



## **JOINT MEETING JPA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & CVB BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES**

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### **Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 8:07 a.m. by Linda Evans, JPA Chair and Mayor of the City of La Quinta, at the Agua Caliente Casino Resort Spa, Cahuilla DEC, in Rancho Mirage, CA.

### **Roll Call**

The roll call is recorded on the following page.

**MARCH 22, 2019**

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JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY

Linda Evans, Chair  
City of La Quinta

Geoff Kors, Vice Chair  
City of Palm Springs

Ernesto Gutierrez  
City of Cathedral City

Gary Gardner  
City of Desert Hot Springs

Richard Balocco  
City of Indian Wells

Elaine Holmes  
City of Indio

Jan Harnik  
City of Palm Desert

Charles Townsend  
City of Rancho Mirage

V. Manuel Perez  
County of Riverside

CVB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tom Tabler, Chairman  
J.W. Marriott Desert Springs  
Resort & Spa

Rolf Hoehn, Vice Chairman  
Indian Wells Tennis Garden

Robert Del Mas, Secretary  
Empire Polo Club & Event  
Facility

Aftab Dada, Treasurer  
Hilton Palm Springs Resort

Bruce Abney  
El Morocco Inn & Spa

Rick Axelrod  
Coachella Valley Economic  
Partnership

Lorraine Becker  
Cabot's Pueblo Museum

Celeste Brackley  
Ace Hotel & Swim Club

Tony Bruggemans  
Le Vallauris

Jamey Canfield  
Palm Springs Convention  
Center

Gary Cardiff  
Cardiff Limousine &  
Transportation

Jay Chesterton  
Fantasy Springs Resort Casino

Stephen D'Agostino  
Hyatt Regency Indian Wells

Tim Ellis  
TravelHost Palm Springs

Michael Facenda  
Agua Caliente Resort Casino

Dr. Ron Fremont  
CSU San Bernardino  
Palm Desert Campus

Jerry Keller  
Lulu California Bistro

Location: Agua Caliente Casino Resort Spa  
32250 Bob Hope Drive  
Rancho Mirage, CA 92270

Regular Meeting  
Friday, March 22, 2019, 8:00am – 10:00am

JPA ROLL CALL   PRESENT		PRESENT	NOT/YTD
CITY OF LA QUINTA	Linda Evans, Mayor, Chair	X	
	Robert Radi, Council Member		
CITY OF PALM SPRINGS	Geoff Kors, Council Member, Vice Chair	X	
	Robert Moon, Mayor		
CITY OF CATHEDRAL CITY	Ernesto Gutierrez, Council Member	X	
	Mark Carnevale, Mayor Pro Tem		
CITY OF DESERT HOT SPRINGS	Gary Gardner, Council Member	X	
	Jan Pye, Mayor Pro Tem		
CITY OF INDIAN WELLS	Richard Balocco, Council Member		
	Ted Mertens, Mayor	X	
CITY OF INDIO	Elaine Holmes, Council Member	X	
	Waymond Fermon, Council Member		
CITY OF PALM DESERT	Jan Harnik, Council Member	X	
	Gina Nestande, Mayor Pro Tem		
CITY OF RANCHO MIRAGE	Charles Townsend, Council Member		1
	Iris Smotrich, Mayor Pro Tem	X	
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE	V. Manuel Perez, Supervisor, 4th District		
	Steven Hernandez, Chief of Staff	X	
CVB BOARD OF DIRECTORS ROLL CALL		PRESENT	EXCUSED
Tom Tabler, Chair, J.W. Marriott Desert Springs Resort & Spa		X	
Rolf Hoehn, Vice Chair, Indian Wells Tennis Garden		X	
Robert Del Mas, Secretary, Empire Polo Club		X	
Aftab Dada, Treasurer, Hilton Palm Springs Resort		X	

CVB Board of Directors  
(continued)

