

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

---

### Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 8:11 a.m. by Linda Evans, JPA Chair and Mayor of the City of La Quinta, at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Salons 2 & 3, Rancho Mirage, CA.

### Roll Call

The roll call is recorded on the following page.

**JANUARY 24, 2020**



Location: Ritz-Carlton Hotel  
 68900 Frank Sinatra Drive  
 Rancho Mirage, CA 92270

Regular Meeting  
 Friday, January 24, 2020, 8:00am – 10:00am

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, M.D.  
 Coachella Valley Economic  
 Partnership

Lorraine Becker  
 Cabot's Pueblo Museum

Celeste Brackley  
 Ace Hotel & Swim Club

Tony Bruggemans  
 Le Vallauris

Gary Cardiff  
 Cardiff Limousine &  
 Transportation

Jay Chesterton  
 Fantasy Springs Resort Casino

Dermot Connolly  
 La Quinta Resort & Club and  
 PGA West

Tim Ellis  
 TravelHost Palm Springs

Michael Facenda  
 Agua Caliente Resort Casino

Rob Hampton  
 Palm Springs Convention  
 Center

Jerry Keller  
 Lulu California Bistro

Jay Mainthia  
 Indio Super 8 and Suites

		PRESENT	NOT/YTD
CITY OF LA QUINTA	Linda Evans, Mayor, Chair	X	
	Robert Radi, Council Member		
CITY OF PALM SPRINGS	Geoff Kors, Mayor, Vice Chair	X	
	Dennis Woods, Council Member		
CITY OF CATHEDRAL CITY	Ernesto Gutierrez, Council Member	X	
	Mark Carnevale, Council Member		
CITY OF DESERT HOT SPRINGS	Gary Gardner, Council Member	X	
	Jan Pye, Council Member		
CITY OF INDIAN WELLS	Richard Balocco, Council Member		
	Ted Mertens, Council Member	X	
CITY OF INDIO	Elaine Holmes, Mayor Pro Tem	X	
	Waymond Fermon, Council Member		
CITY OF PALM DESERT	Jan Harnik, Council Member	X	
	Gina Nestande, Mayor		
CITY OF RANCHO MIRAGE	Charles Townsend, Council Member		
	Iris Smotrich, Mayor	X	
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE	V. Manuel Perez, Supervisor, 4th District		1
	Steven Hernandez, Chief of Staff		

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

---

#### STAFF/ATTORNEY

---

Scott White, President and CEO  
Mark Crabb, Chief Sales Officer  
Bill Judson, Vice President Finance and Administration  
Jeff Miraglia, Chief Brand Officer  
Colleen Pace, Chief Marketing Officer  
Bob Thibault, Chief Development Officer  
Erica Abarca, Partnership Manager  
Tammy Bucklin, Assoc. Director of Sales  
Miranda Caudell, Copywriter  
Andy Cloutier, Director of Human Resources  
Carmen Cubero, Destination Dev. Admin. Asst.  
Paola Fernandez, Digital Marketing Coordinator  
Rebecca Kirkpatrick, Business Analyst

Stefanie Kilcoyne, Director of Operations  
Krystal Kusmieruk, Social Media Manager  
Alex Mercado, Conv Sales Administrative Asst.  
Davis Meyer, Partnership Manager  
Gary Orfield, Director Travel Industry Sales  
Jill Philbrook, Director of Destination Services  
Reva Reynolds, Executive Administrative Assistant  
Julie Sinclair, Director of Brand Communications  
Sean Smith, Director of Indian Wells Sales & Mktg.  
Amber Warren, Brand Coordinator  
Marissa Willman, Director of Digital Marketing  
Colin Kirkpatrick, Deputy Legal Counsel

---

#### GUESTS

---

Peter Freymuth, Palm Springs Airport Commission  
Brooke Beare, City of Indio  
Gabe Coddling, City of Rancho Mirage

---

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

---

Chair Evans lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

---

#### CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

---

The agenda was accepted unanimously.

---

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

---

There were no comments from the public.

