

MOUNT SAN JACINTO WINTER PARK AUTHORITY

Minutes of the adjourned meeting of the Mount San Jacinto Winter Park Authority held November 10, 2021 at the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, Palm Springs, CA.

Authority Members:

Bary Freet
Brian Nestande
Jerry Ogburn
Jeff Ohlfs
Nancy Stuart

Staff:

Nancy Nichols, General Manager
Jim Whitmore, Executive VP
Marjorie De La Cruz, VP HR & Risk Mgmt.
Greg Purdy, VP Marketing & Public Affairs.

Absent:

Brian Conley
Sandra Magana-Cuellar

Guests:

Mike Dippel, MSJSP
Kyle Radke, The Jones Agency
Barb Kaplan, Guest
Dennis Woods, Guest
Robert Rotman, Guest
Mike Fontana, Fontana & Associates
Kevin Kennedy, Guest
Maria Kennedy, Guest
Cheryl Freet, Guest
Larry Bennett, Guest

Legal Counsel:

Robert Hargreaves

CALL TO ORDER – FREET

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

ROLL CALL – PURDY

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – FREET

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – FREET

Upon Motion by Stuart, seconded by Nestande and carried, to approve meeting minutes dated August 21, 2021 were unanimously approved.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT

Nichols stated Meinke was unable to attend and asked if the Authority had received and reviewed the financial reports and narrative for September 2021. She then asked if there were any questions. Hearing none Nichols reported that \$6.5 million remains available from the bank loan and, once the State Park agreement was signed, would have access to an additional \$10 million. She reported no loan money has been used to date. Ohlfs questioned the availability of funds from any governmental infrastructure bills. Nichols stated research was done by Townsend Public Affairs and found in-progress projects were not eligible but would continue to investigate. Nichols said that she would invite Townsend Public Affairs to an upcoming meeting to discuss further.

Nichols reviewed and recommended approval of Minute Order 2021-10 regarding the destruction of records.

Upon motion by Ohlfs, seconded by Nestande and carried, Minute Order 2021-10 authorizing the retroactive destruction of Ticket and Retail daily reports up to and including fiscal year ending June 2016 and Purchase orders and Invoices up to and including fiscal year ending June 2016 per the Records Retention and Destruction Policy adopted September 21, 2004, was unanimously approved.

Concessions – Fritch reported Peaks Restaurant was open for lunch, but still having staffing issues, along with the rest of the service industry. He stated if staffing issues addressed would be open for dinner by Thanksgiving.

MARKETING REPORT

Sales & Public Relations – Purdy stated the September 2021 Sales and Public Affairs report had been sent to the Authority and asked if there were any questions. Hearing none Purdy reported on October 2021 attendance for individuals and groups. The outlook for groups was very positive with the reopening of international travel and our banquet facilities reopening soon. Purdy reviewed the upcoming Tree Lighting Ceremony details and announced that Marjorie De La Cruz would be the host of our Facebook Live stream of the event.

Advertising – Radke reported that we were taking advertising very slowly with most of the focus in-market. Would ramp up as needed. She stated that regarding Freet's previous inquiry about rotating digital billboards, we did use them back in 2015 and 2016 primarily for event marketing and snow. Cost starts at around \$100 per day per spot.

GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

Nichols gave update on remote meetings guidelines with additional input by Hargreaves.

Nichols discussed appointment of a grand reopening sub-committee. Board decided to move ahead with committee formation.

Upon motion by Nestande, seconded by Ohlfs, and carried, that a grand reopening sub-committee be formed comprised of Conley, Freet and Stuart, was unanimously approved.

Nichols reported that Desert Water Agency (DWA) has advised of a slowing water volume from our natural spring. We met with them and several water conservation measures have been instituted, as well as a full inspection of pipes and water tanks for any possible leaks. Since the meeting, they have advised that the spring water flow has increased, but we will continue doing all we can to conserve water. DWA also secured a \$10,000 grant for us to replace toilets at the Valley Station with low-flow models.

We are continuing with reduced tramcar capacities and would only have one holiday week this year of early 8:00 a.m. opening (between December 25 and January 2). This was due to both wastewater volume concerns and to support our Covid protocols.

Projects Report – Whitmore stated the Mountain Station remodel project was still in phase 5. Gift shop now permanently open. Crews are working on painting after hours. Stair treads are being trimmed for all staircases and are awaiting installation. Contractor has removed all their equipment from Culver Nichols Room in preparation for starting their work in that area. Valley Station wastewater was operating within the parameters of our permit and staff has been trained in the calibration of the sequencing batch reactor. Components for the Mountain Station wastewater plant continue to arrive on site. Due to equipment delivery delays and limited helicopter availability, we have requested an extension to completion date of the Mountain Station wastewater treatment facility from Water Quality Control Board until December 2022. Shutdown projects were reviewed, which included annual state inspections, slipping the track rope, changing pendant ropes and annual personnel training. We also put conduit (for wastewater plant) under the concrete path at the Mountain Station, which required replacing 180 linear feet of concrete.

Staffing Update – De La Cruz reported that recruiting efforts have remained vigorous and we continue to advertise aggressively in the candidate marketplace. As of now, we have 11 vacant positions, which we hope to have filled within 60 days. We already have some great new team members. Board discussion ensued regarding what categories of employees are needed and the viability of temporary employees for the open positions.

CALIFORNIA STATE PARK REPORT

Dippel reported that Ranger Jed was returning to MSJSP in December. The park has seen a large volume of filming inquiries lately. The prior weekend, the park was the site of a marathon for 45 elite athletes. National Association of Interpreters would be holding their convention in Palm Springs and will visit the Tram. Business has been good in the park and no issues to report.

Ohlfs questioned status of State Parks operating agreement. Dippel reported that it was still under review. Nichols reported that State Parks reached out to her with one question five or six weeks ago and that it was in the budget committee review process, which should be the last step before signature.

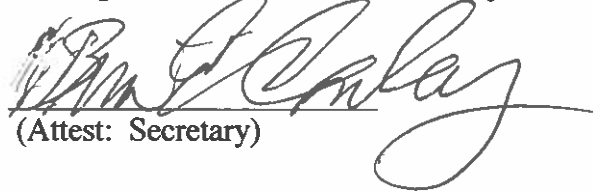
AUTHORITY MEMBER COMMENTS

Ohlfs would like the installation of the trail counter at the base of Tram Way to be revisited, budget permitting. He stated after recently returning from a long road trip and visiting other attractions, Ohlfs commended the Tram staff on PSAT's operation and professionalism. In addition, with Veteran's Day on the 11th, he would like to extend his thanks to any veterans at the Tram and in the audience and wish a 'happy birthday' to members of the Marine Corps. Stuart concurs with Ohlfs regarding the Tram and Elevated Experiences staffs on everything they have been through and extended her compliments to all.

Whitmore introduced Mike Fontana, who is project manager for our remodeling project, and was available for a building tour after the meeting was adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business, Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:47 a.m.


(Attest: Secretary)