Abe Liao  
Kimpton Rowan Palm Springs

Jay Mainthia  
Indio Super 8 and Suites

Michael McLean  
McLean Company Rentals

Allen Monroe  
The Living Desert

Lee Morcus (Emeritus)  
Kaiser Restaurant Group

Thomas Nolan  
Palm Springs International  
Airport

Brad Poncher  
Homewood Suites by Hilton,  
La Quinta

Greg Purdy  
Palm Springs Aerial Tramway

Christoph Roshardt  
Renaissance Indian Wells

Tom Scaramellino  
Westin Mission Hills Golf Resort  
& Spa

Bob Schneider  
Desert Consulting

Barb Smith  
Access Palm Springs

Kelly Steward  
The Ritz-Carlton Rancho  
Mirage

Doug Watson  
Riviera Palm Springs

Elie Zod  
Retired Hospitality Executive

Bruce Abney, El Morocco Inn & Spa	X	
Rick Axelrod, Coachella Valley Economic Partnership (CVEP)		X
Lorraine Becker, Cabot's Pueblo Museum	X	
Celeste Brackley, ACE Hotel & Swim Club		
Tony Bruggemans, Le Vallauris	X	
Jamey Canfield, Palm Springs Convention Center		
Gary Cardiff, Cardiff Limousine & Transportation		
Jay Chesterton, Fantasy Springs Resort Casino	X	
Stephen D'Agostino, Hyatt Regency Indian Wells		X
Tim Ellis, TravelHost Palm Springs		X
Michael Facenda, Agua Caliente Resort Spa / Spa Resort Casino	X	
Ron Fremont, CSUSB Palm Desert Campus		X
Jerry Keller, Lulu and Acqua California Bistros		
Abe Liao, Kimpton Rowan		
Jay Mainthia, Indio Super 8 Motel		
Michael McLean, McLean Company Rentals	X	
Allen Monroe, The Living Desert		X
Lee Morcus (Emeritus), Kaiser Restaurant Group		X
Tom Nolan, Palm Springs International Airport	X	
Brad Poncher, Homewood Suites by Hilton, La Quinta	X	
Greg Purdy, Palm Springs Aerial Tramway	X	
Christoph Roshardt, Renaissance Indian Wells Resort	X	
Tom Scaramellino, Westin Mission Hills Golf Resort & Spa		X
Bob Schneider, Desert Consulting	X	
Barb Smith, Access Palm Springs	X	
Kelly Steward, The Ritz-Carlton, Rancho Mirage		X
Doug Watson, Doubletree by Hilton		
Elie Zod, Retired Hospitality Executive		X



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#### STAFF/ATTORNEY

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Scott White, President and CEO  
Jeff Miraglia, Chief Brand Officer  
Bob Thibault, Chief Development Officer  
Colleen Pace, Chief Marketing Officer  
Rob Osterberg, Director of Convention Sales  
Andy Cloutier, Director of Human Resources  
Joyce Kiehl, Director of Communications  
Gary Orfield, Director of Travel Industry Sales  
Julie Sinclair, Director of Brand Communications

Anndee Laskoe, Director of Brand Content  
Marissa Willman, Director of Digital Marketing  
Davis Meyer, Partnership Manager  
Krystal Kusmieruk, Social Media Manager  
Amber Warren, Brand Coordinator  
Erica Abarca, Development Administrative Assistant  
Reva Reynolds, Executive Administrative Assistant  
Ashley Mastako, Communications Coordinator  
Colin Kirkpatrick, Legal Counsel

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#### GUESTS

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Peter Freymuth, PS Airport Commission  
Mary Jo Ginther, Palm Springs Bureau of Tourism  
JL Mertens, Guest of City of Indian Wells  
Brian Nestande, Riverside County

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#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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Chair Evans lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

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#### CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

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The agenda was accepted unanimously.

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#### PUBLIC COMMENT

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There were no comments from the public.

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#### PRESENTATION

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None.

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#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES (ALL VOTE)

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The JPA-CVB Board of Directors Joint Meeting Minutes dated January 25, 2019 (all vote).

The JPA Executive Committee and CVB Board of Directors Joint Meeting Minutes dated January 25, 2019, were approved without changes. The vote was unanimous based on the roll call taken at the beginning of the meeting (Harnik / Hoehn).