---

#### PRESENTATION

---

##### **Jenny Gil Schmitz, Executive Director, Desert X**

Chair Linda Evans introduced Jenny Gil Schmitz, Executive Director of Desert X and Susan Davis, President of the Desert X Board of Directors. Desert X 2021 will be Feb. 6 - April 11, 2021. She thanked the tourism industry for its support, specifically for supporting the opening reception, which resulted in coverage in Vanity Fair. Since 2017, they have had over 600,000 site visits valley-wide. In 2019, they had 400,000 visitors over 10 weeks, double what they had in 2017. Social Media has been very successful – 41,000 app downloads and 13,000 podcast listeners. Website traffic is impressive and the site funnels people to hotels, too. In 2019, they had 22 hotel partners. Survey showed 90% would like to visit Desert X again.

Desert X Alula 2020 will be Jan. 31 – Mar. 7, 2020 in Saudi Arabia. Alula is in the southwest desert of Saudi Arabia. This is their first international collaboration. It is a UNESCO World Heritage site. It is well preserved, but difficult to access in the last 40 years. Saudi Arabia is launching tourist initiatives to get people to visit during their winter cultural festival. The Desert X team is currently installing the exhibits. There we no questions.

Scott White added that Desert X has been a phenomenal success for the destination. The CVB looks forward to partnering on the 2021 event.

##### **Steve Hankin, President & CEO of Desert International Horse Park**

Chair Linda Evans introduced Steve Hankin, President & CEO of Desert International Horse Park.

---



Hankin noted that the venue is the second largest equestrian event in the United States. The 239-acre facility used to be owned by people outside California and it was purchased by a California family in August 2019. Historically, events were scheduled for 10 weeks: 2 weeks in November and 8 weeks during the winter circuit. The park is now open 6 months of the year, Oct. 1 – March 30. The events will be expanded to 14 weeks in 2020 and 16-17 weeks in 2021, Mid-October to mid-March. Now, they run 20,000 horses through the park during the 10 weeks. 2,000 horses are there right now, valued at approximately \$500 million. There are about 6,000 people who come with the horses, stay in hotels, eat in restaurants, etc., while they are here. They will distribute about \$3.5 million in prize money this year. They have 1.3 million square feet of competition space, larger than Palm Beach, Florida, the next largest equestrian event in the nation. Their plan is to invest over \$15 million in the facility over the next 3-5 years. They have already invested \$2.5 million since the purchase in August 2019. Some demographics about equestrian sport participants: 38% have net annual income over \$500,000, 85% of participants are female and compete in 14 equestrian events per year, on average. Participants come from all over the world. Next week, they are announcing their first world-wide dressage event, which will be a world cup qualifier, here in the Coachella Valley for the first time on Nov. 19, 2020. Currently, the park is streaming live on the US Equestrian Federation network which has a membership of over 8,000 people. They will stream live every day of the events. Their hashtag is #WestCoastIsTheBestCoast.

Sponsor money has tripled since the purchase in August. AIG is one of the larger sponsors. Due to the Olympics in 2028, the park is already receiving inquiries about bringing horses here and training in Southern California. They expect increase in participation of 10% each year and more horses.

Hankin shared some photos of some of the recent improvements at the park, shade structures, new sand for improved footing, two competition rings are finished. Encourage all to attend any of the events. They distributed a card with their event dates. During week four, they will have the most famous horse at the park, Endo, who is blind, coming from Oregon and doing demonstrations.

He asked for any questions. Hours of operation are listed on the card handed out. Competition typically runs Tuesday through Sunday. Competition usually begins at 7:30 or 8:00am and goes to 4:00 or 4:30pm. Admission is free. Lorraine Becker noted that her granddaughter was in the first slide of the presentation with her horse. Hankin noted that it is a great sport for kids. Evans asked if there were volunteer opportunities. A: Yes. Steve said people could email him or go on the website there is information there. They will do more events to bring people in and work with school districts to allow students to visit. He reiterated that, for the business community, it is a large source of wealthy people who are visiting. Evans congratulated the investment of the new owners, enhancing the southeast end of the valley.

