

Visit Grand Junction
Advisory Board of Directors Meeting
September 8, 2020

The meeting was held virtually

Presiding: Julie Shafer

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

Visit Grand Junction Board Members Absent: Paul Petersen and Zeb Miracle

Grand Junction City Councilmembers Present: Mayor Duke Wortman, Councilmember Phillip Pe'a

City of Grand Junction Staff Present: Greg Caton, Elizabeth Fogarty, Randi Kim, Wanda Winkelmann, Doug Shoemaker, Trent Prall, John Shaver, Shelley Caskey, Jodi Welch, Ken Sherbenou, Kim Machado

The meeting was called to order at 3:04 pm.

Grand Junction Branding Presented by Destination Think

Frank Cuypers, Senior Strategic Consultant from Destination Think, presented Grand Junction's brand insights. Results from the Place DNA™ process uncovered how residents experience and feel about Grand Junction, along with what local organizations are telling the world about Grand Junction (projected analysis), and what the world is saying about Grand Junction (perceived analysis). Next steps include the creative execution process, followed by the Brand Platform, Brand Positioning, and Brand Manifesto.

Board Business

Minutes from the August 11, 2020 meeting: Joe Burtard motioned to approve the minutes as written; Mikhail Blosser seconded. Motion passed.

The day and time for the monthly Visit GJ advisory board of directors meeting will remain on the second Tuesday of each month from 3:00 to 5:00 pm., based on results from a poll sent to Councilmember Pe'a, City Manager Greg Caton, and the Visit GJ board members.

Visit Grand Junction Updates

Elizabeth provided an update on lodging tax collections. From the 4.25% lodging tax collections that Visit Grand Junction receives, July 2020's business was down 33.9% compared to July 2019. Total collections received year-to-date through July's business decreased by 45.0% compared to the same time period last year. When considering the 6% lodging tax collections, July's business saw a decline of 33.9% over July 2019. Year-to-date collections for the total 6% lodging tax through July's business has decreased 45.0% compared to the same time period last year.

Fogarty further shared, at the request of the Visit GJ Board last month, a destination comparative analysis showing how hotel occupancy in Grand Junction is performing compared to other cities. Grand Junction is performing better than all of the larger city markets in the U.S., except for Phoenix, AZ, and Norfolk, VA, and GJ is also ahead of Glenwood Springs, Fort Collins, and Colorado Springs in terms of percentage of lodging tax revenue growth.

Information that was communicated to staff from the local offices of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and the Colorado National Monument (CNM) was shared. Camping within areas managed by these agencies has increased since the beginning of the pandemic. The CNM reported that campground reservations since June as been larger than it has been over the last three years. Within city limits, campgrounds report low occupancy and reservations since the pandemic; however, business had moderately increased since mid-June. Their reservation booking window had decreased from several months-out to last-minute reservations, and one-night stays.

Elizabeth mentioned that Bill Edwards from the USFS – Grand Valley District, along with Greg Wolfgang and Collin Ewing from the BLM’s Grand Junction Field Office, will be presenting at the October 13, 2020, Visit GJ Board meeting. A request for BLM Director William Pendley to present at a future board meeting has been submitted to the BLM for review and approval.

For the September issue of 5280 Magazine, along with the Sunday, September 6 edition of the Denver Post, Colorado Springs Gazette, Fort Collins Coloradoan, and Durango Herald, well over 100,000 additional subscribers received the Colorado Official State Vacation Guide along with the exclusive four-page Grand Junction insert piece that highlights the area. This additional circulation was at no additional cost and due to Visit GJ’s strong partnership.

There being no further business, Tammy Anderson motioned to adjourn, Phillip Pe’a seconded. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 5:10 pm.