

Visit Grand Junction  
Advisory Board of Directors Meeting  
August 11, 2020

The meeting was held virtually

**Presiding:** Paul Petersen

**Visit Grand Junction Board Members Present:** Julie Shafer, Joe Burtard, Ken Mabery, Tammy Anderson, Zeb Miracle, Josh Niernberg, Mikhail Blosser, Kelsey Coleman

**Grand Junction City Councilmembers Present:** Councilmember Phillip Pe'a

**Staff Present:** Greg Caton, Elizabeth Fogarty, Michael Bodman, Kerry Graves, Mason Barrows, Kim Machado

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 pm.

Minutes from the July 20, 2020 meeting: Josh Niernberg motioned to approve the minutes as written; Julie Shafer seconded. Motion passed.

### **Board Business**

- **Visit GJ Board Vacancies** – Paul Petersen reported that the first board term for himself and Mikhail Blosser will expire on December 31, 2020, and that they will need to reapply to be considered for a second term. The deadline for applications is October 16, 2020.
- **Suggestions on preferred time of day for board meetings** – Visit GJ staff will send a poll to Councilmember Pe'a, City Manager Greg Caton, and the advisory board members, to obtain input on their preferred day(s) and time(s) for the monthly Visit GJ board meetings. The results will be shared at the September 8 meeting.

### **Visit Grand Junction Updates**

Elizabeth provided an update on lodging tax collections, which were adjusted to include late and missing payments. From the 4.25% lodging tax collections that Visit Grand Junction receives, June 2020's business was down 54.1%. Total collections received year-to-date through June's business decreased by 47.7% compared to the same time period last year. When considering the 6% lodging tax collections, June's business saw a decline of 54.1% over the same month last year. Year-to-date collections for the total 6% lodging tax through June's business has decreased 47.7% compared to the same time period last year.

Paul asked how Grand Junction's occupancy compares to destinations on the Front Range. Councilmember Pe'a also inquired about the occupancy in the mountain destinations. Staff will research the requested information and share the results at the September 8, 2020 board meeting.

### **Staff Presentation of Destinations International Annual Conference**

Elizabeth provided a brief overview of the two-day 2020 Destinations International Annual Conference, which was held virtually and attended by over 3,000 delegates from all over the world. Visit GJ staff members Mason Barrows, Kerry Graves, Michael Bodman, and Kim Machado, each gave a summary of the sessions they attended on day one of the conference. Highlights included the latest technologies, social media tools, data trends, responsible tourism marketing, recovery strategies, community partnerships, and

strong organizational cultures. Examples were shared of how Visit GJ has implemented many of the recommended practices already, while also describing new initiatives being considered.

Feedback from Councilmember Pe'a and the board members was positive and supportive. The staff will present highlights from day two of the convention at an upcoming board meeting.

### **Other Comments**

Elizabeth asked the board members what additional agenda topics they would like considered for future board meetings. Julie Shafer suggested that an update from the Bureau of Land Management office would be helpful in terms of how the pandemic has affected camping on BLM lands. Ken Mabery added that an update from the forest service would be beneficial as well. Staff will reach out to those two agencies to schedule a presentation for a future board meeting.

Councilmember Pe'a mentioned some of the economic development projects currently underway, such as Dos Rios, Las Colonias, and Redlands 360 projects, along with a mixed-use project located to the west of Community Hospital. City Manager Greg Caton provided a brief update on these projects, as well as the projects included within the city's 5-year capital plan. Sales tax collections were reported for July (June's business), which were up 0.3% over July 2019. The total year-to-date collections (January through July) were down 5.1% over the same period last year.

With no further business, Tammy Anderson motioned to adjourn, Ken Mabery seconded. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 4:21 pm.