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#### CONSENT CALENDAR (JPA EXEC COMMITTEE ONLY VOTES)

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1. Warrants and Demands Dated January 31, 2019
2. Warrants and Demands Dated February 28, 2019

Chair Evans noted the warrants and demands were included in the meeting documents in advance. The consent calendar was approved and the vote was unanimous based on the roll call taken at the beginning of the meeting (Harnik / Kors).

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## JPA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ITEMS (JPA Executive Committee Only Votes)

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### UPDATES FROM THE CHAIR

**Linda Evans** had no specific updates as the Chair of the JPA Executive Committee, but kicked off the updates from the JPA members by noting that the Montage and Pendry hotels at SilverRock in the City of La Quinta are under way. The La Quinta Arts Festival is completed.

### UPDATES FROM THE JPA MEMBERS

**Geoff Kors** reported that the City of Palm Springs launched "uniquely Palm Springs" to feature the unique local businesses. This initiative came from the Economic Development Business Retention Subcommittee. The feedback from retail so far is that the effort is having a positive impact. The City also launched a TOT rebate program for hotel renovations, focused on small hotels, but all hotels are eligible. The City plans to revisit its Noise and Events ordinance.

**Ted Mertens**, City of Indian Wells, reported that the BNP Paribas tennis tournament was very successful. The City is looking forward to the Pickleball Tournament again in November and the Ironman again in December.

**Iris Smotrich** reported that the Omni Rancho Las Palmas and Holiday Inn Express in Rancho Mirage both completed upgrades in 2018 including room remodels, Splashtopia, new pool and eatery. The Ritz Carlton Rancho Mirage is also discussing an expansion. One of the car dealers is building a new showroom. New businesses include an Irish Pub near Gelson's and Krispy Kreme, which is set to open April 16, 2019.

**Jan Harnik** reported that Palm Desert Field Day was March 9. They are in the midst of the Food & Wine Festival. Last year, five local chefs were invited to New York City for the James Beard luncheon and they have been invited back for this October's James Beard event. Palm Desert also just finished hosting Fashion Week.

**Elaine Holmes** is pleased the Coachella Valley is busy. The City of Indio welcomes Homewood Suites which is currently being framed. The Marriott Fairfield is doing well since its opening in December. The annual Tamale Festival attracted 300,000 visitors. The City and festival planners implemented some new ideas this past year and are re-energizing the event. She noted that the 2019 Tamale Festival and the Ironman event are on the same weekend.

**Gary Gardner** is pleased to attend his first Greater Palm Springs CVB meeting representing the City of Desert Hot Springs. DHS hosted the inaugural Kind Music Festival and 7,000 people attended the one-day event. Tyson was the sponsor and plans to continue. He expressed thanks to all cities who donated to Desert X; the event is very beneficial for Desert Hot Springs and the City was proud to have two installations in the City. Desert X encourages visitors to explore the outlying areas of the Coachella Valley. The City is working to secure funding for a visitors center and park center for the Sand to Snow National Monument. The mayor and members of council are traveling to Washington, DC, to lobby in favor of the Monument. Also, cannabis tourism is enticing visitors to Desert Hot Springs to visit the new facilities. The mineral hot springs combine well with this new industry.

**Ernesto Gutierrez** reported that Cathedral City will celebrate LGBT days March 30 and they still have space for entries. The new location for the Coachella Valley Repertory Theater just opened. Also, Cathedral Canyon Drive just reopened following the flood damage this spring.

**Steven Hernandez** reported no update from the County of Riverside.

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## CEO/PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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### BOARD REPORT FOR MARCH 2019

Scott White thanked Michael Facenda and the Agua Caliente Casino Resort Spa team for hosting today's meeting.

#### Marketing

Scott White introduced Colleen Pace who reported that the CVB has finalized the summer coop participants for 2019. There are 13 and the new participant is the Ritz-Carlton Rancho Mirage. The new media in 2019 will target fly markets with weather-triggered ads during the coldest winter months. Starting in May, the CVB will target the get-away markets (drive). The CVB will also put ads in Airline Weekly, targeting airline network planners. The publication has 14,000 subscribers. Expedia,

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Canada, launched February 8, 2019, with \$1.5M in gross bookings. There is also a campaign with Brand USA and Expedia targeting visitors from Mexico.

