

Visit Grand Junction
Advisory Board of Directors Meeting
November 9, 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: Joe Burtard, Julie Shafer, Paula Skrzypczak, Paul Petersen, Josh Niernberg

Absent: Kelsey Coleman, Angel Bautista.

Grand Junction City Council Member Present: Councilmember Phil Pe'a

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

The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m. by Board Chair, Tammy Anderson.

Minutes from the September 14, 2021, meeting: Paul Petersen motioned to approve the minutes as written Paula Skrzypczak seconded. Motion passed. Official minutes were not recorded for the October 12, 2021, meeting, due to lack of a quorum. Meeting notes were taken this meeting and have been posted on VisitGrandJunction.com.

Destination Travel Network:

Lia Wik, Director of Sales, and Tyler Baily, Director of Destination Travel Network (DTN), met with the board in-person and provided an update of the workshops and meetings they arranged with area tourism-related businesses in the Grand Junction area. The meetings have been positive and engaging with the business owners. Each business they met with was provided with a "report card" to help them understand how their business is performing digitally throughout the internet, including Google and Facebook, and provided solutions to make the most of their digital exposure. Lia and Tyler also briefly explained DTN's digital marketing solutions designed for tourism-related businesses and answered questions from the board members.

Expand the Tent Marketing Services Program

Elizabeth Fogarty recapped the proposed framework for the revised Expand the Tent marketing services program that will provide value and a fair partnership for all tourism-related stakeholders in Mesa County. This is in addition to the marketing assistance Visit GJ provides through DTN. She reviewed the services tourism-related stakeholders inside and outside the Grand Junction city limits will receive if they participate in the yet-to-be-named program. Inclusion in the program, for all services, will be automatic and at no cost for stakeholders within the Grand Junction city limits, just as it currently is, since they collect and remit sales tax and lodging provides for the lodger's tax. Access to DTN's digital marketing services is only accessible by members of Visit GJ's partnership program, as well as all tourism businesses within city limits.

Elizabeth suggested that the program membership fee for stakeholders outside the Grand Junction city limits should be fair and affordable and asked for the Board's input on an appropriate fee. Several board members stated that assigning a percentage of sales from each business for the membership fee, like the fee is structured under the current program, is problematic. Other options including tiered pricing and suggested annual membership fees were also discussed before the following motion was presented by Joe Burtard and seconded by Mikhail Blosser:

"I make a motion to allow the Visit Grand Junction staff to move forward with revising the current resolution (41-16) to authorize Visit Grand Junction to partner with tourism-based businesses outside the city limits for an annual membership fee of \$350, with the ability for staff to adjust the fee in the future as they see fit. The revised resolution should include the services tourism-related businesses will receive for the annual membership fee."

The motion was approved unanimously.

Per the Board's request, staff will provide an outline of the services members of the program will receive and will share that at the December 14, 2021, meeting.

Elizabeth explained that the current resolution (41-16), will be revised to include details of the new membership program to ensure there are no assumptions as to eligible participation in the program and the services members, who decide to join, will receive, per the City Attorney's recommendation. Once the Visit GJ advisory board approves the revised resolution, Elizabeth will review with the City Attorney and City Manager, followed by presenting to City Council for adoption. Once adopted, Visit GJ staff will communicate the new membership program with stakeholders throughout Mesa County through a variety of communications and follow-up to make sure all partners are informed.

Community Updates

Sarah Dishong, Chair of the Grand Junction Commission on Arts and Culture, shared information on the commission's mission as well as updates on their annual programs and activities, which included art grants, the 6th Annual Take Part in Art, Champion of the Arts program, 8th Annual Write On, the Creative District, and maintenance on the Grand Junction area's art sculptures. Public art exhibits are displayed at various City of Grand Junction buildings including, City Hall, the Grand Junction Convention Center, Tiara Rado Golf Course, and the Historic Avalon Theatre.

Elizabeth asked Sarah what Visit GJ could improve upon, thanked her for the partnership with Visit Grand Junction and encouraged her to reach out if there is anything Visit GJ can assist with. Sarah responded to continue sharing information about events and covering the arts, as Visit GJ has been.

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, July 2021's business was up a factor of 80.3 percent compared to July 2020. For a more accurate comparison, July 2021's business was 17.0 percent higher compared to July 2019. When considering the 6% lodging tax collections, July 2021's business was also up 80.3 percent compared to July 2020 and 17.1 percent higher compared to July 2019. Grand Junction's hotel occupancy for July was 81.3 percent, 3.6 percent lower than June 2021's occupancy and 16.8 percent higher than the U.S. occupancy rate of 69.6 percent. The \$115.07 ADR for July 2021 was the highest ever ADR recorded for the month of July in Grand Junction's lodging history.

Other updates Fogarty shared include:

- A recap of the upcoming Visit GJ Advisory Board of Director vacancies.
- A review of the distribution, deliverables, and estimated impressions for the three Outside TV episodes was shared. The second episode's two, 15-second commercials were also shown.

Due to lack of available time, attendee comments from the 2021 Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference will be shared at the December 14, 2021, meeting.

There being no further business, Julie Shafer motioned to adjourn, Josh Niernberg seconded. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.