



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

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:36 a.m. by Gary Gardner, JPA Chair, at The Ritz-Carlton, Rancho Mirage in Rancho Mirage, CA.

Roll Call

The roll call is recorded on the following page.

JUNE 29, 2023

Location: The Ritz-Carlton, Rancho Mirage

Room: Salons 3 & 4

68-900 Frank Sinatra Drive

Rancho Mirage, CA 92270

Joint Meeting

Thursday, June 29, 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

Bruce Whitman
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

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 Chesterton
Fantasy Springs Resort Casino

Dermot Connolly
La Quinta Resort and Club

Tim Ellis
Ellis Hospitality Services

Eddy Estrada
Smarter Property Management

David Feltman
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	X	
	Elaine Holmes, Council Member		
CITY OF CATHEDRAL CITY	Rita Lamb, Mayor	X	
	Mark Carnevale, Council Member		
CITY OF INDIAN WELLS	Bruce Whitman, Council Member	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	X	
	Gina Nestande, Council Member		
CITY OF RANCHO MIRAGE	Steve Downs, Mayor Pro Tem	X	
	Meg Marker, Council Member		
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE	V. Manuel Perez, Supervisor, 4th District		E
	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	X	
	Tom Scaramellino, Secretary - Westin Rancho Mirage Golf Resort	X	
	Aftab Dada, Treasurer - Hilton Palm Springs Resort	X	

Visit GPS Board of Directors
(continued)

Rob Hampton
Palm Springs Convention
Center

Jerry Keller
LULU California Bistro

Patrick Klein
The Shops on El Paseo

Jay Mainthia
Indio Super 8 & Suites

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

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
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, Meredith Lodging	X	
Jay Chesterton, Fantasy Springs Resort Casino	X	
Dermot Connolly, La Quinta Resort & Club	X	
Tim Ellis, Ellis Hospitality Services	X	
Eddy Estrada, Smarter Property Management		E
David Feltman, VRON Palm Springs	X	
Rob Hampton, Palm Springs Convention Center		E
Jerry Keller, LULU California Bistro	X	
Patrick Klein, The Shops on El Paseo	X	
Jay Mainthia, Indio Super 8 Motel		A
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	X	
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		E
Tim Pyne, Renaissance Esmeralda Resort & Spa		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. 25 BOD and 9 JPA.

STAFF/ATTORNEY

Scott White, President and CEO
Bill Judson, Vice President Finance and Administration
Colleen Pace, Chief Sales and Marketing Officer
Carolina Viazcan, VP of Sales
Davis Meyer, Senior Director of Community Affairs
Julie Sinclair, Director of Brand Communications
Lauren Bruggemans, Director of Sustainability & Community Engagement
Jeffrey Farnsworth, Marketing & Sales Coordinator
Krystal Kusmieruk, Senior Marketing Manager
Stacie Henderson, Senior Graphic Designer

Gary Orfield, Director of Tourism Development
Stefanie Kilcoyne, Director of Operations
Don Prince, Director of Indian Wells Tourism
Sarah Goslin, Executive Assistant & Board Administrator
Bob Wilson, Brand Communications Specialist
Marta Battle, Destination Experiences Manager
Kimber Foster, Director of Palm Springs Tourism
Oleg Nakonechny, Tourism Development Manager
Elizabeth Jamison, Destination Experiences Manager
Andy Cloutier, Director of Human Resources
Lena D. Wade, Legal Counsel

LIFT TO RISE PRESENTATION

Heather Viakona, President & CEO for Lift to Rise, gave a presentation on Affordable Housing in the Coachella Valley.

- What Lift to Rise needs from our community is investments, engagement in the housing conversation, and making affordable housing a priority in our communities.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

JPA Vice-Chair Waymond Fermon 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.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (All Vote)

JPA – VGPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS JOINT MEETING MINUTES DATED MARCH 31, 2023 (all vote)

The JPA Executive Committee and VGPS Board of Directors Joint Meeting Minutes dated March 31, 2023, were presented for approval. Chair Gary Gardner asked for a motion. Mayor Linda Evans with City of La Quinta made a motion to approve, and Rolf Hoehn with Desert Champions LLC seconded. No abstentions. 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 MARCH 2023**
 - **WARRANTS AND DEMANDS DATED APRIL 2023**
 - **WARRANTS AND DEMANDS DATED MAY 2023**
-

The Warrants and Demands dated March, April, and May 2023 for Pacific Premier Bank, were presented for approval. Mayor Linda Evans with City of La Quinta made a motion to approve, and Council Member Jan Harnik with City of Palm Desert seconded. No abstentions. There was no additional discussion, and the Warrants and Demands were approved based on a show of hands.

