

MOUNT SAN JACINTO WINTER PARK AUTHORITY

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Mount San Jacinto Winter Park Authority held June 20, 2018 at the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, Palm Springs, CA.

Authority Members:

Bary Freet
Jerry Ogburn
Jan Oliphant
Nancy Stuart

Absent:

Brian Nestande
Jon Sheinberg

Legal Counsel:

Robert Hargreaves

Guests:

Kelly Elliott, MSJSP
Mark Hudgens, MSJSP
Todd Friedman, MSJSP
Larrynn Carver, CA State Parks
Mike Yengling, CA State Parks
John Fritch, Elevated Experiences
Chris Mills, Prest-Vuksic Architects
Mike Fontana, Project Manager
Kyle Radke, The Jones Agency
Maryanne Coury, The Jones Agency
Ben Kandora, The Jones Agency
Phillip Large, The Jones Agency

Staff:

Nancy Nichols, General Manager
Jim Whitmore, Executive VP
Gary Aberg, VP Technology
Marjorie De La Cruz, VP HR & Risk Mgmt.
Tara Meinke, VP Finance
Greg Purdy, VP Marketing & Public Affairs
Paul Wright, Technology Manager

Guests (cont.):

Jack Alexander, Guest
Michael Birnberg, Guest
Brian Conley, Guest
Maric Ming, Guest
Jeff Ohles, Guest
Danny Repelson, Guest
Robert Rotman, Guest
Dennis Woods, Guest

CALL TO ORDER – STUART

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

ROLL CALL – PURDY

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – OGBURN

WELCOME OF GUESTS – STUART

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – STUART

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dennis Woods congratulated John Fritch on his “Entrepreneur of the Year Award” at the recent Chamber of Commerce Luncheon. He also congratulated Nancy Stuart on her recent Tramway presentation to the Palm Springs City Council.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – STUART

Upon Motion by Freet, seconded by Ogburn and carried, the meeting minutes dated April 18, 2018, were unanimously approved.

MOUNTAIN STATION PRESENTATION

Project Architect Chris Mills read the following as the Design Statement for the Mountain Station’s remodel: “The underlying intent of this remodel is to create a refreshed, exciting and accessible experience to a historically significant building without compromising the original integrity of the building. This will be accomplished through major infrastructure upgrades, removal, concealment and repair of past ‘Band-Aid’ work or work not sensitive to the original architectural concept as well as modification of spaces to accommodate current and projected functions. All work will be designed to reflect and promote the original architectural concept of the Architect.” He then reviewed the packet of renderings and floorplans.

Project Manager Mike Fontana then reviewed construction schedules, major infrastructure components and budgets.

Discussion followed on the possibility of using a projector for future architectural presentations, the County being the primary agency for plan check and inspections, changing stations and a fire pit.

It was the consensus of the board to move ahead with the conceptual plans.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT

Meinke asked if the Authority had received and reviewed the financial reports for April and May 2018, and asked if there were any questions. Hearing none she stated that year-to-date ridership through May 2018 was 10,883 more than May 2017 year-to-date ridership.

Concessions – Fritch reported food and beverage sales for May have been steady with slight increases. Over 60% of Restaurant Week diners chose the Restaurant Week Menu. Groups are going up, especially Chinese.

MARKETING REPORT

Sales & Public Relations - Purdy stated that the Sales, Marketing and Public Affairs report had been sent to the Authority and asked if there were any questions. Hearing none he reported that visitor attendance for May 2018 was up 10.2% compared to May 2017 and group sales were up 63.6% compared to May 2017. Further discussion included recent tradeshow, our nomination for a CVB award, and mobile tour usage and upgrades.

Advertising – Radke introduced her team in the audience. She discussed there was a slight shift in ridership this year, with there being a higher percentage of seniors versus children, probably due to lack of snow. The agency held pricing with media outlets, achieved nearly \$1.4 million in added advertising value and completed upgrades to the website during the past year. She then introduced staff to present the new “Your Great Escape” campaign for the coming fiscal year.

GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

Nichols stated that, moving forward, certain policies and procedures needed to be created and/or updated in accordance with recommendations by BB&K.

Nichols reviewed the discretionary bonus policy. Discussion ensued and it was decided to bring back a revised policy draft for the next meeting and, in the interim, Nichols asked the board to approve a net \$1,500 bonus per employee for the current fiscal year.

Upon motion by Freet, seconded by Ogburn and carried, to approve a \$1,500 net bonus to Tramway employees for fiscal year-end, was unanimously approved.

Hargreaves discussed the Electronic Communications Policy, which is based upon a recent court decision expanding the definition of public records to also include email. He stated each board member will now have a Tramway-only email account.

Upon motion by Freet, seconded by Ogburn and carried, Resolution 2018-3 adopting the Electronic Communications Policy, was unanimously approved.

Nichols reviewed the Amended Records & Retention Policy to encompass electronic communications along with some other changes recommended by BB&K.

Upon motion by Oliphant, seconded by Freet and carried, Resolution 2018-4 adopting the Amended Records & Retention Policy, was unanimously approved.

Projects – Whitmore reported that the Hazardous Materials Survey had been completed and we are awaiting findings. Once received, abatement can begin prior to remodeling. In addition, crane installation will begin next week, so it is ready for shutdown.

CALIFORNIA STATE PARK REPORT

Kelly Elliott introduced her guests from the Park’s Service Center and thanked the board for inviting them. She stated-how much they appreciate all the detail that has gone into retaining the Mountain Station’s historical value.

Mark Hudgens reported on the on-going trail rehab and tree hazard issues. He stated the NHA Field and Educational Programs are now in full swing; directional Tram signs have been received and additional staff is now onboard to install. They are close to getting Hidden Lake open, but per the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service directive, have asked that the Parks and the Tram not advertise.

Discussion ensued on the possibility of a fire pit placement on Desert View Terrace; replacement of Desert View Trail signage; posting hours at Ranger Station; and if signs can be placed on trees. Hudgens replied that generally signs cannot be affixed to trees, adding that they are putting together an overall signage plan for Round Valley and some of the other trails.

AUTHORITY MEMBER COMMENTS

Oliphant thought this was a very informative meeting regarding the future of the Tram and extended her thanks to staff and the remodeling sub-committee.

Ogburn reported that this Saturday was the first of five summer youth nature hikes in cooperation with the Boys & Girls Club of Palm Springs, Palm Springs Rotary Club and the Tramway. These kids are not able to experience the forest much, so this is a special experience for them.

Stuart commended the youth program, and extended her thanks to the tram staff and The Jones Agency for doing a fantastic job. She looks forward to seeing everyone on August 15 for the next scheduled meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business, Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.



(Attest: Secretary)