

Visit Grand Junction  
Advisory Board of Directors Meeting  
March 8, 2022, 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:** Paula Skrzypczak, Elizabeth Fortushniak, Brenda Greene, Pat Nichols-Perrin, Mikhail Blosser, Paul Petersen

**Absent:** Joe Burtard, Kelsey Coleman

**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 Tammy Anderson.

Minutes from the February 8, 2022, meeting: Pat Perrin-Nichols motioned to approve the minutes as written; Paula Skrzypczak seconded. Motion passed.

**Community updates and Q&A**

Vara Kusal, Executive Director of the Horizon Drive District (HDD), provided updates on HDD projects, including a bike repair station, bike racks and route maps, graffiti cleanup, drainage way repairs, illegal camping cleanup, pet waste stations, the ARTIC public safety program, Art on Horizon, and recently installed parklets made possible by the Colorado Department of Transportation Grant Street Furniture Project. She also shared results from a recent survey conducted by HDD.

Vara thanked Visit Grand Junction for their support and partnership. Elizabeth Fogarty thanked Vara for sharing the latest updates with the Visit GJ Board and asked if there was anything Visit GJ can improve upon and/or further support the partnership. Vara said, no, just keep marketing and keep up the great work.

**Visit Grand Junction Updates**

Elizabeth Fogarty provided an update on lodging tax collections. From the 4.25% lodging tax collections that Visit GJ received (short-term rental lodging tax revenue is included), December 2021's business was a factor of 65.2% higher compared to December 2020 (adjusted for late and missing payments). For a more accurate comparison, December 2021's business was 31.5% higher than December 2019's business (pre-pandemic). Total lodging tax collections for 2021 was 72.7% higher than 2020's collections and 13.7% higher than 2019's collections.

Total lodging tax collections for January 2022 were not available to report. Of the Grand Junction lodging properties that reported their metrics to STR, LLC., occupancy for January 2022 was 44.0%, ADR was \$81.55, and RevPAR was \$35.85. Tammy Anderson asked if a Colorado hotel metrics report can be obtained that excludes the ski and resort towns during the winter months since the higher average daily rates in those areas tend to skew the overall metrics for the state and Grand Junction. Elizabeth responded that staff would research this and report back to the Board, and agreed that this would provide more accurate data for Grand Junction to compare themselves to.

Other updates Elizabeth shared include:

- Destination Travel Network and Visit Grand Junction hosted two live webinar workshops in March. Several businesses were in attendance, including owners/managers from Palisade and Fruita who are seeking marketing assistance.
- Community meetings and events that Elizabeth attended included Governor Polis's State of the State Address, Grand Junction Mobility event, GJ Air Alliance meeting, meeting with Harrison Earl, Grand Junction Regional Airport's data contractor, Dr. Nathan Perry from Colorado Mesa University, Grand Junction Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet, and the Tourism Industry Association of Colorado (TIAC) executive meeting and board meeting, where Elizabeth was elected Chair Elect of the TIAC Board for 2022.

- Recent media coverage of the Grand Junction area includes articles in The Wall Street Journal, Discover USA, Rails to Trails, and Family Vacationist – all of which listed many tourism related businesses.
- Travel expert and media personality Jeanenne Tornatore appeared on several large market television stations, including Chicago’s WGN, Fox 19 Cincinnati, Good Day Rochester, Fox 2 Detroit, CBS Richmond, Fox 24 Charleston, Fox Las Vegas, CBS Tampa, and the CW Denver highlighting Grand Junction as a dual-climate, less-crowded and affordable destination to consider for Spring Break. Jeanenne featured canyoneering, biking, golfing, dining, skiing, Grand Junction Regional Airport, and the Colorado National Monument in the segments. Visit GJ contracted over 11 TV news spots in total. This was a new campaign for Visit GJ that had not been done before.
- Joe Burtard and his business, JR’s Carriage Service was awarded Business of the Year by the Grand Junction Area Chamber of Commerce.
- The last two commercials for the third Outside TV episode were shown to the board members.

As part of Elizabeth’s “Behind the Scenes” communication with the Board, she presented information on the importance of public relations as part of Visit GJ’s marketing strategies, and how the results are achieved.

There being no further business, Paul Petersen motioned to adjourn; Brenda Greene seconded. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.