CEO / PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Scott White, President & CEO for VGPS greeted guests and thanked Shannon Gilbert and The Ritz-Carlton team.

The team is working on city dashboards where each city will have access to real-time data for their specific city. We hope to have those ready by the fall.

The Economic Impact of Tourism in the Coachella Valley data shows that we are back to the same number of visitors in the destination since 2019.

VGPS is trying to be more sustainable, so we are hoping for an approval of a solar project over our carport that will save us approximately \$316,000 over the next 20 years.

Alaska Airlines gave us a non-stop flight to JFK. PSP total passengers YTD is 1.7 million as of May. PSP seat projections for the 2nd and 3rd quarters are up more than 34% versus 2019, and 4th quarter projections are up more than 22% versus 2019.

Sales & Marketing Updates:

Colleen Pace presented our Marketing updates.

Summer Campaigns:

- We have launched our Summer Campaign Programs, which include digital outdoor billboards, digital display ads, social media, print, seasonal and television.
- We have launched the third season of the Summer Eats Pass, and we are donating \$1 for every check-in to FIND Food.
- We have 11 partners as part of our summer co-op program, and we have created 4 new spots this year.
- New LGBTQ+ Advertising – we are considering Out Traveler and Out There Magazine.
- New content programs with AFAR, Lonely Planet, and Sunset.
- Working with BBC Storyworks on a Wellness Series and are partnering with Kate Anderson and Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians on this project.
- A sustainable travel documentary series is planned via Zinc Media, a production company in Partnership with Sustainable Travel International and Sublime Magazine.

Social & Web Marketing:

- Updated or created 60 new content pieces since March.
- We just launched the first season of "Your Guide To" Series - all videos can be found on our YouTube channel.
- We are working with Crowdriff Creators and Sonic Gods to enhance and expand our influencer/content strategy.
- Getting ready to launch Chatbot + AI messaging, which will improve visitor experience on the VGPS website.

Convention Sales Marketing:

- New Campaign with Greenhaus planned to rollout in late Q3.
- Presented the Convention Sales Media Plan.
- IGLTA (The International LGBTQ+ Travel Association) will be hosted in Palm Springs in 2025.

Media/Communications:

- Launched a new international campaign with FINN Partners.
 - UK/Ireland Activation taking place the first two weeks of September. Activations planned in Dublin, Edinburgh, Manchester, and London.
 - Working with Visit California and Brand USA for expanded international marketing in UK/Ireland, Germany, Australia, France, Mexico, and Canada.
 - Hosted 69 Media in-market from March-June and attended 7 shows.
 - Had over 130 articles since March.
-

- Launched 'Meet the Mentors' program, which partners aspiring travel writers with accomplished media mentors – Visit Greater Palm Springs creates custom itineraries for each pair – will post their stories on our website.
- Taking part in new Missions/Tradeshows, FAMS/events, activations, and podcast opportunities in 2023-2024.

Convention Sales & Tourism Development Updates:

Carolina Viazcan presented our Tourism Development updates.

- Introduced our new Tourism Development Sales Manager, Oleg Nakonechny.
- Highlighted programs and events we attended or hosted from March through May.
- Summer Programming includes eight programs we plan to take part in from June through August.
- IPW 2024 is taking place in LA. We will have an expanded presence with custom branding in California Plaza, hosting a wellness lounge and booth for appointments.

Carolina Viazcan presented our Convention Sales updates.

- Showed Convention Sales future pace and production.
- Recap of twenty four March – June Sales Events & Tradeshows.
- Recap of three March-June FAMS.
- Adding five tradeshows to the travel schedule for additional presence.

Partnership Updates:

Davis Meyer presented our Partnership updates:

- Raised over \$35k for the Greater Palm Springs Tourism Foundation on May 4th during our Tourism Foundation Golf Tournament.
- May 7-13 was National Travel and Tourism Week. Visit Greater palm Springs brought out our DEI partner, Travel Unity, to host our events.
- The Tourism Foundation contributed \$12k to help 11 College of the Desert Hospitality Management Students Study Abroad in Japan.
 - Visit Greater Palm Springs has since hired one of the students.
- Restaurant Week was very successful. 86 restaurants participated, and we donated over \$4k to FIND Food Bank. Recapped the Restaurant Week Media Plan.
- Autism Certification – Congratulations to JW Marriott Desert Springs and Rancho mirage Library & Observatory for becoming certified.
 - We are still in need of 3 hotels, 2 restaurants, 1 civic/recreation company and 3 entertainment companies to become certified in order for us to receive Destination Certification.
- Short-Term Vacation Rental Summer Webinar Series starts in mid-July and can be found on greaterpalmsprings.rentresponsibly.org

Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget Review:

- Recommended TBID is \$22.8 million
- Funding Comparison shows 2022/2023 was \$28 million / proposing a budget of \$31 million for 2023/2024.

