

COACHELLA VALLEY MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY  
(CVMC)

REGULAR MEETING  
73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 101  
Palm Desert, California

DRAFT MINUTES

July 8, 2024 - 3:00 p.m.

**Teleconference locations:**

State of California, Resources Agency  
715 P St.

Mojave Room on the 20<sup>th</sup> floor (NRHQ 20-104)  
Sacramento, CA 95814

3602 Inland Empire Blvd. Suite C-220  
Small Conference Room  
Ontario, CA 91764

MEMBERS PRESENT: Stephen Benson, Department of Finance  
Patricia Cooper, Riverside County  
Denise Delgado, City of Coachella  
Gary Gardner, City of Desert Hot Springs  
Grace Garner, City of Palm Springs  
Elaine Holmes, City of Indio  
Kathleen Kelly, City of Palm Desert  
Richard Kim, California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Rita Lamb, City of Cathedral City (*Chairwoman*)  
Lynn Mallotto, City of Rancho Mirage  
Deborah McGarrey, City of La Quinta  
Jennifer Norris, Wildlife Conservation Board  
Savana Saubel, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians  
Andrea Scharffer, CA Natural Resources Agency  
Christopher Tracy, University of California, Riverside  
Ellen Lloyd Trover, Senate Rules Committee Appointee

MEMBERS ABSENT: Enrique Arroyo, California State Parks  
Beatriz Gonzalez, State Assembly Appointee  
Joan Taylor, Governor's Appointee  
Bruce Whitman, City of Indian Wells

CVMC STAFF PRESENT: Elizabeth King, Executive Director  
Diana Rosas, Associate Director  
Maximiliano Ochoa, Project Coordinator  
Abriana Elms, Administrative Coordinator

OTHERS PRESENT: Lynn Sweet, University of California Riverside  
Troy Strange, Desert Recreation District  
William Brent Felstead, Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains  
Recreation and Conservation Authority  
Margaret Park, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians

1.0 Call to Order & Introductions

Chair Lamb declared a quorum with 14 voting members present at 3:02 p.m. Subsequently, two additional board members (Delgado/ Garner) arrived after the roll call bringing the attendance to 16 voting members.

2.0 Approval of May 13, 2024, Meeting Minutes

A motion was made and seconded (Gardner/Holmes) to approve the May 13, 2024, minutes; the motion passed with two abstentions (Mallotto/Saubel).

3.0 Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

No public comments were made.

4.0 Closed Session

No closed session was scheduled for this meeting.

5.0 Action/Informational Items- Public Hearing

Action Item 5.1 Adoption of Resolution 2024-07 consenting to and approving the donation by the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) of one parcel in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area to the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians.

Board Member Saubel recused herself and left the room for the item as a Bagley Keene best practice as she represents the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, whom the item impacts.

The Chair opened the item. Executive Director King summarized item 5.1 as presented in the staff report. Chief Planning Officer Margaret Park of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians was also in attendance and provided a brief overview of Action Item 5.1.

Board Member Gardner shared his excitement for this land-back donation, adding that this is something that has been worked on for some time.

**Vote:** A motion was made and seconded (Gardner/Kelly) adopting Resolution 2024-07 consenting to and approving the donation of +/- 320 acres of land (Riverside County Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 686-110-008) in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area from the Conservancy to the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. The motion passed with one abstention (Saubel).

Action Item 5.2      Approving the Annual Budget of the Coachella Valley Desert and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for Fiscal Year 2024- 25.

Executive Director King summarized item 5.2 as presented in the staff report.

There were no questions or discussion from the board.

**Vote:** A motion was made and seconded (Kelly/McGarrey) approving the attached Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget. The motion passed unanimously.

Informational Item 5.3

Presentation by Desert Recreation District.

Executive Director King introduced Scott Sear, Public Information/Legislative Affairs Officer with the Desert Recreation District, who gave a brief informational presentation on Shumway Ranch and general updates.

Chair Lamb asked if a teacher could take her class up to Shumway Ranch for a field trip. Officer Sear commented that at this time the Reservation system is only open to its Partners.

## 6.0 Reports

### 6.1      Written reports from staff.

Associate Director Rosas and Project Coordinator Ochoa gave a brief update on Acquisition and Land Management Updates.

Board Member McGarrey asked for clarification on the work KDI is doing and if that work is being done at the Salton Sea. Project Coordinator Ochoa responded that the project discussed earlier was a different project. Board Member Cooper asked about the bond to be voted on and if an amount was given. Associate Director Rosas responded that the

bonds referenced earlier are those that the Conservancy already has. Board Member Cooper asked about past bond amounts. Associate Director Rosas responded: in 2006, Proposition 84 had \$10 million; Proposition 1 had \$10 million; Proposition 68 had \$7 million and Climate Resiliency and Community Access grant (CRCA) she would have to check on. Associate Director Rosas stated that the amounts vary but the proposed bond amount is \$24 million for the upcoming climate bond.

## 6.2 Executive Director Report.

Executive Director King reported on the following:

- Conservancy Updates for FY 2024/2025- Executive Director King commented that she is settling in thanks to staff and to the board for their support.
- Trails update- the Mitigated Negative Declaration is now adopted for the four new trails. The next step in this process is the Conservancy will work with its Consultant Aspen Environmental on getting permits and licenses from the landowners.
- Partners- Executive Director King stated that she was able to meet with some of the Partners: Agua Caliente; The Living Desert; Desert Recreation District; CVCC/CVAG and the California Natural Resources Agency. Executive Director King mentioned that she looks forward to meeting with more of the partners in the coming months.
- 2020/2025 Strategic Plan- Working on the five goals and objectives to create measurable targets. Public input is also something that the Conservancy plans to roll out in January.

Board Member Gardner expressed that the second goal of the Strategic Plan, Lands Management, should be a high priority all around. Board Member McGarrey also commented acknowledging the Conservancy's staff for their excellent reporting and organization during the meeting. Board Member Trover expressed her excitement with all that has been done at Shumway Ranch.

## 6.3 Board Member comments and reports.

There were no board comments or questions.

## 7.0 Adjourn to the September 9, 2024, meeting.

Chair Rita Lamb adjourned the meeting without objection at 4:01 p.m.