

MOUNT SAN JACINTO WINTER PARK AUTHORITY

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Mount San Jacinto Winter Park Authority held June 18, 2025 at the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, Palm Springs, CA.

Authority Members:

Sandra Magana-Cuellar
Brian Conley
Jonathan Hoy
Jerry Ogburn
Jeff Ohlfs

Absent:

Nancy Stuart
Giovanni Virgen

Legal Counsel:

Craig Hayes

Staff:

Nancy Nichols, General Manager
Jim Whitmore, Executive VP
Tara Meinke, VP Finance
Marjorie De La Cruz, VP HR & Risk Mgmt.
Greg Purdy, VP Marketing & Public Affairs
Jamison Moore, IT Manager
Rebecca Petrillo, Senior Accountant

Guests:

Maryanne Coury, The Jones Agency
Janet DeSoto, MSJSP
Martin Foster, The Jones Agency
John Fritch, Elevated Experiences
Brady Her, MSJSP
Frank Jones, The Jones Agency

CALL TO ORDER – MAGANA-CUELLAR

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

ROLL CALL – PURDY

Ogburn stated he was appearing remotely under the just cause teleconferencing exception due to a physical issue that will not allow him to participate in person today.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

WELCOME OF GUESTS – MAGANA-CUELLAR

Meinke introduced Rebecca Petrillo who will be the new senior accountant replacing Analiz Ellis who is retiring at the end of June, after 26 years of dedicated service.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – MAGANA-CUELLAR

Upon Motion by Ohlfs, seconded by Hoy and carried, to accept today's agenda. Conley-Aye; Hoy-Aye; Ogburn-Aye; Ohlfs-Aye; Magana-Cuellar-Aye. Motion approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MAGANA-CUELLAR

Upon Motion by Conley, seconded by Ohlfs and carried, to approve meeting minutes dated April 16, 2025. Conley-Aye; Hoy-Aye; Ogburn-Aye; Ohlfs-Aye; Magana-Cuellar-Aye. Motion approved.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT

Meinke asked if the Authority had received and reviewed the financial reports and narrative for April 2025 and May 2025 and asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Concessions – Fritch reported that Elevated Experiences for May 2025 had food and beverage sales of \$790,054.96. 2025 Restaurant Week went very well with Peaks completely booked almost every night.

MARKETING REPORT

Sales & Public Relations – Purdy reported that the Tram ended May 2025 with 51,047 visitors which was 3.2% more than budget and .4% less than May 2024. Year-to-date totals were 6.6% more than budget and 3.1% less than 2024. Group sales were down approximately \$4,500 for May, primarily due to the drop in wholesale voucher business. Upcoming events include Military Days in July, the Palm Springs Chamber Mixer and First Responders Days in August. The Los Angeles Times shot a story of the top things to do in Palm Springs during the summer and Palm Springs Life did an interview and shot a story for the Tram being voted “Best Attraction” and “Best Children’s Activity.” Purdy reviewed the Tramway zip code reports for the past three months showing a significant drop in international visitors compared to the prior year.

Advertising – Jones reviewed the advertising ‘added value’ (no cost) they secured during the fiscal year for the Tram, which totaled \$225,463 in additional ad value and 23,770,342 additional impressions. He then shared ads for the upcoming Military Days and First Responders Days.

Ad Committee – Conley reported that the Ad Committee held its second meeting on May 7 to review three concepts developed by The Jones Agency for the new advertising campaign. These campaigns typically have a three-year life cycle, and the new ads will begin to appear after the September shutdown. Conley stated that the campaign selected appeared to be the most versatile and then introduced Jones who presented several preliminary examples of the new campaign.

Projects Report – Whitmore reported a tramcar carriage frame had been powder-coated and the water-receiving box at the Mountain Station loading dock had been automated to open and close automatically. To better monitor air particulates across the Coachella Valley, the Tram assisted Air Quality Management District with installation of a camera at the Mountain Station. In addition, new security cameras were installed, and some older cameras were upgraded in both stations. As a safety upgrade, a catwalk was installed around the tanks in the Mountain Station wastewater facility to limit the amount of time Tram personnel spend on ladders while taking samples and conducting routine maintenance.

The pedestrian counter for February counted 1,620 hikers with an average daily count of 52 hikers, the peak day was May 24 (Memorial Weekend), when there were 198 hikers.

GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

Nichols announced the signing of a contract to begin neuro-diversity training for managers after July 1. Frontline employees will receive their training during shutdown.

Nichols reviewed Resolution 2025-3, which is the annual approval of CEQA guidelines and recommended its approval.

Upon motion by Conley, seconded by Magana-Cuellar and carried, Resolution 2025-03 amending and adopting local guidelines for implementing the California Environmental Quality Act. Conley-Aye; Hoy-Aye; Magana-Cuellar-Aye; Ogburn-Aye; Ohlfs-Aye. Motion approved.

Nichols introduced the Long Valley Gateway Project Committee to give their report. Ohlfs stated that the staff has done a great job in getting the Request for Proposals (RFP) ready and gathering a list of companies who will receive copies for bidding. Nichols added that the RFP will be sent out the following week; contractors will come up for a walk-through approximately 30 days later; and then the deadline for proposals is 30 days after that.

Nichols stated that we would end the fiscal year slightly ahead of budget, but behind last year.

The next board meeting is scheduled for August 20, 2025.

CALIFORNIA STATE PARK REPORT

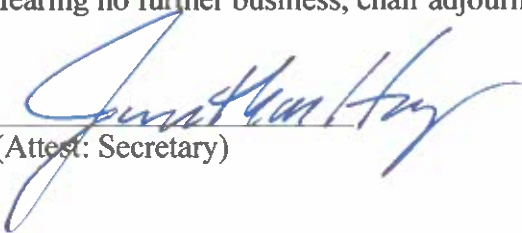
Brady Her reported that they are switching phone systems, so new phone numbers will be posted on social media and will be updated with Tram staff. Two new park aids were hired. They are considering implementing fire restrictions in July on the Idyllwild side and the forest in general, but will follow the Forest Service's lead. They have several State Park and NHA programs coming up and are starting several new volunteer programs. Campsite reservations should be converted to online soon, like the rest of State Parks' campgrounds.

AUTHORITY MEMBER COMMENTS

Ohlfs reported that World Ranger Day is July 31. He will be attending a ceremony at Cayucos State Beach where agencies will celebrate the Parks profession and honor the 180 rangers from 144 countries who died last year.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business, chair adjourned the meeting at 10:03 a.m.


(Attest: Secretary)