Recapping GPS Next, Pace reported that there were 106 attendees and the follow-up survey indicated 88% of people rated the event excellent or very good and 86 said they will definitely return. The CVB welcomes feedback on the event.

### **Digital Marketing**

Marissa Willman reported that in Digital Marketing, the CVB implemented Arrivalist last July, which tracks arrivals to the destination (via mobile devices) after exposure to digital media or the CVB website. Other DMOs in our competitive set participate in this program. Also, Adara tracks booking data for website visitors and users exposed to digital advertising and estimates the resulting spend in the destination. On the website, the CVB is using SEO Content (Search Engine Optimization) to optimize landing pages and blog posts to increase organic traffic to the website. The top five blog posts included "Hot Water Guide to Desert Hot Springs" and spots about Modernism Week 2019 and Desert X. The CVB also created landing pages for the signature events to drive more traffic to the website. The Desert X page was the top performing page and 25,000 people downloaded the Desert X app. In new initiatives, Willman's department created Meetings Deals to drive website traffic to Group Deals. There is no cost to participants who want to post a "deal."

### **Convention Sales**

Scott White introduced Rob Osterberg to report for Mark Crabb who is in Chicago. Osterberg reported that the CVB hosted a BNP Paribas Open FAM last week with 18 attendees. He thanked the JW Marriott Desert Springs for hosting the accommodations and thanked Rolf Hoehn and his staff at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden. In the past, this FAM provided 96 destination leads totaling 66,111 room nights. Convention Sales has a new initiative, the Customer Advisory Board, which will include seasoned and new business leaders. The program will be developed in 2019 and the inaugural meeting will be in 2020. The update on the Site Experience is that there have been 18 site experiences surveyed with an overall score of 8.7 out of 10.0. The Convention Sales Video Content series will have 12 episodes. Two have been completed. With this series, meeting planners and their attendees can see the potential experiences they can have in our destination and how GPS is differentiated from other destinations.

### **Travel Industry Sales**

Gary Orfield reported that there are three business-to-business marketing campaigns targeting Australia, Ireland and the United Kingdom, respectively. The run dates are each a little different, but take place between January and May 2019. Tour operators are using our So-Cal Triangle strategy. The Palm Springs Courtyard Marriott is one of the hotels featured. GPS is hosting the California Cup this year. This is a VIP FAM, attended by presidents, managing directors, and owners of tour-related businesses. It is a 4-day program and over 50 clients are coming from around the world. The JW Marriott Desert Springs is hosting. There are still spots available and CVB board members are encouraged to participate. Visit California has identified India as a growth market. They are partnering with Sartha Marketing, an India-based trade and PR representation agency. The CVB is participating in a FAM they developed taking place May 16-19, 2019. A participation form will come out on Monday for those who would like to join in. Finally, Travel Industry Sales is redirecting budget resources and coordinating a So Cal VIP FAM, designed to bring clients here so they can experience the destination. A number of significant agencies are coming out from the Los Angeles area for Stagecoach and other activities.

### **Social Media**

Krystal Kusmieruk noted that US Travel designates one day a year for people to plan their vacation. The CVB conducted a promotional 24-hour sweepstakes and asked followers to provide their input, generating 201,764 impressions. This year's superbloom made national news. The CVB coordinated an interview with Visit California, put a blog post on the CVB website, and posted videos on social media. Regarding the Craft GPS series, the Truss & Twine video was shown. Eight episodes will be created. The Chill Chaser series is in its third season. The episode featuring dog-friendly locations was shown. Anndee Laskoe reported that Wander List is in its third season. One of the new segments is Vintage Shopping which was shown. It has already received more than 215,000 views. The next piece, coming out next week, is Unique Boutiques and Historical Small Hotels.

