

Visit Grand Junction
Advisory Board of Directors Meeting
November 14, 2023, 3 pm – 5 pm

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

Presiding: Brenda Greene, Chair

Visit Grand Junction Board Members Present: Pat Nichols-Perrin, Tammy Anderson, Elizabeth Fortushniak, Mikhail Blosser

Absent: Kelsey Coleman, Joe Burtard, Paul Petersen

City of Grand Junction Staff Present: Elizabeth Fogarty, Director

Grand Junction City Council Present: Mayor Anna Stout

Guests: Julie Shafer, Grand Junction Air Show board member and owner of Shafer Marketing; Britt Mathwich, Colorado Mesa University Associate Professor; Tefvik Demirciftci, Colorado Mesa University Assistant Professor; Jessica Burford, President and CEO of the Palisade Chamber of Commerce; Sam Dains, Colorado Mesa University Student

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Board Vice Chair Brenda Greene.

Minutes from the October 10, 2023, meeting: Pat Nichols-Perrin motioned to approve the minutes as written; Tammy Anderson seconded. Motion passed.

2022 Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference Recap and Attendee Comments

The 2023 Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference (GovCon) was held in Ft. Collins, CO, on September 26 - 29, 2022. The following sponsored attendees provided their insights, learnings, and applications from the sessions they attended: Jessica Burford, President and CEO of the Palisade Chamber of Commerce; Britt Mathwich, Associate Professor of Business and Hospitality Management; Tefvik Demirciftci, Assistant Professor of Hospitality Management; and Sam Dains, Colorado Mesa University Student.

Sam, Tefvik, Britt, and Jessica thanked Visit Grand Junction for sponsoring their attendance at this year's conference. They hope to attend next year's conference and CMU likely will have more students who attend.

Grand Junction Air Show and Mesa County Real Estate Update

Julie Shafer, former Visit GJ Advisory Board Member, owner of The Shafer Team – Coldwell Banker Distinctive Properties, and a Grand Junction Air Show board member, provided an update on the Grand Junction Air Show held on October 14 – 15, 2023. This year's show featured the U.S. Navy Blue Angels, with over 100 members of the Blue Angels team staying in Grand Junction the week prior to the show. Attendance was estimated at over 30,000 people, making it the largest air show Grand Junction has ever had.

Julie also shared the latest residential real estate trends in Mesa County. She outlined the challenges of escalating interest rates that particularly impact first-time homebuyers and those in the lower-to-mid income range. While existing home inventory is limited, Julie mentioned optimistic news about new home construction. Thousands of units are in progress through various subdivisions and apartment complexes.

Julie thanked the Visit Grand Junction advisory board and staff for their support and work. Elizabeth Fogarty thanked Julie for sharing the Grand Junction air show and real estate updates.

Visit Grand Junction Updates

Elizabeth Fogarty shared an update on Grand Junction's lodging tax collections and hotel metrics for September 2023's business activity. For September 2023's business, lodging tax collections were 5.4% above September 2022. For September 2023 YTD, lodging tax collections were 11.9% higher compared to September 2022 YTD.

For September 2023's hotel metrics, Grand Junction's occupancy was 78.1%, ADR was \$121.44, and RevPAR was \$94.82. For September 2023, Grand Junction's occupancy was 2.9% higher than Colorado when including ski towns, 0.5% higher than Colorado when excluding ski towns, and 18.0% higher than the U.S. occupancy. For September 2023 YTD, Grand Junction's occupancy was 68.2%, ADR was \$109.58, and RevPAR was \$74.77. For September 2023 YTD, Grand Junction's occupancy

was 1.3% higher than Colorado when including ski towns, even with Colorado when excluding ski towns, and 6.1% higher than the U.S. occupancy.

Other updates include:

- The annual City of Grand Junction Board and Commission Appreciation Dinner is scheduled for December 11, 2023. Board members were encouraged to RSVP if they haven't done so already.
- A reminder that the election for Chair and Vice-Chair of the Visit GJ Advisory Board for 2024 will occur during the December 12, 2023, meeting.
- Community and Industry Meetings, Conferences, and Events that Elizabeth attended recently include Colorado Tourism Office's International Promotion Committee; City Council Budget Workshop on Capital, Economic Development and Non-Profits; Economic Development Council of Colorado Expanding the Role of Tourism session; the "Get Your Spooky On With the City" community event; CTO Tourism Marketing Committee; meeting with Grand Junction Arts Commission Chair; meeting with Colorado Wildlands Project Director; Fall/Winter City of Grand Junction Employee Appreciation Event; City Council Budget Workshop - economic development partners presentations; Hotel Melrose grand opening, Grand Junction Regional Air Service Alliance Meeting; and a presentation to the New Dimensions Lifelong Learning Institute.
- The CTO's Destination Blueprint program in-person workshop will be held on November 28, 2023, at Two Rivers Winery and Chateau. Results from the Workforce Survey will be incorporated into the discussion of identifying impactful strategies to advance workforce development, which Visit Grand Junction will be implementing.

Mayor Anna Stout shared a City Council update.

There being no further business, Elizabeth Fortushniak motioned to adjourn; Pat Nichols-Perrin seconded. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 4:57 p.m.