---

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES (All Vote)

---

The JPA-CVB Board of Directors Joint Meeting Minutes dated November 22, 2019 (all vote).

The JPA Executive Committee and CVB Board of Directors Joint Meeting Minutes dated November 22, 2019, were approved without changes. The vote was unanimous based on the roll call taken at the beginning of the meeting (Harnik / Gardner).

---

#### CONSENT CALENDAR (JPA Exec Committee Only Votes)

---

1. Warrants and Demands Dated October 31, 2019
2. Warrants and Demands Dated November 30, 2019
3. Warrants and Demands Dated December 31, 2019

The Consent Calendar was approved and the vote was unanimous based on the roll call taken at the beginning of the meeting (Kors / Holmes).

---

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

---

##### UPDATES FROM THE CHAIR

Linda Evans commented on the Marvyn's Magic Theater Meet & See event, adding that CTA credit can be earned for attending.

---



## **RESOLUTION NO. JPA 2020-001 – Changing Definition of Actuarial Equivalent in the Defined Benefit Pension Plan**

The Resolution was approved and the vote was unanimous based on the roll call taken at the beginning of the meeting (Evans / Gardner).

### **UPDATES FROM THE JPA MEMBERS**

**Linda Evans** reported that the American Express golf tournament in the City of La Quinta was very successful, raising \$1 million for local charities. They will address the traffic flow for next year. The Art Celebration in La Quinta is March 5-8. The roundabouts should be completed by then.

**Geoff Kors** reported that he attended the recent CTA training for JPA and Board members. It is a great program and all participants passed the exam and earned their certification. In the City of Palm Springs, the Tour De Palm Springs bicycle event is February 7 and 8. Modernism Week will begin February 13<sup>th</sup> and last for 11 days. The October preview has grown to four days. PS Resorts helped to fund advertising, including marketing outside the area and saw a 20% increase in attendance in the fall. They expect the same growth for the March event.

**Elaine Holmes** reported that there is so much happening in the City of Indio at Empire Polo and El Dorado. Polo season is in full force. The Southwest Arts Festival is this weekend for four days. The new Hampton Inn is expected to open in the spring. The City's Downtown Specific Plan is continuing to be developed with a number of percolating projects. The City completed a transportation study, Better Connected Indio, important to the east end of valley.

**Jan Harnik** reported that Linda Evans is being honored today at the "Women Who Rule" event by Women Leaders Forum. The City of Palm Desert is having Swingin' Hops on El Paseo on February 8. The new iHub will open in mid-March which is a partnership with CSU San Bernardino Palm Desert Campus, CVEP (Coachella Valley Economic Partnership) and the City of Palm Desert. This will be a game-changer for economic development in the region. The Palm Desert Food and Wine event will once again overlap with the end of Fashion Week El Paseo the end of March. The City does have some concerns about the proposed Greater Palm Springs Business Improvement District regarding short-term rentals. They would like to have a more complete discussion about that because as this discussion is taking place, Palm Desert is phasing out its short-term rentals in its R-1 and R-2 zones and does not wish to create confusion.

**Ted Mertens** reported that the City of Indian Wells no longer has short-term rentals as of January 1, 2020, with the exception of two weeks during the tennis tournament. Staff and Council will be engaged in a strategic planning session on Jan. 29<sup>th</sup>. The project on the northwest corner of Highway 111 and Miles looks close to approval and should be breaking ground just after the tennis tournament this year. The City is looking forward to a successful BNP Paribas tennis tournament.

**Iris Smotrich** reported that there are still tickets available for Modernism Week - there are a number of events in Rancho Mirage. This year, they have a Neighborhood Tour of Chalet Palms, a 1965 condominium community in Magnesia Falls. Also, the City's Speaker Series started last week with Danica Patrick, the race car driver. The next speaker is Joe Montana. Chris Evert is also in the lineup. "Anything Goes" will be performed February 21 and 22 in the Rancho Mirage amphitheater in dinner theater style. The third annual Rancho Mirage Wine and Food Festival will be February 28 and 29 from 1:30-5:00pm.