### **Communications**

Joyce Kiehl began with a staff update, announcing that Ashley Mastako was promoted to Media Relations Manager. A new Communications Coordinator will be hired. CVB staff members traveled to Boston in February for the inaugural Boston to Palm Springs flight on JetBlue. The Palm Springs Bureau of Tourism greeted everyone when they landed in Palm Springs. The Communications team has hosted media and events for Tristan Banning (Sidewalk Hustle), Andrew Nelson (National Geographic), Annabel Herrick (Amuse) and worked with Desert X to promote the event. Featured coverage included 101 articles about various aspects of the destination. The Barcelona Quality Score is used to measure the quality of the coverage, not just the quantity. The average score per article is over 7. The value of the CVB's media exposure is tracking at over \$2 million. Upcoming initiatives include a Mexico media mission, a German press FAM, a VCA Taiwan press FAM, a Visit



California Korea/Japan media mission, Restaurant Week activities, National Travel & Tourism week, and more. The SATW (Society of American Travel Writers) Eastern Chapter Conference will be here in June from the east coast.

#### **Partnership**

Davis Meyer reported that the annual Oasis Awards will be held at the Palm Springs Convention Center on June 11 and will include lunch this year. Some new categories have been created. Upcoming Partner events include the Merv Griffin Estate on April 3, the Coachella Valley Repertory Theater on April 30, and two more events in May. The CTA (Certified Tourism Ambassador) Program has certified 86 ambassadors to date. It was reported that Bruce Abney's whole team at the El Morocco is certified or enrolled in a class. Meyer encouraged all to host a class for their staff. Partners are encouraged to provide incentives/rewards to CTA graduates. The CVB created a landing page on its website for the CTA program.

White announced that the Greater Palm Springs Tourism Foundation has received its IRS approval.

#### **Destination Development**

Bob Thibault summarized the VisaVue statistics, indicating that total spending is up 6.7% YOY. Los Angeles is our biggest market and Seattle and New York are up. The CVB started promoting to Las Vegas and those numbers are up, too. The dineGPS update focused on Restaurant Week which is May 31 through June 9, 2019. Agua Caliente Casinos is a presenting sponsor.

With respect to air service, the average load factors at PSP for February were up 5.7% YOY and the total passenger activity for January and February were up 18.6% and 16.5% respectively. Delta has new service to Atlanta and JetBlue extended its New York flight through May 2019.

Thibault reported that Destination Next is a survey the CVB will implement to provide feedback from key people in the destination to determine destination priorities and strategies. The assessment will take place April-May 2019 and a presentation of results will take place in June. Participants invited to take the survey are CVB Partners and stakeholders, government leaders, meeting planners, travel trade professionals, and community leaders.

White noted that with respect to air service, he is negotiating to encourage the New York service to start in September and he is reaching out about some other destinations.

#### **California Travel Association Update**

White provided an update on the California Travel Association. He is serving on its Government Relations Committee and noted that 2,000 bills were introduced in Sacramento in 2018. One hundred of them had an impact on tourism. The organization works with the California Chamber and other groups and advocates on behalf of tourism. Assemblyman Eduardo Garcia's Salton Sea bill is pending referral to the policy committee. Priority Topics for 2019 include homelessness, protecting tourism funding, labor and workforce issues, sustainability, short-term rentals, infrastructure needs, etc. The CA Travel Association is working to develop its PAC (Political Action Committee). Other interest groups benefit from a well-funded PAC. The PAC raised about \$30,000 in past years and increased that number to \$157,000 in 2018. The goal is to get to \$500,000. The CVB will look at opportunities to raise money for the PAC. White noted that Bob Schneider went to Sacramento and the convention in San Diego. Jeff Miraglia is the chair of the Cal Travel marketing committee and Mary Jo Ginther is also involved, so the destination has some momentum already.

The California Travel Summit will take place September 10-13, 2019, at the JW Marriott at L.A. LIVE.

#### **Monthly Summary Financial Report & Treasurer's Report – January 2019**

Scott White noted that John Kirby has announced his retirement. His replacement, Bill Judson, from Sonoma, is scheduled to start work April 15. There were no comments or questions regarding the financials.

### **CVB BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE**

#### **UPDATES FROM THE CHAIR**

Tom Tabler thanked the CVB staff for their hard work. The Chairman's Committee will meet soon and he will report out at the next board meeting. He noted the importance of the Destination Development Plan and the hospitality program being developed at CSUSB Palm Desert campus. He also reminded members about the Oasis Awards scholarships and encouraged all members to offer nominations for Oasis Awards. Tabler noted that John Kirby was missed today and congratulated him on his retirement. Tabler also requested an offer for a meeting venue for the next board meeting in May.

