

CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: November 14, 2024

PREPARED BY: Thomas Soule, Public Affairs Manager

SUBJECT: APPROVE OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL FOR THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS
MANAGER TO PROMOTE THE PALM DESERT FOOD AND WINE
FESTIVAL

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize out-of-state travel for the Public Affairs Manager to participate in a media event in New York City, New York, on January 21, 2025, promoting the Palm Desert Food & Wine Festival at the James Beard Platform in conjunction with Palm Springs Life and Visit Greater Palm Springs.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

Palm Springs Life has once again leveraged its relationship with the James Beard Foundation to host a dinner by prominent chefs from the Palm Desert area for key media representatives at the James Beard Platform in New York City to promote Palm Desert Food & Wine.

Visit Greater Palm Springs supports this annual media dinner, which provides an excellent opportunity to gain national exposure for one of Palm Desert's signature events.

The media outlets that participated in last year's dinner at the James Bear Platform included *The Wall Street Journal*, *Fodor's*, *Good Morning America*, *The Today Show*, *Lonely Planet*, and *the New York Post*. The opportunity to have face-to-face interactions with these outlets and others is difficult to recreate in any other context without spending a great deal of time and money, making this an economical way to seek PR exposure and build awareness of the Palm Desert brand. Exposure to national media outlets can help boost awareness of the Palm Desert Food & Wine Festival, drawing potential tourists from around the country. Increased attendance would positively impact local businesses, generate additional revenue, and contribute to the local economy.

Although the Palm Desert Food & Wine Festival is well represented at this event, because the dinner at the James Beard Platform is coordinated by Visit Greater Palm Springs, there's a natural emphasis on Greater Palm Springs rather than on Palm Desert specifically. Having a representative from the City in attendance ensures that Palm Desert is highlighted in conversations with the journalists in attendance as a tourism destination in and of itself. This also provides the opportunity to follow up with those journalists directly in the future. These media outlets are typically hard to reach, so personal contact at this event has a greater likelihood of leading to future coverage than the usual route of cold calling or emailing the same publications.

Legal Review:

This report has been reviewed by the City Attorney's Office.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There's no cost for a City representative to attend the dinner, limiting the financial impact to travel costs. Funds in an amount not to exceed \$1,500 are available for this purpose in Account No. 1104417-4312000.