



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

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:37 a.m. by Gary Gardner, JPA Chair, at HOTEL PASEO in Palm Desert, CA.

Roll Call

The roll call is recorded on the following page.

DECEMBER 8, 2023

Location: HOTEL PAESO
Room: Grand Paseo Ballroom
45-400 Larkspur Lane
Palm Desert, CA, 92260
Joint Meeting
December 8, 2023
8:30am – 10:00am

JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY

Gary Gardner, Chair
City of Desert Hot Springs

Waymond Fermon, Vice Chair
City of Indio

Rita Lamb
City of Cathedral City

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

Visit GPS 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

Aftab Dada, Treasurer
Hilton Palm Springs Resort

Kate Anderson
Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians

Kevin Barnes
Miramonte Resort & Spa Indian Wells

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 Cassidy
Meredith Lodging

Jay Chesteron
Fantasy Springs Resort Casino

Dermot Connolly
La Quinta Resort and Club

Tim Ellis
Ellis Hospitality Services

Eddy Estrada
Smarter Property Management

David Fellman
VRON of Palm Springs

		PRESENT	NOT/YTD
CITY OF DESERT HOT SPRINGS	Gary Gardner, Council Member, Chair	X	
	Roger Nunez, Council Member		
CITY OF INDIO	Waymond Fermon, Council Member, Vice Chair		A
	Elaine Holmes, Council Member		X
CITY OF CATHEDRAL CITY	Rita Lamb, Mayor	X	
	Mark Carnevale, Council Member		
CITY OF INDIAN WELLS	Greg Sanders, Mayor	X	
	Ty Peabody, Council Member		
CITY OF LA QUINTA	Linda Evans, Mayor	X	
	Steve Sanchez, Mayor Pro Tem		
CITY OF PALM SPRINGS	Jeffrey Bernstein, Mayor Pro Tem	X	
	Ron deHarte, Council Member		
CITY OF PALM DESERT	Jan Harnik, Council Member		E
	Gina Nestande, Council Member		X
CITY OF RANCHO MIRAGE	Steve Downs, Mayor	X	
	Meg Marker, Council Member		
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE	V. Manuel Perez, Supervisor, 4th District		
	Joaquin Tijerina, Economic Development Manager	X	
VISIT GPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS ROLL CALL		PRESENT	EXCUSED
	Rolf Hoehn, Chair - Indian Wells Tennis Garden	X	
	Peggy Trott, Vice Chair - Kimpton Rowan Palm Springs		E
	Tom Scaramellino, Secretary - Westin Rancho Mirage Golf Resort	X	
	Aftab Dada, Treasurer - Hilton Palm Springs Resort		E

Visit GPS Board of Directors
(continued)

Shannon Gilbert
The Ritz-Carlton, Rancho Mirage

Rob Hampton
Palm Springs Convention
Center

Jerry Keller
LULU California Bistro

Patrick Klein
The Shops 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
Kate Anderson, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians		E
Kevin Barnes, Miramonte Resort & Spa Indian Wells	X	
Lorraine Becker, Cabot's Pueblo Museum		E
Sejal Bhakta, Hampton Inn & Suites, Palm Desert and Indio	X	
John Bolton, Oak View Group		A
Celeste Brackley, The Line & Saguaro Hotels		A
Gary Cardiff, Cardiff Limousine & Transportation	X	
Kenny Cassady, Meredith Lodging		E
Jay Chesterton, Fantasy Springs Resort Casino	X	
Dermot Connolly, La Quinta Resort & Club	X	
Tim Ellis, Ellis Hospitality Services		E
Eddy Estrada, Smarter Property Management	X	
David Feltman, VRON Palm Springs	X	
Shannon Gilbert, The Ritz-Carlton, Rancho Mirage	X	
Rob Hampton, Palm Springs Convention Center	X	
Jerry Keller, LULU California Bistro	X	
Patrick Klein, The Shops on El Paseo	X	
Kelly McLean, Poppy	X	
Nusrat Mirza, JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort & Spa	X	
Allen Monroe, The Living Desert		A
Lee Morcus (Emeritus), Kaiser Restaurant Group		A
Michael Murray, Hotel Paseo	X	
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	X	
Saverio Scheri, Agua Caliente Casinos		E
Bob Schneider, Desert Consulting	X	
Ankit Sekhri, Two Bunch Palms		E

Barb Smith, Eventis Destination Services	X
Boris Stark, Palm Desert Vacation Properties	X
Joe Tormey, CSU San Bernardino Palm Desert Campus	E
Doug Watson, Strategy Innovation Co.	X

A quorum was reached. 24 BOD and 9 JPA.