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## CVB BOARD MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Tom Tabler announced that Abe Liao (Kimpton Rowan Palm Springs) is moving to Washington, D.C., and Gil Reyes at Hotel Paseo is going to a Westin property in Florida, which leaves two openings on the board. Brad Poncher, speaking on behalf of Tim Ellis, the chair of the nominating committee, directed board members to communicate their nominations to either Revae Reynolds or Tim Ellis for follow up.

## MEMBER UPDATES ON NEW DEVELOPMENT

Tom Tabler welcomed board members to provide a brief update if they have new developments to share.

**Christoph Roshardt** announced that the Renaissance Indian Wells will begin renovating guest rooms on June 10, elevating the suites, remodeling the lobby bar over June through August and re-opening in October.

**Tony Bruggemans** noted that Palm Springs is busy and remembers years ago when it was less so. Le Vallauris has had a great season, although the rain decreased patio seating.

**Greg Purdy** announced the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway's goal to re-open on April 1. He noted their security camera captured impressive footage of the rain damage. The Tram paid their employees during the closure.

**Robert Del Mas** reported that the Empire Polo Club and Events is gearing up for Coachella and Stagecoach. They have two weddings on Saturday, corporate events next week, and then soft load-in starts a week from tomorrow for the concerts. Attendance is expected to be good. Coachella sold out within six hours.

**Tom Tabler** announced that the JW Marriott Desert Springs is doing some remodeling through December 1, 2019.

**Rolf Hoehn** reported that the BNP Paribas tennis tournament was very successful and set a new record: attendance was 475,000. Last year was 454,000, so they are getting closer to their target of 500,000. Uber and Lyft services help save parking spaces. They started the Senior Cup right after the BNP. Over 800 senior tennis players from all over the country and internationally will participate. That will be followed by the Indian Wells Arts Festival and the Easter Bowl, junior tournament, followed by their music season with Garden Jam on April 6 and 7, with Lukas Nelson, Los Lobos, and Buddy Guy. The pickleball tournament is in November.

**Barb Smith** and Access Palm Springs have been busy. She thanked the hotel partners for their support. The Mardi Gras fundraising event for the CSUSB Hospitality Program was very successful. They are still tallying and collecting the total donations. Over 500 people attended. The support of the JW Marriott Desert Springs was appreciated. She is looking forward to even bigger and better for next year.

**Mike McLean** reported that vacation rentals are up across the Coachella Valley. The TOT through January is up 16% over last year and complaints are down 40-45%. He encouraged all to attend the April 3 event at the Merv Griffin Estate Meet & See.

**Michael Facenda** thanked everyone for a successful Meet & See at Agua Caliente Casino Resort Spa last night. The Agua Caliente Casinos have a new logo, new brand, new commercials, which unify the two properties, "Agua Caliente Casinos."

**Tom Nolan** reported that the airline industry is a complex one. There are interrelated relationships between airlines, airports, and flyers. Bob Thibault and he are attending the Jumpstart airline conference in June. He is in conversation with the airlines constantly and with Southwest over the last couple of years. Southwest introduced service to Hawaii which pulled away some interest in other airports. There are mechanics union issues which had a negative impact on reputation and the 737 Max topic also. The industry can change quickly.

**Jay Chesterton** reported that business is good at Fantasy Springs Resort Casino. The Rockyard opens tomorrow night for its season with a Van Halen tribute band.

**Bruce Abney** reported that the Meet & See last evening was a great event. He and the El Morocco support the Tourism Ambassador Program and complimented its thoroughness.

**Lorraine Becker** reported that Cabot's Pueblo Museum is bringing in Hopi kachina carvers, an ancient craft. She appreciates the surge of activity in the valley and encouraged all to come to Cabot's this weekend.

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**Brad Poncher** of Homewood Suites in La Quinta, thanked all for making the large events possible.

#### FUTURE MEETING DATE

Friday, May 17, 2019. Location TBD.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:56 a.m.

**Prepared by:**

  
Reva Reynolds  
Executive Administrative Assistant

**CVB Board of Directors Secretary:**

  
Robert Del Mas

**Approval Date:**