**Ernesto Gutierrez** reported that the Palm Springs International Film Festival screened a number of films at Cathedral City's Mary Pickford Theater with over 11,000 attendees. On February 8, Cathedral City will host the Taste of Jalisco with live music, horse displays, food, and fireworks, with no admission fee, 11:00am-9pm. Cathedral City will host a softball tournament Feb. 20-23 at Big League Dreams, including the US Women's Olympic team. The Cathedral Canyon bridge over the wash will break ground soon. The new casino is moving along, expected to be completed by the end of 2020 or early 2021. The City is beginning improvements to many residential surface streets, investing over \$5 million. Also, College of the Desert is planning to develop an automotive training center in Cathedral City opening within three years.

**Gary Gardner** reported that Desert Hot Springs completed a survey of their hotels and they are reporting good occupancy and good February and March numbers. It was beneficial for Desert Hot Springs to host some of the installations for Desert X and they are looking forward to next year. The event was a huge draw for DHS. The CTA (Certified Tourism Ambassador) training for the CVB Board members was last week. He was amazed at the depth and quality of the program and materials. He noted that if others have not yet sent their staff, they should.

Linda Evans noted that it is time to send in nominations for the Oasis Awards, and suggested that one of the criteria should be that candidates be CTAs.

---

---

## CEO/PRESIDENT'S REPORT

---

### CVB 2020 GOALS

Scott White reported that the team will summarize some of the highlights of 2019 and talk about goals for 2020. He noted that the process begins in October/November. Each department has one or two board member liaisons who volunteer their time to review the data and help compile goals and objectives for each department.

### DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

#### Convention Sales – Mark Crabb

Crabb reported that 2019 was a great year. The team hit 98% of their room night goal even though the northeast sales representative position was vacant for about four months. Other highlights for 2019 include: 19 joint share events, 10 shows attended, and 5 client events. He thanked all the Partners who participated. He noted the Film Festival client FAM with 24 of the CVB's top clients and thanked Tom Tabler and the team at the JW Marriott for a successful experience. As for the 2020 Team Goals, Crabb thanked Tom Scaramellino and Rob Hampton, his board liaisons, for their help in creating these goals: Leads 1,180, New Leads 650, Bookings 350 and Room Nights 222,500. Rob Hampton thanked Crabb for the opportunity to be a part of the process.

#### Destination Marketing – Colleen Pace

Pace provided a summary recapping the 2019 consumer marketing numbers including 511 million impressions and 198 million digital advertising impressions. Total impressions were 43 billion, up 6% from 2018. (In 2014, the CVB generated 1.7 billion impressions.)

Pace showed a slide indicating all the various platforms/media that will be used in 2020 and noted the newest developments. Connected TV was tested in the fall of 2019. This is the direction that TV is going. AARP is taking the place of our WestWays media buy, which is regional. AARP has national reach. Another expanded program is Adara for its digital marketing and retargeting program. The CVB will also have advertising on podcasts through iHeart Media, the largest podcast provider. Podcast sessions will be chosen based on their alignment with the CVB's pillars, such as Health & Wellness, etc. Another new program is Nativo which will distribute some of our content digitally. The 2020 Co-op Overview includes continuing the TV and billboard programs, plus the addition of five new co-ops: 1. Social media, 2-4. Adara, Locale, and Pandora (digital/audio) and 5. An international co-op through Expedia.

Current co-ops running now include The American Express, BNP Paribas Open and ANA Inspiration. The BNP and American Express videos were shown. The ANA video is still in production.

Pace summarized highlights from the Convention Sales marketing efforts in 2019. The 2020 Convention Sales media plan was also summarized including some direct mail and some lead generation programs that are new. Gardner had a question about cost effectiveness and podcasts; can they be skipped by the listener? A: Connected TV does cost a little bit more, but we will have the capability to be more targeted in our messaging. The CVB ads on the podcasts cannot be skipped. Moreover, research shows that listeners have 4x the recall on podcast messages. The CVB could also, potentially, have its own podcast in the future.