STAFF/ATTORNEY

Scott White, President and CEO	Gary Orfield, Director of Tourism Development
Bill Judson, Vice President Finance and Administration	Stefanie Kilcoyne, Director of Operations
Colleen Pace, Chief Sales and Marketing Officer	Carolina Viazcan, VP of Sales
Davis Meyer, Senior Director of Community Affairs	Sarah Goslin, Executive Assistant & Board Administrator
Julie Sinclair, Director of Brand Communications	Kimber Foster, Director of Palm Springs Tourism
Lauren Bruggemans, Director of Sustainability & Community Engagement	Andy Cloutier, Director of Human Resources
Dana Fury, Director of Marketing	Bruce Bauer, Legal Counsel
Krystal Kusmieruk, Senior Marketing Manager	Todd Burke, VP of Communications
Dan Tackett, Staff Accountant	Alejandrina Mercado, Destination Experiences Specialist

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

JPA Committee Member Mayor Steve Downs led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

JPA Chair Gardner asked whether there were any changes to the agenda. Hearing no changes, 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. There were no public comments on record.

A member of the public that was present spoke:

Brad Anderson stated that his concerns align with the City Governments. As a resident of Rancho Mirage, he is discouraged and disenfranchised with being unable to vote for the city representatives. Mr. Anderson stated that he understands this organization (Visit Greater Palm Springs) is not responsible for the individual cities but asked that everyone please hold the city governments accountable for their decisions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (All Vote)

JPA – VGPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS JOINT MEETING MINUTES DATED SEPTEMBER 29, 2023 (all vote)

The JPA Executive Committee and VGPS Board of Directors Joint Meeting Minutes dated September 29, 2023, were presented for approval. JPA Chair Gardner asked for a motion. Mayor Linda Evans, City of La Quinta made a motion to approve, Mayor Pro Tem Jeffrey Bernstein, City of Palm Springs seconded. No abstentions. The City of Palm Desert, and City of Indio were not present to vote. There was no further discussion, and the minutes were approved based on a show of hands.

CONSENT CALENDAR (only JPA Executive Committee votes)

- **WARRANTS AND DEMANDS DATED SEPTEMBER 2023**
- **WARRANTS AND DEMANDS DATED OCTOBER 2023**

The Warrants and Demands dated September, and October 2023 for Pacific Premier Bank, were presented for approval. JPA Chair Gardner asked for a motion. Mayor Steve Downs, City of Rancho Mirage made a motion to approve, Mayor Greg Sanders, City of Indian Wells seconded. No abstentions. The City of Palm Desert, and City of Indio were not present to vote. There was no additional discussion, and the Warrants and Demands were approved based on a show of hands.

VGPS BOARD (BOD VOTE only)

- **Renewals and Vote-In**

BOD Chair, Rolf Hoehn, called for an approval of renewing Kate Anderson and Jerry Keller for another term, and Mark Gorton joining the Board of Directors. Liz Ostoich made a motion to approve, and Robert Schneider seconded. All approved. No abstentions.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BRANDING PRESENTATION

Kimberley Wright, County of Riverside office, gave an overview of the presentation to be conducted by Will Ketchum, President of North Star, on the branding of Riverside County.

- Kimberley stated that the goal of Riverside County is to foster growth and set themselves apart from other counties and regions. VGPS has been at the helm to work with North Star.

Will Ketchum joined the meeting via Zoom and presented the Research and Strategy Report for Riverside County.

Overall findings specifically for Coachella Valley:

Assets: Agriculture, Location, Diverse offerings, Multiple airports, Open land, Relative affordability, Entertainment and hospitality, Tourism, nationally recognized name, Beautiful landscapes, and Outdoor recreation.

Challenges: Creating cohesion for all industries, finding local investors, Finding room for young families, Breaking through the noise, Reputation of no high-paying jobs, Two strongest sectors are low wage and low skill, Being known exclusively for Coachella Festivals.

Opportunities: Celebrating agricultural successes, Increased logistics tech, Manufacturing, Ag innovation, Telling the Coachella Valley story, Remote work, Easy quality of life sell.