VGPS Board (BOD VOTE only)

• Approval of Proposed 2023-2024 Budget

BOD Chair, Rolf Hoehn, called for an approval of the Proposed 2023/2024 Budget. Aftab Dada with Hilton Palm Springs made a motion to approve, and Tim Ellis with Ellis Hospitality Services seconded. All approved. No abstentions.

• Approval of TBID Annual Report (by Civitas) – Required by State of California

BOD Chair, Rolf Hoehn, called for an approval of the TBID Annual Report. Brad Poncher with Homewood Suites by Hilton La Quinta made a motion to approve, and Lorraine Becker with Cabot's Pueblo Museum seconded. All approved. No abstentions.

• Approval of Resolution No. BOD 2023-003 – Amended & Restated VGPS BOD Bylaws

A Resolution to approve Amending and Restating the Bylaws and Adopting the Category of Board Member Emeritus was presented for approval. Aftab Dada with Hilton Palm Springs made a motion to approve, and Nusrat Mirza with JW Marriott Desert Springs seconded. No abstentions. All approved.

- **Approve Shannon Gilbert from The Ritz-Carlton, Rancho Mirage, Saverio Scheri from Agua Caliente Casinos, and Kevin Barnes from Miramonte Resort & Spa for Board of Directors seat (Tim Ellis)**

Tim Ellis called for an approval of Shannon Gilbert, Saverio Scheri, and Kevin Barnes for seats on the Board of Directors. Bob Schneider with Desert Consulting made a motion to approve, and Celeste Brackley with Saguaro Palm Springs & Line Hotels seconded. All approved. No abstentions.

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

- **Approval of Proposed 2023-2024 Budget**

JPA Chair, Gary Gardner, called for an approval of the Proposed 2023/2024 Budget. Mayor Linda Evans with City of La Quinta made a motion to approve, and Mayor Pro Tem Steve Downs with City of Rancho Mirage seconded. No abstentions. All approved.

- **Approval of Resolution No. JPA 2023-004 – Carrying Over Funds to FY 2023/2024**

A Resolution to approve Carrying Over Funds to fiscal year 2023/2024 was presented for approval. Mayor Linda Evans with City of La Quinta made a motion to approve, and Mayor Pro Tem Jeffrey Bernstein with City of Palm Springs seconded. All approved. No abstentions.

- **Approval of Resolution No. JPA 2023-006 - Authorizing Investment of Monies in the Local Agency Investment Fund**

A Resolution to approve Authorizing Investment of Monies in the Local Agency Investment Fund was presented for approval. Mayor Linda Evans with City of La Quinta made a motion to approve, and Mayor Pro Tem Jeffrey Bernstein with City of Palm Springs seconded. All approved. No abstentions.

- **Approval of Resolution No. JPA 2023-007 - Authorizing Change in Bank Signers and Pacific Premier Bank to Provide Other Financial Services**

A Resolution to approve Authorizing Change in Bank Signers and Pacific Premier Bank to Provide Other Financial Services was presented for approval. Mayor Linda Evans with City of La Quinta made a motion to approve, and Mayor Pro Tem Jeffrey Bernstein with City of Palm Springs seconded. All approved. No abstentions.

- **Approval of Resolution No. JPA 2023-005 - Opposing Senate Bill 584**

A Resolution to approve Opposing Senate Bill 584 was presented for approval. Mayor Linda Evans with City of La Quinta made a motion to approve, and Council Member Jan Harnik with City of Palm Desert seconded. All approved. No abstentions.

- **Approval of TBID Annual Report (by Civitas) – Required by State of California**

BOD Chair, Rolf Hoehn, called for an approval of the TBID Annual Report. Mayor Pro Tem Jeffrey Bernstein with City of Palm Springs made a motion to approve, and Council Member Jan Harnik with City of Palm Desert seconded. All approved. No abstentions.

JPA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATES

- Mayor Linda Evans: Work with Scott to explore what would the VGPS entity look like if we were to embark on economic development in the valley. Maybe a study session, or sub-committee.
- Jan Harnik agrees with Linda Evans – how do we create meaningful jobs in tourism?
- Hear from those investors in CVEP and especially those that are not investors. We need further discussion.
- Waymond Fermon: Reminder of the free concert series in downtown Indio, and Food Truck Fridays.

FUTURE MEETING DATE

- September 29, 2023 | Agua Caliente Resort & Spa, Rancho Mirage

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Scott White & Gary Gardner at 10:16 a.m.

Prepared by:


Sarah Goslin
Executive Assistant & Board Administrator

Visit GPS Board of Directors Secretary:


Tom Scaramellino, Secretary

Approval Date:

