

Visit Grand Junction  
Advisory Board of Directors Meeting  
November 8, 2022, 3 pm – 5 pm

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

**Presiding:** Joe Burtard

**Visit Grand Junction Board Members Present:** Tammy Anderson, Paul Petersen, Paula Skrzypczak, Elizabeth Fortushniak, Brenda Greene, Mikhail Blosser, Kelsey Coleman

**Absent:** Pat Nichols-Perrin

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

**City of Grand Junction Staff Present:** Elizabeth Fogarty, Director; Kim Machado, Administrative Specialist; Mason Barrows, Visitor Center Manager and Content Coordinator; Matthew Hart, Administrative Coordinator

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

Minutes from the October 11, 2022, meeting: Joe Burtard was listed as being present during the October 11 meeting, when in fact he was not. Visit GJ staff will make the correction in the minutes. There being no further changes, Paul Petersen motioned to approve the minutes as written; Tammy Anderson seconded. Motion passed.

**2022 Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference Recap and Attendee Comments**

Visit Grand Junction staff members, Mason Barrows, Kim Machado, and Matthew Hart, provided their insights, learnings and implementation from the sessions they attended at the 2022 Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference. Topics included Colorado Tourism Office opportunities, destination management, workforce strategies, diversity and inclusion, sustainability, data, and marketing trends.

**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 collected quarterly), August 2022's business was a factor of 4.2% higher compared to August 2021 (adjusted for late and missing payments). Of the Grand Junction lodging properties that reported their metrics to STR, LLC., occupancy for September 2022 was 78.1%, ADR was \$120.17, and RevPAR was \$93.79.

Other updates Elizabeth shared include:

- Care for Colorado and Leave No Trace update was shared, including payment of membership to Colorado Tourism Office for the program has been taken care of.
- Community Meetings and Events that Elizabeth attended include City Council workshops and regular meeting (first public hearing) for the 2023 budget, Special Events Task Force meeting, and Get to Know Your City community event.
- Recent media coverage included online articles on Forbes Advisor, Medscape Physician Reports, Fox News Online, AAA Online Blog, Texas Lifestyle & Travel Magazine, 5280 Magazine, and Pride Journeys. A few titles of the articles included: "Best Places to live in Colorado in 2022", "20 Best Places for Doctors to Retire", and "The Best U.S. Cities for Biking". Elizabeth also explained the progression of Grand Junction's destination brand resulting from both paid and organic press coverage.
- Recent data insights from Destination Analysts showing American's view of travel as being essential, as well as their intention to spend money on travel even during an economic downturn. Sixty-four percent of American travelers expect the U.S. to enter an economic recession; yet despite that, 75% "strongly agree" and "agree" that they will still consider travel to be a worthwhile investment during a recession.
- Consumer data insights from Visit GJ's live market survey panel platform showing that 54% of consumers consider Grand Junction as being the closest city to the Colorado National Monument, while 6% view Fruita as being the closest city. In addition, 55% consider Grand Junction as the closest city to the Grand Mesa, while 4% each view

Fruita and Palisade as the closest city to the Grand Mesa. There was discussion regarding Estes Park showing up as the third-most mentioned destination (Colorado Springs was second after Grand Junction) which further reinforces the confusion around “Grand Valley” and “Western Slope.” Elizabeth shared with the board that their decision to champion “Grand Junction” and “Grand Junction area” is based solely on data from consumers who are confused by Grand Valley and Western Slope and associate those names with other locations in Colorado, Michigan, and elsewhere.

- Interviews for the three open Visit GJ Advisory Board seats will be held on November 22, 2022, at 5 p.m., at City Hall. Appointments to the board by City Council is scheduled for the December 7, 2022, regular meeting.
- The City of Grand Junction Boards and Commissions Dinner will be held on December 5, 2022, at the Grand Junction Convention Center.

Joe Burtard mentioned that an election for the offices of Board Chair and Vice Chair for 2023 will be held during the December 13, 2022, meeting, and asked if there was interest in serving in those offices. Kelsey Coleman replied that she is interested in serving as Board Chair and Brenda Greene replied that she is interested in serving as Vice Chair for 2023.

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

The meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m.