#### Communications & Media – Colleen Pace

Pace mentioned the PR quality score as the way the CVB measures media effectiveness. The CVB achieved 121% of its quality score goal. For media assists, the CVB achieved 82% of the goal. This metric is a bit more difficult to track, but overall the year was successful. The Atlanta Activation recently wrapped up (Dec. 11 – Jan. 5), promoting increased flight service between Palm Springs and Atlanta. It featured a large cube with a vending machine that awarded participants with gifts that aligned with their interests. The video about the activation was shown.

The 2020 spring activations include a window display at Saks Fifth Avenue in New York City from Feb. 20 – Mar. 4, 2020.

Communications 2020 goals are somewhat flat because the CVB had two vacancies in the PR department and it will take a bit of time for the new hires to settle in to their positions. Thank you to Greg Purdy and the Chairman's Committee for helping with the 2020 goals.

#### Film Oasis – Colleen Pace

The CVB attended the American Film Market (AFM) in conjunction with the Riverside County Film Commission. This was the CVB's third year of attendance. In 2019, there were some significant filming contracts in the destination as a result of being involved in AFM. October 2019, the feature film "Big America" was filmed here along with some smaller filming contracts. In November, three films were in the destination; "Tennis" brought in almost 3,600 room nights.

---



---

**Website – Marissa Willman**

Willman highlighted success for 2019, including a series of landing pages for our signature events. The pages promote itineraries and ideas for extending stays and directing visitors to hotel websites. CVB increased the number of people who are finding the CVB online via searching by 1000%. The air service page led to one in ten people who saw the page went to a resort booking page or directly to the airline site. Mobile traffic to the website grew tremendously throughout the year. Graph shows that desktop traffic is less than 1/3 of traffic and mobile is almost 2/3. The CVB is addressing this by 1. redesigning the website to be more mobile friendly, and 2. the CVB is measuring traffic by device. Willman thanked Celeste Brackley and Bob Schneider and the Chairman's Committee for helping with goals.

Blog Content – The CVB blog is responsible for 1 in 5 page views on the website, so it is a high-traffic section. The CVB has over 400 pieces of content and will review the content quarterly to evaluate and optimize.

Email Marketing – The CVB transitioned to Simpleview which allows for automated email responses when individuals click on an email. The CVB will begin creating personas for each of its 15,000 subscribers around the CVB pillars of Health & Wellness, Outdoor Adventure, and Dining.

Social Media – Willman reported that for 2019, impressions and video views were much higher than 2018. For 2020, the CVB will adjust the social media goals and track "buckets" of KPIs (no longer tracking KPIs for each channel: Instagram, Facebook, etc.)

Convention Sales – One of the CVB's social media goals is to build brand awareness for meeting planners across the country. Find Your Meeting video series was successful in 2019.

**Tourism Development – Gary Orfield**

Orfield thanked Christoph Roshardt and Peggy Trott for their guidance as Board Liaisons.

2019 Recap – Orfield reported that his department met 100% of its goal regarding activations. Namely, the CVB holds a special client event to bring our brand and destination awareness to clients around the world and they accomplished 15 such events. With respect to marketing campaigns, most are business-to-business and have a high impact. His department attained 107% of that goal.

Client Reach describes the number of people the CVB meets face-to-face through FAMs and trade shows, etc. His department exceeded this goal and reached 11,000 people in 2019.

2019 Fun Facts – The 11,000 clients represented 35 countries. His department brought 205 travel professionals here to the Coachella Valley so they could see the destination first-hand.

With respect to the New Strategy for 2020, the CVB has noted that global travel is evolving, so the Travel Industry Sales department is transitioning to Tourism Development. Orfield will work under Bob Thibault (Destination Development) and be involved in new events, online travel agencies, digital booking channels, air and rail service development, Tourism Foundation, etc., and continue to service his existing travel trade clients.