Overall strategy insights and DNA statement:

The job of the brand is to tell your most competitive story. The job of the strategy is to determine what that story should be about.

Riverside County Strategic Points of Leverage:

Capacity = Space and Choices. Population Growth = Accessibility, Breadth of Experiences & Livability. Momentum = Energy That Attracts. For now "talent" means more people, a ready and bigger pool (workforce). Then, the task becomes using marketing to attract/retain higher wage, higher level talent.

Riverside County DNA Platform Statement:

Target Audience: To whom Riverside County has the most appeal.

Frame of Reference: Geographic context of Riverside County.

Point-of-difference: What makes Riverside County special.

Benefit: Why it should matter to the consumer.

Comments and questions from our Board/JPA:

1. Gary Gardner asked if the study differentiated between east and west of the pass.
 - a. The study intentionally did not differentiate between the two, as they wanted to check the current knowledge across the county.
2. Dermot Connolly stated that the study should be looking at information from only Riverside County residents as those

Workforce Development:

- Continued our quarterly HR Steering Committee meetings and engagement with HR professionals in our industry.
- Conducted focus groups to refine and improve our hospitality careers campaign.
- Raised approximately \$150,000 for the Tourism Foundation and awarded \$36,500 scholarships this academic year.
- Focusing on a youth-centric strategy to grow hospitality leaders locally and promote the value of hospitality careers.
 - Continue to invite students to attend industry events.
 - Play an active role in working with local educational institutions and OneFuture Coachella Valley
 - Create a Youth Hospitality Ambassador Program made up of young people that are early in their hospitality careers or still in college.

TEAM GPS and Vacation Rentals:

- Davis Meyer gave an update on TEAM GPS, Vacation rentals education and research, and marketing and production.

Conventions, Meetings, Sporting Events, and International Visitation:

- We continue to focus on mid-week, summer, and new group business.
- We have added emphasis towards MICE business
- We are evaluating and evolving the current meetings campaign.
- We are evolving our strategic partnerships with meeting industry organizations.
- We have completed the RFP process to hire a new UK/Ireland agency for PR, Marketing and Travel Trade, and selected Finn Partners.
- We developed and executed a consumer media plan targeting key markets in the UK and Ireland, with a soft launch in April 2023, and full launch in June 2023. We will continue to optimize the campaign in 2024.
- Align efforts with Brand USA's and Visit California marketing offerings to maximize our reach and budget. Our 2024 programs include media in UK, Mexico, Germany, France, Australia, and Canada.
- Optimize our current brand partnership with luxury luggage maker Globe-Trotter and explore new Globe-Trotter pieces and potential French activation.

Marketing Updates

Colleen Pace gave updates on the below:

Marketing

- Updating our brand campaign to launch next fall.
- Fly Market Support – we are running ads in all of our direct fly markets and have added one-stop markets across television and select digital marketing.
- Our Time to Fly campaign includes social and digital ads with "Find Flights" CTA linking to dynamic website content.
- Our fly messaging was added to billboard and television creative for the fall season.
- Our vacation rental advertising includes dedicated digital, social, and native advertising throughout the year, including the VGPS international campaign.
- We are in discussions with Sunset Magazine, AdTheorent, Clicktivated, Undertone, and more regarding our upcoming campaigns for 2024.
- Visit Greater Palm Springs sponsored the Acrisure Classic – a three day NCAA Championship during the Thanksgiving holiday. The game on Thanksgiving day was live-streamed and was a record-setting Thanksgiving for college hoops on FOX. The game was the most-watched college basketball game ever on FOX with over five million viewers. It was also the most-watched regular season college basketball game on any network since 2008.
- Gave an update on our print and digital event marketing support.
- Our Art & Sol Season 1 is a winner of 2023 Addy and Adrian Awards and was a finalist for 2023 ESTO and City Nation Place Awards. We are in production of season 2 with plans to deploy in quarter one of 2024.
- Your Guide To, Season 2, has received over 89,000 video views.
- Launched a new Travelzoo destination piece in October. There was also a live broadcast on November 30th featuring health and wellness themed activities throughout Greater Palm Springs.
- Planning our summer co-op season, which we will be sending out the co-op opportunities to our partners soon.
- The Oasis is Real is a new campaign created in collaboration with Greenhaus that we launched in October.

