality Awards Gala. This is the largest fundraising event for the Tourism Foundation and our opportunity to recognize our local hospitality industry workers.
3. We made the Green Destinations Top 100 stories competition for the second year with our story, The Power of Inclusion: Amplifying Authentic Experiences and Local Voices. This recognizes our destinations efforts towards responsible tourism and distinctive appeal.
4. VGPS won the Outstanding Organizational Initiative Award from Travel Unity at their inaugural DEI Award Gala. This award acknowledges our commitment to inclusion through the lens of youth engagement and workforce development, honoring our Summer 2024 Youth Leadership (Micro-Internship) Program.

A local CSUSB student, Diego Rendon, and a Tourism Foundation Scholar, was honored with the Travel Unity Youth Award for his exceptional dedication to advancing inclusion in travel and the college experience at CSUSB.

**Scott White closing remarks:**

Congratulated Tom Scaramellino on his retirement from the Westin Rancho Mirage and presented him with a gift and signed card from VGPS, the Board of Directors, and JPA Executive Committee.

Recognized Board & JPA birthdays for October, November, and December.

**FUTURE MEETING DATE**

- January 31, 2025 | Agua Caliente Casino Resort & Spa, Rancho Mirage

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by Scott White & Gary Gardner at 9:52 a.m.

**Clerk for the Board:**



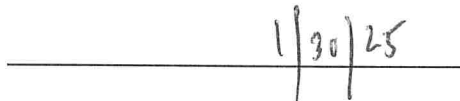
Sarah Goslin, Executive Assistant & Board Administrator

**VGPS Board of Directors Secretary:**



Tom Scaramellino, Secretary

**Approval Date:**



1/30/25