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Subject: Longtime Visit Fort Worth leader retiring
Date: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 11:10:30 AM

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Longtime Visit Fort Worth leader retiring

Fort Worth Report

by [Bob Francis](#)

January 20, 2026 5:26 pm



Bob Jameson, president and CEO of Visit Fort Worth.
(Courtesy photo | Visit Fort Worth)

Bob Jameson, who has led Visit Fort Worth for 13 years as president and CEO, announced Tuesday he will retire at the end of April.

“This has been the joy of my life,” Jameson said in a news release. “Tourism is important for our economy and our national visibility and must be grounded in our community for the benefit of our residents.”

A national search will begin to find Jameson’s replacement, Visit Fort Worth officials said in the release.

During Jameson’s tenure, the city’s visitor economy doubled and Fort Worth became one of the fastest-growing tourism destinations in the country.

Jameson joined the group in January 2013, replacing David DuBois, who had led the Fort Worth and Convention & Visitors Bureau for seven years.

City leaders credited Jameson for increasing the public profile of the nonprofit organization, which is funded primarily by the city’s hotel occupancy tax. Visit Fort Worth’s annual meeting, usually held in February, has become a top citywide event, regularly drawing about 1,000.

Jameson’s involvement in local tourism extends beyond his time as head of Visit Fort Worth.

Prior to joining the tourism organization, then known as the Fort Worth Convention & Visitor's Bureau, he led the Marriott Worthington Renaissance hotel in downtown Fort Worth for nearly three decades.

"Bob Jameson has had immeasurable impact on Fort Worth's visitor tourism success over the past 13 years," Mayor Mattie Parker said in a statement. "He is truly one of Fort Worth's best ambassadors, and I'm thrilled for him in his next chapter of retirement."

Under Jameson's leadership, Visit Fort Worth developed the Fort Worth Sports Commission, Hear Fort Worth music office, the Fort Worth Film Commission and the Fort Worth Tourism Public Improvement District to attract and support long-term growth of key industries throughout the city. He also expanded support for convention sales and services as well as for the Fort Worth Herd.

In the past decade, Visit Fort Worth officials said the city saw:

- The economic impact of tourism doubled to \$3.6 billion.
- The number of visitors doubled to more than 11.7 million.
- Hospitality jobs doubled to 30,000.
- Direct visitor spending hit a record \$3 billion.

- \$287 million state and local taxes generated by visitor spending.

Jameson currently serves on the boards of Arts Fort Worth, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce, Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Near Southside, Fort Worth Opera, the Cliburn, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, Fort Worth Sister Cities International, and Downtown Fort Worth Inc.

He also serves on the boards of the Texas Travel Alliance and the U.S. Travel Association.

Steve Montgomery, president and CEO of the Fort Worth Chamber, said the announcement carried an impact.

"This is one of those moments that you know is coming someday, yet when it finally arrives, it hits you hard," he said.

Montgomery said the next leader needs to be someone who is “passionate about the success of the organization, its mission and, above all, Fort Worth.”

For Fernando Costa, former assistant city manager for the city, Jameson left a roadmap for the next leader of Visit Fort Worth.

“His successor, and others who aspire to sustain Fort Worth’s economic and cultural momentum, can draw valuable lessons from Bob’s leadership,” he said.

Jameson, who was born in Long Beach and raised in Garden Grove, California, began his career in hospitality with Marriott International in the Golden State in 1977.

He graduated from the University of San Francisco in 1976 with a bachelor of arts in history.

Jameson and his wife, Anne Milder Jameson, are the parents of four children: Bradley, Simone, Mack and Andi.

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