

MOUNT SAN JACINTO WINTER PARK AUTHORITY

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Mount San Jacinto Winter Park Authority held October 18, 2017, at the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, Palm Springs, CA.

Authority Members

Jerry Ogburn
Nancy Stuart
Bary Freet
Jan Oliphant
Brian Nestande
Jon Sheinberg

Staff

Nancy Nichols, General Manager
Gary Aberg, VP IT
Tara Meinke, VP Finance
Greg Purdy, VP Marketing & Public Affairs

Absent:

None

Guests:

Mark Hudgens, MSJSP
Todd Friedman, MSJSP
John Fritch, Elevated Experiences
Kyle Radke, The Jones Agency
Jim Forneris, NHA
Vince Llacer, NHA
Mike McCulloch, former Authority Member

Legal Counsel:

Robert Hargreaves

CALL TO ORDER – OGBURN

Meeting called to order at 9:30 a.m.

ROLL CALL – PURDY

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - MCCULLOCH

WELCOME OF GUESTS – OGBURN

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – OGBURN

Upon Motion by Oliphant, seconded by Stuart and carried, to accept today's agenda was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mike McCulloch presented a prototype for an aluminum Tram directional sign for the State Park trails. He volunteered to assist with the placement of signage.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – OGBURN

Upon Motion by Sheinberg, seconded by Nestande and carried, the meeting minutes dated August 16 2017, were approved.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT

Meinke asked if the Authority had received and reviewed the financial reports and narrative for August 2017 and September 2017, and asked if there were any questions. Hearing none she stated that year-to-date ridership through September 2017 was 2,002 more than September 2016 year-to-date ridership.

CONCESSIONS – Fritch reported food and beverage sales for September 2017 were approximately 20% higher than September 2016. He stated had selected coffee machines for new coffee bar at Cascade Café and was adding a digital menu for Cascade Café similar to the one at Pines Cafe.

Discussion followed on new seasonal menus.

MARKETING REPORT

Sales & Public Relations - Purdy reported August 2017 and September 2017 attendance numbers compared to budget and to previous year. He reported the 2,890 attendance decrease in September 2017 ridership was largely attributable to being closed one extra day for shut-down this September. He stated September 2017 year-to-date attendance was 124,968 compared to 122,966 year-to-date September 2016, a 2% increase. He reviewed the new security measures being taken for the upcoming Tram Road Challenge, provided an update on the Tram mobile app and announced Shari Belafonte would be the celebrity tree lighter this year.

Discussion followed on using a drone to patrol and obtaining a temporary no low-flying zone designation from the FAA during Tram Road Challenge.

Advertising – Radke reported that advertising for the Snow Guessing Contest was complete, and was now finishing holiday campaign, although was using most of last year’s creative. She reported the KMIR Olympic Party to be held at the Mountain Station has been confirmed but details are still pending.

Discussion followed on summer pass numbers, upgrading summer passes to annual passes and United Way ads regarding the Tram Road Challenge.

GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

Nichols reviewed Minute Order 2017-7 and recommended its approval.

Upon Motion by Oliphant, seconded by Stuart and carried, Minute Order 2017-7 authorizing the retroactive approval of the expenditure of \$30,139.90 for resurfacing the Entryway and Telescope Patio at the Valley Station, was unanimously approved

Willow Creek Trail - Park Superintendent Mark Hudgens reviewed status of Willow Creek trail. He stated reopening was scheduled for November 15, 2017 but not guaranteed. He stated State Parks and USFS would be doing a joint press release on the reopening. Ogburn asked if the Tram would do an announcement as well.

Friends of Palm Springs Mountains/Chino Canyon - Nichols reported on the meeting she and Ogburn had with the Friends of Palm Springs Mountains. The Friends have been meeting with all adjacent property owners regarding obtaining a consensus for creating a small walking trail along Tram Way. It would have informational markers for hikers. Road safety was a primary concern by the Tram. Ogburn added that Tribe and City were on-board, although all planning was very preliminary.

Project Report - Gary Aberg gave the project report in Jim Whitmore's absence. He reported Mike Fontana had stated a Hazardous Materials Survey would be done to determine what hazardous materials would need to be abated prior to commencement of Mountain Station rebuild and Fontana was inviting bidding general contracts to attend mandatory walk-through in early November. Aberg stated the tentative start date for work on the Mountain Station project was May 1, 2018. Aberg reported Tram had entered into three-year agreement with Palm Springs Police Department to provide tram security officers with advanced firearms training at the Department firing range and the contract was approved by the Palm Springs City Council. He stated during annual shutdown, replaced four pendant ropes, resurfaced Mountain Station and Valley Station Docks along with front entrance stairs, repaired sections of septic system at Mountain Station, installed new septic controls, installed two new 125 KW generators at Mountain Station and completed required annual State testing and inspections.

CALIFORNIA STATE PARK REPORT

Hudgens reviewed repair work performed during shut-down and expressed thanks for Tram's assistance with flying in materials.

Hudgens gave an update on the proposed Hidden Divide permitting process. He stated there were new rules about hiking off-trail effective January 1, 2018 and was working on staffing to enforce rules as well as an interpretation program. He reported US Fish & Wildlife would only allow 30 permits issued per day to Hidden Lake and was hoping for spring reopening of the area.

CLOSED SESSION

Chair adjourned regular meeting at 10:00 a.m. to reconvene in Closed Session, Item 9.A – Conference with legal counsel – Anticipated Litigation, GC 54956.9

CLOSED SESSION ITEMS (If Any)

Chair reconvened regular meeting at 10:22 a.m. There were no reportable actions.

AUTHORITY MEMBER COMMENTS

Stuart asked that the signage Mike McCulloch suggested be considered. It would be advantageous for all concerned. Sheinberg mentioned the social media photo-op possibilities of such signage. Freet expressed his support as well. Ogburn recommended that we find a way to honor (former Tramway GM) Rob Parkins. Oliphant suggested that there be something permanent at the Tram as well as what he can keep personally. Staff will discuss.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:28 a.m.



(Attest: Secretary)