

Minutes

**Destination El Paso Advisory Board Meeting
Tuesday, November 25, 4:00 p.m.**

Destination El Paso

CITY CLERK DEPT
2026 MAR 3 PM12:27

Board Members Present	Board Members Absent	Destination EP Staff	City of El Paso	Public
Daniel J. Veale*	Gabriel Ayub	Jose Garcia	Ignacio Troncoso	
Rene Hurtado*	Bernie Olivas	Brooke Underwood		
Veronica Hernandez *	Jennifer Gonzalez	Valerie Garcia		
Pifas Silva *	Genevieve Torrez	Rene Wong		
Ken Gorski *		Chris Puga		

I. Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 4:03 PM by Rene Hurtado

II. Approval of Minutes

- Motion by Rene Hurtado to approve the October minutes, seconded by Veronica Hernandez and Pifas Silva, and the motion was approved.

III. Presentation on New Uniform Bylaws: Mayte Elizalde, Destination El Paso

- Overview of newly required City of El Paso Uniform Bylaws.
- Board structure, eligibility, member responsibilities, and training requirements reviewed.
- Noted that the board's purpose is advisory and limited to its enabling legislation.
- The Quorum requirement confirmed as 5 members.
- Members must complete the required Ethics, Code of Conduct, Public Information Act, and Texas Open Meetings Act training.
- Annual report due August 1.

IV. Department Updates for October 2025

- **President/CEO Update: Jose Garcia, President / CEO Destination El Paso**
- **Occupancy/Financials: Jose Garcia, President / CEO Destination El Paso**
 - Hotel occupancy up 5.9% from the prior week; ADR approximately \$120.43.
 - El Paso continues to lead state and national averages in occupancy.
 - Revenue pacing approximately \$403,000 above budget; September ended \$17,460 above budget after subsidy.
 - Visit El Paso +\$21,000; El Paso Live +\$219,000; Water Parks slightly below budget.
- **Tourism Development: Brooke Underwood, Visit El Paso**
 - 11 Amigo Man activations with over 2,000 interactions.
 - Visit El Paso presence at Formula One and Texas Tourism Booth; international exposure increased.
 - Hosted media from Guadalajara and Mexico City, and content creator John Sorsby.
 - Eco-tours and local cultural experiences are supported.
 - Travel activity is expected to slow for November – December and pick up in January.
- **Advertising: Rene Wong, Destination El Paso**
 - Digital campaigns performing above KPIs.
 - Organic social media delivered 14M+ impressions and 91,000+ engagements.
 - MADE campaign generating national and international interest (1,600+ QR scans).

- The Meeting Planner campaign performed well with 390,000 impressions.
- Highlighted multiple national awards earned by El Paso venues.
- **Convention & Sports Development: Valerie Garcia, Visit El Paso**
 - IMEX America produced 15 appointments and 3 RFPs.
 - NAACP expressed verbal commitment pending site visit.
 - Sports: Taekwondo, USA Fencing, and others showed interest.
 - American Society Student Steel Bridge competition offered verbal commitment; Gaming Fest secured for 2026.
 - Upcoming tradeshow and servicing activities noted.
- **Special Events/Venue and Event Management: Chris Puga, Destination El Paso**
 - Reported on four major events: The Strokes, Los Horóscopos de Durango, Dream Theater, and Perfume de Gardenia.
 - 22 events held, 29 event days, 27,000 total attendance.
- **El Paso Water Parks: Jose Garcia, Destination El Paso**
 - Spooky Fest highlighted; group sales producing results.
 - Staff training and maintenance activities are ongoing.
- **Floor open for questions/comments**
 - December 23 meeting conflicts with holiday schedules. Consensus: No December meeting; Staff will prepare a combined December-January report for the regular January Meeting.
 - Thanksgiving parade moving forward with lineup adjustments due to state horse movement restrictions. Sheriff's Posse to participate by walking/in modified format.
 - Board Members requested direct invitations to city events, proclamations, and Winterfest. Encouraged to represent the board publicly and maintain communication with appointing officials.
 - Discussion held on term limits and prior COVID-era extensions; clarification to be reviewed.

*Adjourn: 5:00 pm

*The next meeting will be January 27, 2025, at 4:00 pm

Vice Chairperson: _____

Date: _____

