

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

July 9, 2013

DoubleTree Hotel
743 Horizon Dr.
Grand Junction, CO

PRESIDING: Lon Carpenter, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lon Carpenter, Brad Taylor, John Williams, Kate Graham, Daren Cole, Mike Bell, Per Nilsson, Sharon Woelfle, Glen Gallegos

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Barbara Bowman, Debbie Kovalik, Mistalynn Meyeraan, Erin Chapman, Kristin Lynch and Kim Machado

The meeting was called to order at 3:33 p.m. by Board Chair, Lon Carpenter.

Minutes from the June 18, 2013 Board Meeting: Glen Gallegos moved to approve the minutes as written, Per Nilsson seconded; motion approved.

BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

Colorado National Monument Permitting Process

Barbara Bowman mentioned that public meetings have been scheduled for July 9th from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. in Fruita, and July 10th from noon to 3 p.m. at Colorado Mesa University. The purpose of the meetings is to obtain public input about the types of activities, events, and uses people want to have on the Colorado National Monument (CNM). She encouraged the board members to attend to offer comments around the challenges we are encountering on the permitting process in addition to offering input on the types of activities and events that should be allowed on the CNM.

(Lon Carpenter departed the meeting. Mike Bell chaired the remainder of the meeting)

Staff Reports

Statistics: Barbara Bowman reported that lodging tax is down 4.6% for the year. Visitor center visits overall are also down 19.6%. We have seen a decrease in international visitors to the visitor center. Glen Gallegos asked how we can find out why. Debbie Kovalik responded that research is important such as the Conversion Study but we can get more information through intercept studies and the AMEX survey. Barbara added that Kristin Winn will research other VCBs to inquire about their visitor traffic.

Sharon Woelfle asked if the lodging tax was increased would it make us more competitive. Debbie responded that it would. For example, Boulder recently increased their lodging tax and as a result has been able to step up their marketing efforts. Glen commented that we need to do more to get people to come to Grand Junction but that it will be difficult with the conservative budget we have. Barbara added that if the budget allowed us to spend an additional \$200,000 on marketing and advertising, we have ideas to bring more people in, and we would like Council to give us their ideas as well. In addition, we will call our peers and inquire if they are increasing their budget and if so, what they are doing.

Marketing/PR: Mistalynn Meyeraan showed a video segment that aired on FOX31 Denver - *Explore Colorado*, featuring the Colorado National Monument. Mistalynn further reported the following:

- Filming for three videos had just wrapped up and is currently in the editing phase with PILGRIM Advertising. These will be shared with the Board at a future date.
- Visits to our internet site are up.
- Our eBook has been reformatted to be compatible with additional devices such as Kindle.
- We currently have over 5,500 likes on Facebook.
- Thanks to our summer intern, we now have 20 themed boards on Pinterest.
- We will have a week-long radio campaign starting in August targeting Denver and northern Colorado that will include giveaways to incent people from those areas to visit Grand Junction.

Sales: Erin Chapman reported the following:

- Sales leads are at 53% to goal.
- The peach giveaway promotion is in progress with a direct mail piece that will be sent out in the week of July 22nd. The peach giveaway will be on August 14th and 15th from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. at three locations in the Denver area; Denver Tech Center, Westminster/Boulder, and Downtown. The invitation for the peach giveaway includes a peach cobbler recipe on the back side. This is the best opportunity to speak one-on-one with meeting planners. Any board member is welcome to attend.
- Two FAMs are coming up in July:
 - The Japanese representative from the Colorado Tourism Office (CTO), Osamu Hoshino, will be focusing on hiking on the Colorado National Monument to create itineraries for the Japanese market.
 - Iceland Air has increased their flights to Colorado so a representative from the airline will be visiting Grand Junction and other Colorado areas.

Convention Services: Kristin Lynch reported the following:

- Over 50 people attended the Attractions Open House in May.
- Three new events were held in April through June:
 - HITS Triathlon – 600 registrants, many of which were from out-of-town. This will be held again in May, 2014 and hope to have 1,000 participants.
 - Special Olympics – many of our volunteers helped in the Family Support Center during this event.
 - Hershey's State Track Meet – 550 registrants from across the state. Many volunteers worked at the information table.

- New events in the fall include Epic Rides – Grand Junction Off-Road Endurance Race and the Western Colorado Classic Car Show.

OTHER BUSINESS

Brad Taylor mentioned a recent tweet he viewed on Twitter from Google announcing a grant program for special projects, and inquired if we should look into it. Debbie said we will look further into it.

There being no further business, Per Nilsson motioned to end the meeting; Daren Cole seconded, motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 5:27 p.m.