

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

May 14, 2013
Cross Orchards Historic Site
3073 F Road, Grand Junction, CO

PRESIDING: Lon Carpenter, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lon Carpenter, Brad Taylor, John Williams, Kate Graham, and Sharon Woelfe

MEMBERS ABSENT: Glen Gallegos, Mike Bell, Per Nilsson, Daren Cole

STAFF PRESENT: Barbara Bowman, Debbie Kovalik, Mistalynn Meyeraan, Holly Prickett, Kristin Lynch, Erin Chapman, and Kim Machado

VISITORS: Mayor Pro Tem Marty Chazen and Matt Carpenter, PILGRIM Advertising

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m.

Minutes from the April 9, 2013 Board Meeting: John Williams moved to approve the minutes as written; Brad Taylor seconded; motion approved.

Host Comments: Peter Booth, Executive Director of The Museum of Western Colorado, gave a summary of upcoming events at the Museum, Dinosaur Journey, and Cross Orchards Historic Site. He commented that the Museum relies on partnerships with tourism-related businesses, such as the VCB and hotels, which in turn helps tourists spend more and stay longer.

Special Events Funding Update

Brad Taylor provided an update from the Special Events Committee meeting held on May 13, 2013. The committee has reviewed 15 Special Event Funding applications so far for this year; 12 events have been approved for a total of \$28,900. \$6,100 remains in the budget. Holly Prickett reported that the committee has seen the majority of applications for this year's funding but they are anticipating at least one or two more will be submitted. The following Special Event Funding applications were reviewed at the May 13th meeting:

- *Museum of the West's Dinosaur Days - \$1,800 requested.* This event will be held on September 7th in Fruita. Committee recommends funding \$1,000 since the City of Fruita is contributing \$1,000.
- *The Western Colorado Classic Auto Event- \$8,000 - \$11,000 requested.* This event will be held over Labor Day weekend on August 31st – September 1st at Canyon View Park. Brad asked if this event should be moved into a bigger event category. Barbara Bowman mentioned that we could pull \$5,000 from the Large Event line item in the budget if the Board requests to.

Brad recommended funding \$2,100 from the Special Events fund and \$5,000 from the Large Event fund for a total of \$7,100.

Brad made a motion to fund \$7,100 for The Western Colorado Classic Auto Event and \$1,000 for Dinosaur Days. John Williams seconded; motion approved.

Website (www.visitgrandjunction.com) Presentation

Mistalynn Meyeraan gave a presentation on the 1st Quarter Update – Interactive Marketing. A year-over-year comparison shows the following:

- 11.2% increase in total site visits and 12.7% increase in page views.
- Since the redesigned website was launched, there have been 50 new articles which supplement 150 articles from the old site and an improved SEO (from 94 to 130 ranked keywords on 1st page of results).
- 80.6% of visitors are new to the mobile site and 71.83% are new to the desktop site. New visitors to the mobile site are from (in order): Denver, Grand Junction, and New York City. New York City indicates that people have viewed the billboard ad in Times Square.
- Over 17,000 eNewsletters have been emailed per month and the click-thru rate on opens went from 15% to 18% which is due to more relevant content being added.

The VCB and Miles Media are submitting an entry for the 2013 Destination Council Destiny Award for our improved website. PILGRIM Advertising and the VCB are working on other award submissions for the eBook and Content Marketing Strategy which recognizes excellence and creative accomplishment in destination travel promotion.

The VCB's Facebook page has increased 2,496 fans in 6 weeks and 3,303 in 1 year and reaches 35,000 – 55,000 people per week. Our Twitter account has 1,002 followers. The plan for summer 2013 is to improve our Pinterest account and create an Instagram account.

VCB Budget Dashboard

Debbie Kovalik shared with the board the new VCB Budget Dashboard which gives a quick snapshot on how the VCB is performing in the areas of budget, customers served at the visitor center, sales and convention services, and internet visits. Erin Chapman explained how the VCB calculates the estimated economic impact for various markets such as meetings and conventions, Foreign Independent Traveler (FIT), and motor coach tours. Various sources are used to calculate economic impact.

Sharon Woelfle reported that occupancy from her property (Americas Best Value Inn) is the same and revenue is up from this time last year. The month of May will be up over the past 5 years in occupancy and revenue.

Michelle Wheatley – Colorado National Monument

Due to another commitment, Michelle was not able to attend the board meeting. Barbara Bowman said that she will extend the invitation to Lisa Eckert to present at the June board meeting since she was also not able to attend the May board meeting.

BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

Further Definition on 2013 Board Retreat Ideas (Topics to be discussed at June's Board Meeting)

- Strategic Plan – Lon Carpenter said that Glen Gallegos suggested this topic but since he is not present to further define it, the topic will be discussed further at June's meeting.
- Education Program to Engage Civic Leaders – Lon thanked Mayor Pro Tem Marty Chazen for attending the board meeting. Barbara Bowman suggested the possibility of scheduling lunch with the VCB Board and City Council. She further commented that the VCB has reached out to the partners in the hospitality industry by delivering the 2013 Visitor Guide and tear-off maps to the lodging properties and attractions, scheduling an attractions open house for front line employees on May 22nd, and scheduled two seminars on public relations and SEO. In addition, a UK FAM is scheduled for May 19th and 2 German FAMs have been scheduled in the first quarter. Any Board member is welcome to attend a FAM.

OTHER BUSINESS

Barbara mentioned that the Colorado Urban Winefest will be held on June 7th – 8th in Denver and that any board member is invited to attend with the VCB. Sharon said she would like to attend.

Due to the Pow Wow trade show in Las Vegas on June 8th – 12th, both Barbara and Debbie will not be at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting on June 11th. The Board agreed to move the meeting to the following Tuesday, June 18th. The meeting will be held at Allen Unique Auto.

There being no further business, Kate Graham motioned to end the meeting; Brad Taylor seconded, motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 4:54 p.m.