White added that GPS Next and other research shows that the key events in the destination are important. The CVB will pull back on trade shows, which are shotgun approach, and focus on more aligned and targeted strategies.

**Destination Development – Bob Thibault**

Thibault noted that Greater Palm Springs hosted its first Airport Roundtable this year. Eight airlines were represented, the most ever, and 25 air service marketing representatives were in attendance. At the conference, each airline discusses its portfolio, flight schedule, aircraft used, etc. The CVB hosted them for 2 events while they were here. White added that this conference had been held in many other destinations and the attendees all said this was the best conference ever.

GPS Next – Thibault reported that, in 2015, the CVB created the Destination Development Plan, a 104-page document outlining strengths and goals of the destination. Then, last June, Paul Ouimet from NextFactor Enterprises, presented the Destination Next concept. The CVB has updated the Destination Development Plan and combined it with Destination Next features to create GPS Next. The streamlined document was distributed to each board member. The CVB will remain focused on air and rail service and our destination pillars (Health & Wellness, Outdoor Adventure, Arts & Culture, Culinary), in an effort to reach our goal of 16 million visitors by 2026. The CVB has created an event, GPSNext, to share this information with stakeholders. White added that the CVB asked Tourism Economics to project the impact on the destination if we reach that visitation goal. The document has a section with this information.

**Certified Tourism Ambassador / Partnership – Erica Abarca**

Abarca thanked everyone for their complimentary remarks regarding the recent CTA class for the board members.

---



CTA & Workforce Development for 2020 – Abarca noted that she will continue to request specific partner deals from your properties and attractions to give CTAs experiences in the destination and be better able to represent the area. Her department's goal is to graduate an additional 450 CTAs in 2020. The CVB can host a class at your property or create a large class by combining several smaller properties. She will continue to hold monthly CTA events/mixers to provide opportunities to network and to learn more about the destination. In fall 2020, the CVB will hold a job fair. The department is also partnering with the Ritz-Carlton Leadership Center to provide additional classes for CTAs, such as, "The Art of the Apology," "Customer Service," etc. Abarca showed a photo of the recent CTA graduates (CVB Board members).

Davis Meyer added that Erica has made the program much more than just the training class. The monthly events encourage networking and continuing education for CTAs to learn more about this area.

#### **Partnership – Davis Meyer**

Meyer noted upcoming Partner events, especially GPS Next Annual Update event on March 5 in the afternoon. Other events include a visit to the Ware Estate in Palm Springs on February 25, BMW Performance Center is in March, the Oasis Awards on June 10. Meyer encouraged everyone to begin nominating people now for the awards.

#### **Video Series – Jeff Miraglia**

Miraglia noted how important video is to engage potential visitors. He thanked everyone in the room for supporting the CVB's efforts with photographers and videographers to come to their properties and capture their stories. In 2019, the CVB completed several unique stories and multiple pieces of branded content for all pillars. Digital and social video series include: GPS Craft, DineGPS, Chill Chaser and Wander List. A teaser video was shown featuring King's Highway and the Children's Discovery Museum. All of the videos are available on the CVB's YouTube channel. Another video was shown featuring Sunnylands Center & Gardens.

White noted that, in an effort to be more sustainable, the CVB is posting as many resources as possible on the website. The CVB welcomes your feedback on the dashboards, microsites, etc.

### **MONTHLY SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT & TREASURER'S REPORT – NOVEMBER 2019**

White noted that the Monthly Summary and Treasurer's Report documents are in the board packet. The Monthly Summary is through the end of November 2019. The CVB's financial outlook is strong. Bill Judson (Vice President, Finance and Administration) is here to answer any questions. There were no questions.

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

#### **CVB 2020 GOALS - APPROVAL**

Hoehn noted Tom Tabler is not in attendance today because his son in San Diego is Director of Sales for a Marriott property celebrating its opening today.

