

MOUNT SAN JACINTO WINTER PARK AUTHORITY

Minutes of the adjourned meeting of the Mount San Jacinto Winter Park Authority held March 18, 2026 at the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, Palm Springs, CA.

Authority Members:

Sandra Magana-Cuellar
Brian Conley – via Teleconference
Jonathan Hoy
Jeff Ohlfs
Nancy Stuart
Giovanni Virgen

Absent:

Jerry Ogburn

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.
Gary Aberg, VP Technology
Greg Purdy, VP Marketing & Public Affairs
Jamison Moore, IT Manager
Rachel Anderson, PR/Special Events Manager

Guests:

Corey Alderson, MSJSP
Maryanne Coury, The Jones Agency
Eden Casareno, Eadie Payne LLP
Janet DeSoto, MSJSP
Martin Foster, The Jones Agency
John Fritch, Elevated Experiences
Stephanie Gutierrez, MSJSP
Stephen James, MSJWPA
Panida Kongpetch, Eadie Payne LLP
Dennis Yu, PARS

CALL TO ORDER – STUART

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

ROLL CALL – PURDY

Conley stated that he was appearing remotely under the just cause teleconferencing exception due to an ADA accommodation that will not allow him to participate in person today. There are no other attendees in the room at his location.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

WELCOME OF GUESTS – STUART

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – STUART

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – STUART

Upon Motion by Hoy, seconded by Ohlfs and carried, to approve joint meeting minutes dated January 21, 2026. Conley-Aye; Hoy-Aye; Ohlfs-Aye; Virgen-Aye; Stuart-Aye. Motion approved.

Authority Member Magana-Cuellar joined meeting at 9:35 a.m.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT

Meinke asked if the Authority had received and reviewed the financial reports and narrative for January 2026. She noted that while we are below budget in attendance, we are up in revenue. She asked if there were any questions and there were none.

Meinke introduced Eden Casareno and Panida Kongpetch of Eadie Payne LLP who reported on the financial statements for the fiscal year 2024/2025.

Financial Statements – Casareno and Kongpetch reviewed management and auditor responsibilities for the audit and issued a clean opinion. As required by audit standards, a risk assessment was conducted and no deficiencies were found. Ohlfs, Magana-Cuellar, Stuart and Hoy complimented Meinke on a clean audit. The 2024/2025 financial report was received and filed.

Pension Plan Review - De La Cruz introduced Dennis Yu with PARS, the Tramway's defined pension plan administrator, who gave a review of highlights of the plan and current funding.

Concessions – Fritch reported that total Elevated Experiences sales for February 2026 were \$975,295. March is off to a great start with wine sales up due to patrons from the tennis tournament. Fritch discussed new menu items.

MARKETING REPORT

Sales & Public Relations – Purdy reported that for February, the Tram's visitor count was 6% more than budget, but 4.2% less than last February. Year-to-date attendance was 4.5% less than budget and 5.2% less than last year. Group sales were 55.5% above last February and are now 18% ahead of last year's year-to-date. Purdy invited board members to Sunrise Service on April 5. He reviewed recent tradeshow attendance, promotional filming, recent news stories, educational presentations, the recent SNL skit and the American Heart association promotion. The status of the current market was also discussed and how the Tram is placing additional targeted advertising throughout Southern California. Board member discussion ensued about opportunities with Olympics and World Cup; the composition of our groups; and the virality of the SNL skit.

Advertising – Martin Foster showed print ads for Sunrise Service, Easter Ride 'n' Dine and Spring Break. Also, the I-10 board has been updated with a new vinyl.

Projects Report – Whitmore stated that we didn't do much construction due to the cold weather and mostly concentrated on keeping the tram running. He reported we still finished reinstalling copper caps to the Mountain Station beams; ran a power line to the red tram car; and installed new panoramic cameras at Mountain Station. Preparation has also begun on new water tank installation. As with all new wire ropes, they stretch and, after the rope installation during last shutdown, we will close on March 24 to shorten this new rope. Pedestrian counter for last quarter (December to March) showed a total of 3,174 walkers.

Whitmore explained ongoing water transportation needs. He reviewed Minute Order 2026-2 and recommended its approval. Ohlfs asked when water hauling would no longer be needed and Whitmore explained that, with recent storms, we have had landslides that have impacted our freshwater supply. Desert Water Agency (DWA) determines when the stream supply can be utilized and both Tram staff and DWA are looking at long-term solutions.

Upon motion by Hoy, seconded by Magana Cuellar and carried, to approve Minute Order 2026-2 authorizing an amount of \$150,000.00 be approved for delivery of fresh water, on an as needed basis, should interruption occur to our regular fresh water supply. And this expenditure be added to the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Maintenance Budget under Outside Services. Conley-Aye; Hoy-Aye; Magana-Cuellar-Aye; Ohlfs-Aye; Stuart-Aye; Virgen-Aye. Motion approved.

GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

Nichols stated an ad hoc Advertising Committee needed to be appointed. Stuart and Conley were recommended to serve. There were no objections to the committee appointments. The next board meeting is scheduled for April 15, 2026.

CALIFORNIA STATE PARK REPORT

No report, but Ohlfs asked about the MSJSP anniversary? Ranger James advised that the Park's 90th anniversary is June 19, 2027 and they are now working on plans on how to commemorate the occasion.

AUTHORITY MEMBER COMMENTS

Ohlfs discussed his recent attendance at the California Parks and Recreation Society Conference. Key takeaways were how many attendees are already familiar with the Tram and how many city-sponsored groups and field trips have either just been or have a Tram trip scheduled. Stuart extended her thanks to the Tram team and the tremendous job they do. Everyone brings special qualities to the job. And Nancy (Nichols) always keeps the board informed of important developments, so there are no surprises.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business, Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:30 a.m.


(Attest, Secretary)