

VISIT GRAND JUNCTION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

June 11, 2019

Holiday Inn and Suites – Grand Junction Airport  
2751 Crossroads Blvd.  
Grand Junction, CO

**Presiding:** Britt Mathwich

**Visit Grand Junction Board Members Present:** Paul Petersen, Julie Shafer, Zeb Miracle, Ken Mabery, Josh Niernberg, Tammy Anderson, Mikhail Blosser

**Board Members Absent:** Kevin Reimer

**Staff Present:** Elizabeth Fogarty, Kim Machado

**Guest Presenter:** Robin Brown

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm.

Minutes from the May 14, 2019 meeting: Paul Petersen motioned to approve the minutes as written; Ken Mabery seconded. Motion passed.

**Mesa Mall Update**

Mesa Mall General Manager, Paul Petersen, shared current and upcoming projects at Mesa Mall. Work on the former Sears property is underway. Construction of the building, which Dillard's will occupy, will be expanded to the north and south into the current parking areas. Water and sewer lines will be moved to accommodate the 30,000 square foot expansion. The new building will be one level and 100,000 square feet in size. Dillard's is scheduled to open in the fall of 2020.

**Community Update – Grand Junction Economic Partnership**

Elizabeth Fogarty shared that Visit Grand Junction continues to host community partners at Visit GJ Board meetings to allow them to share updates. Robin Brown, Executive Director of the Grand Junction Economic Partnership (GJEP), explained GJEP's purpose and partnerships with other economic development entities in the area, including the City of Grand Junction. In 2018, GJEP recruited seven new companies to the area, which resulted in 57 new jobs. GJEP's focus for 2019 is on business recruitment, business brand development, which Visit GJ will be helping with, and other projects such as the foreign trade zone, encouraging the relocation of the Bureau of Land Management headquarters to Grand Junction, and changes to the Rural Jump Start program.

**Director Update**

Elizabeth Fogarty provided updates on the following:

- Visit GJ continues to receive positive feedback on the new Official Grand Junction Visitor guide. Visit GJ will purchase racks for businesses who request them and Visit GJ will keep them stocked with the new guides. Staff is obtaining bids for the mailing of the visitor guide to households and businesses in most of Mesa County. The mailed guides will include a letter introducing the guide – thanking residents for being “Brand Ambassadors,” and also a stamped postcard for residents to send out to friends or relatives, encouraging them to visit the area.

- Elizabeth’s discussions with Gateway Canyons coming on as a formal partner has stalled, likely due to the resort being put up for sale. Elizabeth stated she will continue to reach out to them. They are mentioned in the visitor guide and have been included in a year’s worth of pitching to press, which will provide Gateway long-term value.
- Elizabeth shared with the Board updates with City Director positions – HR, Parks & Rec, and Communications.
- Due to renovations and upgrades at Two Rivers Convention Center and Colorado Mesa University’s ballrooms, along with the decision by the Clarion Inn to close their meeting space, upcoming lodging tax collections could negatively be impacted due to unavailable conference space compared to last year. Total closed conference space is 37,100. To replace that significant loss in group and conference attendees, by replacing with tourism leisure business (essentially one family at a time), is significant and challenging. So far, despite these challenges, lodging tax is pacing ahead and staff will continue to monitor closely.
- The Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) has decided to break from their traditional practice of engaging one Agency of Record (AOR) to manage both ad deployment and creative. They will continue contracting with incumbent Karsh Hagen to manage campaign creative, and engage MMGY Global to manage overall ad deployment and campaign strategy, including using MMGY’s sophisticated data platform. Marketing continues to be disrupted, and along with advances in technology, CTO has shifted, understanding this new approach will deliver positive results for the state.
- Visit GJ’s Business Development and Group Sales Specialist attended the U.S. Travel Association’s International Pow Wow (IPW) in Anaheim, CA. IPW is the travel industry’s premier international marketplace with over 6,200 international and domestic tour companies, journalists and marketing partners representing more than 70 countries. In partnership with the Colorado Tourism Office, 40 pre-scheduled appointments with tour companies and tourism partners were conducted.
- The 2018 annual report is under development. Visit GJ is using a local agency to design and arrange the content of the report.
- Visit GJ recently hired two interns who are currently attending Colorado Mesa University. One is majoring in business marketing and management, and the other is majoring in business administration with a concentration in management and managerial informatics.

**Future Board Meetings with Palisade Tourism Advisory Board and Fruita Tourism Board**

Elizabeth provided a brief update on conversations she and City Manager, Greg Caton, have had with Town Managers from Fruita and Palisade regarding potential marketing partnerships with Visit GJ. She asked the board members if they are interested in meeting with the tourism boards from Fruita and Palisade to discuss these partnerships. All of the board members agreed that meeting with both boards should take place soon. Several offered suggestions on how to demonstrate Visit GJ’s value to both communities and why they should formally partner with Visit GJ. Elizabeth will share the board’s suggestions with Greg Caton and get his input on the appropriate strategy for meeting with each community.

There being no further business, Paul Petersen motioned to adjourn the meeting; Mikail Blosser seconded. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 5:12 pm.