Cultural Tourism

- Congratulations to the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians for the opening of the Cultural Plaza and Museum on November 3rd.
- Showed a short clip from one of the Native American videos from the BBC - In Pursuit of Wellness documentary series -full video coming out in Q1.
- Podcast collaboration with Brand USA on 'How Destinations Can Maximize Relationships with Native American Tribes'.

PR/Communication

- In honor of the inaugural flight to Palm Springs from JFK on December 14, 2023, some of our team will be flying to NY next week to host NYC-based media, travel trade & meeting planners for dinner, and then fly take them on the inaugural flight to Palm Springs for a FAM trip.
- Media Missions include Visit California Chicago Media Mission in October, Visit California Mexico Media Retreat in November, and others into the new year.
- Our media coverage included Women's Health, Time Radio, and The Travel Diaries.
- Our Meet the Mentors program is going well.
- We hosted 32 media in-market across all of our International FAMs, which resulted in more than 80 published articles.

Convention Sales

- Provided updates on Convention Sales production for 2023, and future pace from 2023 – 2025.
- We were a sponsor of the Marriott Corporate Partnership Conference at the JW Marriott Desert Springs.
- 9 partners joined us at IMEX America in October where we had a Virtual Lounge experience. With 90 client appointments, 266 client booth scans, and 50 clients attending our events throughout the week, we came away with new leads totaling 13,509 room nights.
- VGPS is hosting 25 clients, plus guests, at the Omni Rancho Las Palmas Resort for our annual Palm Springs International Film Festival FAM.
- We are attending PCMA Convening Leaders in San Diego in January, and will bring some of our PSIFF planner guests directly to the Conference with us.
- Convention Sales Accolades in 2023 include: Smart Meetings Platinum Choice Award, Best of Meetings Today 2023, and Prevue 2023 Visionary Award.

Partnership Updates

Davis Meyer gave the following updates:

- Our Champions of Hospitality Awards Gala hosted at Renaissance Esmeralda Resort & Spa was a huge success. We had more than 650 attendees, raised more than \$90,000 through sponsorships, silent auction, and donations. We awarded \$24,000 in scholarships to four college students from across the Coachella Valley. Showed a video from the COH Awards in November.
- We had over 50 participants as part of our entry at the Greater Palm Springs Pride Parade, consisting of staff and partners.
- We won a place among the top 100 stories in the 2023 Green Destinations. Green Destinations is a global organization supporting sustainable destinations, their businesses, and communities.
- The vacation rental resident sentiment study was conducted.
Overall findings were that nearly three-quarters of voters (72%) feel favorably about short-term rentals in their city. That number increases to 85% if short-term rentals helped address their top priority, which shows as noise and disturbances and requiring the host to obtain a permit.

JPA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATES

- Linda Evans –
 - AMEX Golf Tournament taking place January 18-21
 - World Wheelchair Motocross Championship at X-Park Skate Park from 10am-5pm tomorrow, December 9
 - Short-term vacation rental update for La Quinta - revisited municipal code and in January will open up new permits in home shares.
- Nusrat Mirza –
 - We had over 250 top corporate meeting planners at our resort last week, as well as Marriott's top 500 sales leaders during the Marriott Corporate Partnership Conference.
- Jeffrey Bernstein –
 - Palm Springs is in the middle of the inaugural Palm Springs holiday program, and planning of the Christmas Day Annual Well in the Desert dinner.
 - The Palm Springs International Film Festival taking place the first week of January looks to be the biggest yet.
- Liz Ostoich –
 - Three of our four restaurants have completed their Autism Certification, and 80% of our front of house staff is certified. Our fourth restaurant should have theirs completed next week, which I believe makes us the first four restaurants in the valley to complete their certification.
- Tim Ellis is doing well.

- Steve Downs –
 - The Cotino sales center is now open and can be visited if you'd like to see what the entire project will look like.
 - I was appointed as Mayor of Rancho Mirage on November 16th.
- Gary Gardner –
 - The Desert Hot Springs Parade of Lights is tomorrow, 12/9/23, starting at 5:45 pm.

FUTURE MEETING DATE

- February 2, 2024 | The Ritz-Carlton, Rancho Mirage

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Scott White & Gary Gardner at 10:06 a.m.

Prepared by:


Sarah Goslin
Executive Assistant & Board Administrator

Visit GPS Board of Directors Secretary:


Tom Scaramellino, Secretary

Approval Date:

