

Visit Grand Junction
Advisory Board of Directors Meeting
July 13, 2021, 3 pm – 5 pm

The meeting was held at the Hotel Maverick, 840 Kennedy Ave., Grand Junction, CO.

Presiding: Tammy Anderson

Visit Grand Junction Board Members Present: Paul Petersen, Julie Shafer, Joe Burtard, Paula Skrzypczak, Ken Mabery, Josh Niernberg, Kelsey Coleman

Absent: Angel Bautista, Councilmember Pe'a

City of Grand Junction Staff Present: Elizabeth Fogarty, Director, Kim Machado, Administrative Specialist

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m., by Chair, Tammy Anderson.

Minutes from the June 15, 2021, meeting: Paul Petersen motioned to approve the minutes as written; Ken Mabery seconded. Motion passed.

Community Updates

Robin Brown, Executive Director of the Grand Junction Economic Partnership (GJEP), provided updates on GJEP's programs and activities, including the remote worker and digital economy plan, remote worker website, GJ host program to network new residents with community members, and a welcome wagon program. Robin also reported on the latest employment, housing, and other Grand Junction economic data. In addition, she mentioned that three new cybersecurity companies have moved to Grand Junction.

Elizabeth thanked Robin for the partnership with Visit Grand Junction and encouraged her to reach out if there is anything Visit GJ can assist with.

Ethical Standards for Members of City Boards, Commissions and Similar Groups

City Attorney, John Shaver, presented information regarding fiduciary duty in the context of board service for City boards, which included topics on the duty of care, the duty of loyalty, conflict of interest or benefit from interest, and actual versus apparent conflicts. He emphasized the importance of board members exercising reasonable care when making decisions for the organization they represent and must act in good faith for the organization. John further stressed that the Board and its members must be loyal to the organization and its mission, act in the best interest of both, and must not act in their own best interest or engage in self-dealing while making decisions or taking actions on behalf of the organization they represent.

John provided examples of apparent conflict of interests and divided loyalty situations, specifically in situations of indirect or direct competition for funding. If a board member fails to recuse themselves from a potential conflict or divided loyalty, the Board may need to act.

John also reviewed the Colorado Open Meetings Law and situations that are considered a "meeting" when three or more board members are present. Emails and text messages can be considered a meeting, but a chance meeting or social occasion where public business is not the purpose of the meeting is not considered a meeting; however, board members should remain cautious of perceived appearances.

Visit Grand Junction Updates

Elizabeth Fogarty provided an update on lodging tax collections. From the 4.25 percent lodging tax collections that Visit Grand Junction receives, May 2021's business was up a factor of 237.8 percent compared to May 2020. For a more accurate comparison, May 2021's business was 2.3 percent higher compared to May 2019. When considering the 6% lodging tax collections, May 2021's business was also up 237.8% percent compared to May 2020 and 2.4 percent higher compared to May 2019. Grand Junction's hotel occupancy for May was 79.1 percent, 11.6 percent higher than April 2021's occupancy and

33.4 percent higher than the U.S. occupancy rate of 59.3%. The \$103.85 ADR for May 2021 was the highest ever recorded for any month in Grand Junction's lodging history.

A comparison of 2020 hotel metrics to the 2020 hotel metrics of Visit Grand Junction's comp set was reviewed a second time, with the main focus on Grand Junction's room demand performance. Grand Junction had the highest demand in Colorado for rooms in 2020 except for the two cities who have much larger room inventory – Denver and Colorado Springs.

Elizabeth provided an overview of the presentations she made to the Grand Junction Regional Airport Board and the Commission on Arts & Culture. She also met with Aimbridge Hospitality and Interstate Hotels and attended the Las Colonias mobility hub and arts campus meeting.

Status and updates of follow-up items and requests from board members were shared. The Board received a draft welcome letter for new hospitality businesses who move to GJ. Staff will also email the draft letter so the Board can review and offer edits. Research on multi-segment comp set category data available for purchase continues, and staff will share an update at the next board meeting. Data relating to camping and RV businesses in Pueblo and Colorado Springs was also shared, offering a comparison to GJ's similar properties.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding recent developments with the Palisade Tourism Advisory Board in regard to a Palisade Board Member contacting USA Today taking issue regarding details within an article that Visit Grand Junction's PR Agency arranged. There was no inaccuracy within the article, it was merely a difference of opinion with how the destination was represented. Elizabeth shared that a meeting was being arranged with the Palisade Board Member, their Chair, and the Palisade Trustee Ex Officio would have a meeting with Elizabeth, Tammy Anderson, City Manager Greg Caton, and Councilmember Pe'a.

Visit GJ's Expand the Tent marketing services program was also discussed as a result of the discussion developing into how to directly partner with Palisade and Fruita businesses that is representative of value received and investment made. The program is being updated to reflect proper investment relating to the value and will be expanded to allow participation from all tourism-related businesses, as the current program only allows lodging properties to participate. The program has not been revisited since 1996. The updated program will allow businesses, outside Grand Junction city limits, such as restaurants, retail, lodging, and activities to receive marketing from Visit Grand Junction. Elizabeth briefly mentioned a destination marketing partner who could assist with the pay to play program, as it wouldn't be efficient to devote staff to managing the process. Additional information and recommendations will be forthcoming.

There being no further business, Josh Niernberg motioned to adjourn, Julie Shafer seconded. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 6:12 p.m.