

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, August 27, 2026 @ 1pm

Joshua Tree Retreat Center, Sanctuary

Item 0.0	Liaison & Collaboration Update	Frank Luckino
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frank spoke about partnerships with the Chamber and possibly JTNPA. He mentioned that the Town would be “taking the lead on marketing” and JNS Next has created a brand and logo. Mentioning with the Town taking the lead on marketing, it frees up Linda’s time to be able to sell advertising. Town Branding is being rolled out. “Hi Yucca Valley” to tie into the Hi-Desert branding. Terry mentioned the “In Yucca You Can” campaign that was proposed a few years back. Presentation to be sent to Frank. Celeste Hildebrand, ED for Hi-Desert Nature Museum is taking on Public Art. She will be our point of contact (POC) for getting a mural on our building. Aquatics Center opening September/November timeframe. Health & Wellnes centered with several sports opportunities. Showers & Lockers will be open to visitors to the area as well. Welcome Sign at the entrance of Town is being designed/produced by local native, Cory Hamilton. 	
Item 1.0	Call to Order @ 2:00pm	Terry Castillo
Item 2.0	Introduction of guests	Terry Castillo
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jacqueline Guevara w/JTNPA Michelle Maresh, Retired Teacher 	
Item 3.0	Approval of Agenda	Terry Castillo
	Bill motioned to approve agenda, Julie seconded. Agenda approved.	
Item 4.0	Email Approved Items	Linda Poindexter
Item 5.0	Secretary’s Report/Minutes:	Julie Bruley
	Terry motioned to approve June 3, 2026 minutes , Bill seconded. Minutes approved.	
Item 6.0	Treasurer’s Report (Attached)	Kathie Ammar
	Park Passes are doing great! Hummer tours are increasing with needed passes for their clients.	
Item 7.0	Gift Shop update	Kathie Ammar
	Year-to-date revenue down about \$5,000. Decrease being contributed to lower visitor numbers over the past 3 months. This is impacted by a decline in foreign visitors. Speculation is the World Cup Soccer games held in Los Angeles drawing travelers away from the desert.	

Other Welcome Centers have also seen a decrease in travelers. Jacque (JTNPA) confirms she is also seeing a slowdown in visitor traffic.

Kathie is requesting permission to change tax accountant from Abbot to Gloria Hill & Associates in Palm Springs.

Item 8.0	Welcome Center update	Linda Poindexter
	8.1 Traffic Report – slightly down from last year	
	8.2 Harvest Hosts – had our first booking in August; signage needed	
	8.3 Art Contest – 91 entries this year; additional marketing efforts & resolved technical issues made a difference	
	8.4 Art Tours – catalogs arrived last week and already several have been given out; continuing the sale of the Art Tours bags with items donated in them.	
	8.5 Palm Springs Chamber membership - approved	
	8.6 Weekend operations – Chamber side – we have ended our trial on locking the Chamber door on the weekends. Visitors confused by the locked front door, which was a staffing decision. After re-evaluation, it was determined we were losing visitors.	
	8.7 Outlook Forum – March in Monterey	
Item 9.0	Board Comments	Board Members
	Hopeful our guests will accept our invitation to join our Board.	
Item 10.0	Public Comments (none) (limited to 3 minutes per person)	Terry Castillo
Item 11.0	Future Agenda Items	Board Members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mural for side of building...Jeff Brady with Park & Rec. Matt Rousch Commissioner (Frank investigating) Picnic tables for staff & tourists• Food Truck Rodeo• JTGC Revival• “Rest Stop” Identify: Welcome, Water Stop, Picnic Stop.• Signage – speak to Chamber about front signage.• Possible Solar covers for parking lot• Field Trips:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Zee offered possible field trip experience for staff and volunteers to Reset○ Desert Christ Park• Set new, and review 2025/2026 planned agenda items	
Item 12.0	Adjournment 2:23pm	Terry Castillo
Item 13.0	Closed Session	Board Members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Action item – Official Title for Kathie needed for banking procedures. Kathie Ammar’s new title is Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the California Welcome Center.	

September Board meeting: September 24, 2026 @ 1:00pm-3:00pm

Meeting with Frank Luckino prior to our next regular board meeting tentatively set for 12:30pm-1:00pm on September 24, 2026