ITEM 5A

Public Safety Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 9, 2026

The audio file for this meeting can be found at: http://www.cvag.org/audio.htm

1. **CALL TO ORDER** - The meeting was called to order by Chair Joseph Mirelez, Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, at 9:01 a.m. at the Coachella Valley Water District Steve Robbins Administration Building Training Room, 75515 Hovely Lane, Palm Desert, 92260.

   Roll call was taken and it was determined that a quorum was present.

Members Present

City of Blythe	Vice Mayor Johnny Rodriguez*
City of Cathedral City	Councilmember Rita Lamb
City of Coachella	Mayor Pro Tem Frank Figueroa
City of Desert Hot Springs	Councilmember Daniel Pitts
City of La Quinta	Councilmember John Peña
City of Palm Desert, *Vice Chair*	Mayor Evan Trubee
City of Palm Springs	Councilmember Grace Garner
City of Rancho Mirage	Councilmember Eve Fromberg Edelstein
County of Riverside	Assistant CEO Michelle Paradise
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians	Chair Joseph Mirelez

**arrived at 6A*

Ex-Officio Members Present

Cathedral City Fire	Fire Chief Michael Contreras
Cathedral City Police	Chief Rick Sanchez
District Attorney's Office	ADA Rodney Tethal
Indio Police Department	Chief Brian Tully
Palm Desert Sheriff's Substation	Lieutenant Daniel Porras
Riverside County Fire Department	Deputy Chief Mie Beverlin

Members & Ex-Officios Not Present

City of Indian Wells	Mayor Toper Taylor
City of Indio	Mayor Pro Tem Waymond Fermon
Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians	Emergency Services Manager Robert Bradbury
California Highway Patrol	Captain Michael Stefanoff
Desert Hot Springs Police	Chief of Police Steven Shaw
Palm Springs Fire	Fire Chief Paul Alvarado
Palm Springs Police	Chief of Police Andrew Mills
Riverside County Fire	Deputy Chief Robert Fish
Riverside County Probation	Chief Probation Officer Christopher Wright
Riverside County Sheriff's Department	Sheriff Chad Bianco
Thermal Sheriff Station	Captain Michael Bianco
U.S. Customs and Border Patrol	Assistant Chief Patrol Agent David Kim

The Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance. There were no agenda modifications or conflicts of interest announced.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Hope Christman, Local Government and Community Liaison with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), submitted a public comment regarding Item 6B on the agenda and provided information on the CPUC's current efforts to strengthen communications network resiliency statewide. A copy of Ms. Christman's email was provided to the Committee for its review.

3. CHAIR / COMMITTEE MEMBER/CVAG STAFF COMMENTS

Deputy Executive Director Erica Felci provided an overview of the meeting and room logistics. She also thanked the Palm Springs and Blythe Police Departments for their contributions to today's agenda.

Ms. Felci further noted an error in Item 7A, the attendance record sheet, in the agenda packet. The City of Cathedral City was present at the September 8, 2025, meeting and chaired the meeting, so the record will be amended to reflect the correct attendance.

4. EX-OFFICIO COMMENTS

None

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Approve the minutes from the September 8, 2025, meeting of the Public Safety Committee

B. Adopt Resolution No. 2026-002-PS authorizing the CVAG Public Safety Committee, as an eligible multijurisdictional body, to utilize the teleconferencing provisions established under Senate Bill 707

IT WAS MOVED BY COUNCILMEMBER PENA AND SECONDED MAYOR PRO TEM FIGUEROA TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR.

THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 9 AYES AND 3 MEMBERS ABSENT

Vice Mayor Johnny Rodriguez	**ABSENT**
Councilmember Rita Lamb	**AYE**
Mayor Pro Tem Frank Figueroa	**AYE**
Councilmember Daniel Pitts	**AYE**
Mayor Toper Taylor	**ABSENT**
Councilmember Waymond Fermon	**ABSENT**
Councilmember John Peña	**AYE**
Mayor Evan Trubee	**AYE**

Councilmember Grace Garner	**AYE**
Councilmember Eve Fromberg Edelstein	**AYE**
Assistant CEO Michelle Paradise	**AYE**
Tribal Chair Joseph Mirelez	**AYE**

5.1 ITEMS HELD OVER FROM CONSENT

None

6. DISCUSSION / ACTION

A. Drone Deployment by Local Law Enforcement

1. Use by the Blythe Police Department

Community Service Officer (CSO) Kelly Thomas provided a PowerPoint presentation overview on the usage of drones by Blythe Police Department and the benefits they have found in their usage, particularly along the Colorado River. Member discussion ensued with CSO Thomas answering questions from the Committee regarding battery life of drones, policies on privacy and the 4th Amendment.

2. Use by Palm Springs Police Department

Transportation Director Jonathan Hoy provided a brief introduction to a drone pilot program currently being tested for potential use on CV Link to support monitoring efforts.

Mr. Hoy introduced Palm Springs Police Department Lieutenant William Hutchinson, who provided a detailed PowerPoint presentation on their drone program, followed by a live video demonstration of a drone located in the City of Palm Springs that he controlled remotely from the meeting room.

A robust discussion followed, with both CSO Thomas and Lieutenant Hutchinson responding to questions from the Committee regarding staffing, funding, and training for the drone program, as well as inquiries about the legal parameters governing when and where drone footage may be used.

No action was taken as this was an informational item only.

B. Countywide and Statewide Efforts to Address Reoccurring 911 Outages in the Coachella Valley

Grace Garner, Senior Legislative Analyst for Riverside County Supervisor V. Manuel Perez, provided the Committee with an update of the County and Statewide efforts to improve 911 systems in the Coachella Valley.

No action was taken as this item was for informational purposes only.

7. INFORMATION – The following item was provided for information only:

A. Attendance Record

B. Conflict of Interest Guidance

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None.

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next meeting of the **Public Safety Committee** will be held on Monday, May 11, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. at the Palm Springs Police Department Training Room, 200 S. Civic Drive, Palm Springs, 92262.

The next meeting of the **Executive Committee** will be held on Monday, February 23, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. at the Coachella Valley Water District, Steve Robbins Administration Building Training Room, 75515 Hovley Lane East, Palm Desert, 92260.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Mirelez adjourned the meeting at 9:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elysia Regalado
Deputy Clerk