Hoehn noted that the 2020 CVB Goals are in the board packet. There were no questions or further discussion. The goals were approved and the vote was unanimous based on the roll call taken at the beginning of the meeting (Poncher / Cardiff).

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

**Rolf Hoehn** noted that the Indian Wells Tennis Garden is very busy getting ready for the tournament next month. They have no major construction projects, but some minor ones. They are creating more features of the event beyond just the tennis. They are expanding the culinary component. A new restaurant in Stadium 2 is Fuku. Fresh Agave will also open in Stadium 2. London Gin will brand one of the bars and one of their sports bars will be redeveloped into a new restaurant called Garden Bistro. Next to that will be an activation of wine sponsor, Kim Crawford. One of their major efforts is to tell the world about the destination, as well as the tennis event. ESPN is expanding their coverage this year. Thank you all for your support. Hotel space and air lift are very important if the tournament will reach its goal of 500,000 visitors in March.

#### **UPDATES FROM THE CVB BOARD MEMBERS**

**Robert Del Mas** reported that the Empire Polo Club and Event facility has had a busy January so far. They started the year with the Palm Springs Dog Show with 4 shows over 4 days and over 4,000 separate dogs entered each day. It was also the season opener for polo and Hat Day. Last weekend, the Lacrosse tournament was the largest one ever. They also had their

inaugural event at The Oasis and that was the 4byFar Festival presented by Land Rover. This weekend is the Southwest Arts Festival at the Polo Club and it runs through Sunday. The weather has been phenomenal.

**Lorraine Becker** reported that Cabot's Pueblo Museum is kicking off its Arts in the Americas series with Oaxacan artists from the state of Oaxaca. The items are hand-carved and hand-painted and make great gifts. Admission is free.

**Rick Axelrod** thanked everyone for their participation in the LifeStream Blood Bank gala and auction. It was a successful event with Rita Coolidge performing. With respect to CVEP, the Palm Desert iHub is continuing construction with occupancy in mid-February and a grand opening in possibly April. Also, CVEP signed a memorandum of understanding with City of Indio and the Greater Coachella Valley Chamber of Commerce for pilot Indio iHub. They are expanding throughout the Coachella Valley.

**Brad Poncher** reported that Homewood Suites La Quinta is doing well and expecting to be very busy during the tennis tournament across the street.

**Gary Cardiff** reported that the season started with a bang beginning with the Palm Springs International Film Festival gala and it has not slowed down. The American Express golf tournament was a huge success.

**Tom Nolan** reported that the airport is running smoothly and reminded everyone to arrive two hours early. They just expanded their checkpoint by 50% additional space. They have a \$30 million ticketing project underway. The baggage handling system represents \$13 million of that. Installation begins in May.

**Joe Tormey** reported that CSU San Bernardino Palm Desert Campus is excited and grateful for the opportunity of the iHub and thanks to CVEP for their partnership.

**Tim Ellis** thanked many in the room who advertise with his Travel Host Magazine.

**Michael Facenda** reported that the Agua Caliente Casinos project, new spa and museum, will be open in Palm Springs by the end of the calendar year.

**Bruce Abney** thanked the CTA program for its wonderful work and noted that he believes his hotel is the only one with every single employee certified by the program.

**Jerry Keller** noted that the marketing and programming of the CVB, and its adjustments to the current trends, is amazing. Lulu and Acqua California Bistro are doing well. The restaurants have some nice parties for Superbowl and Oscar Awards and Valentine's Day. The Musical Theater University entertained last evening and is a wonderful partner.

**Jay Mainthia** reported that the Super 8 in Indio is doing well. Their busy season started with the dog show at the Polo Club and then the lacrosse tournament, followed by the Southwest Arts Festival. They are preparing for the Riverside County Fair and Date Festival. He experiences a lot of compression from the events across the valley. He noted that smaller properties also enjoy the benefits of the CVB's marketing efforts. There is a new restaurant on their property and it is doing well. The Motel 6 which used to be a corporate property was recently purchased by a Chinese family. The new Fairfield Inn was purchased by Korean investors, so he believes there are many eyes trained on Indio.

**Lee Morcus** congratulated Mayor Evans on her award later today. He acknowledged the work of the CVB. Nice to see success, but reminded everyone that we still need to be focused on the future.

**Dermot Connolly** offered congratulations to Empire Polo for the terrific event 4byFar. He reported that the La Quinta Resort and Spa has opened 8,000 square feet of new meeting space. They opened a new coffee shop in their marketplace and expanded the top of the plaza also. The American Express sponsorship of the golf tournament is promising. The international Horse Show is truly a terrific event that brings in people from all over the world and many of them stay in homes and hotels.

**Celeste Brackley**, ACE Hotel and Swim Club, thanked the media and marketing teams of the CVB for their professional work.

**Doug Watson**, College of the Desert, noted that the State of the College event was held earlier this week during which the new automotive program in Cathedral City was announced. The new campus planned for Indio and the 29 acres in Palm Springs are also envisioned. The Palm Springs site is in the process of planning, determining scopes of space, etc. More important, the educational focus of that campus will be: 1. Hospitality/Culinary, 2. Center of Excellence for Health and

---



Wellness, 3. Media Arts, 4. Sustainability. There are more than 17,000 students currently enrolled at the college. The involvement of the community is rich and important.

**Greg Purdy** reported that the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway has a lot of history and they are in the process now of digitizing the film library. They restored the 55-year-old film called the Miracle of Palm Springs and it debuted at the Palm Springs Cultural Center last night. The first phase of their remodeling project is just about completed. It includes an interactive wall on the first floor depicting the trails and includes drone footage. He also congratulated the CTA program and noted that the Tram will have its staff become certified while the tram is closed for their annual maintenance this year.

**Bob Schneider** reported that Big League Dreams is busy with the California winter league. They opened yesterday with an 8% increase in opening day attendance. Bring some friends and come watch a game.

**Rob Hampton**, Palm Springs Convention Center and Bureau of Tourism, reported that the year started off well with the film festival. He traveled to San Francisco to attend the Professional Convention Management Association. He has attended this conference for the past 20 years and had to note that Greater Palm Springs had a huge presence at the conference and was well-represented. He thanked Aftab Dada and PS Resorts for making it possible to host an additional reception during the conference. On another subject, Mary Jo Ginther has announced her retirement. She has been with the Bureau 13 years. They are not looking at what the Bureau will look like going forward.

**Christoph Roshardt** of Renaissance Esmeralda Indian Wells reported that the hotel finished their complete renovation with 516 new guest rooms and suites. They went from 37 suites to 102. There is also a new lobby bar called The Place. They also added a new venue – an olive grove with 18, 50-year-old, fully grown trees.

**Allen Monroe** reported that The Living Desert and Gardens is celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding. There are many special events this year including the Golden Jubilee Gala on March 7. On March 21 they will open a new animal experience, Australian Adventures, a walk-through wallaby experience. On April 4 is Brew at the Zoo. He thanked the City of Palm Desert for its support. This summer they will begin a \$12 million expansion to bring black rhinos in the fall of 2021.

**Aftab Dada** thanked Scott White and his team for superb work. He noted the STR Report for 2019, indicated that the destination, for the first time, hit over 62% occupancy. Our goal should be to exceed that number in 2020.

**Kelly Steward** reported that the Passion for Pinot event was held at the Ritz-Carlton recently. They had hoped for 400 attendees and had 640 people. She also congratulated the CTA program and noted that the Ritz-Carlton would schedule their own class, or classes, as they have 400 employees. She also thanked CVB for their work.

Linda Evans thanked Kelly and the Ritz-Carlton for hosting the meeting today. If you can host the next one in March, please contact Scott White or Revae Reynolds.

#### FUTURE MEETING DATE

Friday, March 27, 2020. Location: TBD


#### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:08 a.m.

Prepared by:

  
Revae Reynolds  
Executive Administrative Assistant

CVB Board of Directors Secretary:

  
Robert Del Mas

Approval Date:

4/24/2020