

Visit Grand Junction  
Advisory Board of Directors Meeting  
January 14, 2025, 3 pm - 5 pm

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

**Presiding:** Brenda Greene, Chair

**Visit Grand Junction Board Members Present:** Elizabeth Fortushniak, Joe Burtard, Theresa Horvat, Julie Shafer, Pat Nichols-Perrin, Manon Desrosiers, Tevfik Demirciftci

**Absent:** Tammy Anderson

**City Council Members Present:** Mayor Pro Tem Randall Reitz

**Visit Grand Junction Staff Present:** Elizabeth Fogarty, Director; Kim Machado, Administrative Specialist; Daniel Short, Business Analyst; Matthew Hart, Visitor Center Manager and Administrative Coordinator

**Guests:** Sandra Zoldowski, Executive Director, Horizon Drive District

The meeting was called to order at 3:04 p.m. by Board Chair Brenda Greene.

Minutes from the December 10, 2024, advisory board meeting: Theresa Horvat motioned to approve the minutes as written; Joe Burtard seconded. Motion passed.

**Community Updates and Q&A – Horizon Drive District**

Sandra Zoldowski, Executive Director of the Horizon Drive District (HDD) provided updates on projects and initiatives for 2025, which include phase three of the Horizon Drive Trail clean-up project, installation of two license plate readers on Horizon Drive, and collaboration with Horizon Drive businesses to organize community events. The HDD has developed a Horizon Drive Business Directory, which is scheduled for release in February 2025. Construction of a roundabout at the intersection of G road and Horizon Drive is expected to be completed by the end of 2025. The roundabout will feature artwork from a local artist.

Elizabeth thanked Sandra for the update and asked how Visit Grand Junction could further support or improve its partnership with the Horizon Drive District. Sandra did not provide specific recommendations, but expressed gratitude for Visit Grand Junction's ongoing support and assistance.

**2024 Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference Recap and Attendee Comments**

Visit Grand Junction staff members Daniel Short, Business Analyst, and Matthew Hart, Visitor Center Manager and Administrative Coordinator shared their insights from the 2024 Colorado Governor's Tourism Conference. Topics covered included artificial intelligence, and developing and promoting unique destination experiences.

**Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board Business**

Official meeting notice designation for 2025: Julie Shafer moved to approve the following motion, and Manon Desrosiers seconded:

"I make a motion to designate VisitGrandJunction.com and GJCity.org as the official meeting notice locations of the Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board of Directors for 2025. In the event of a disruption in internet service, the Visitor Center entrance door at 740 Horizon Drive and the glassed-in exterior notice board at City Hall, 250 N. 5th St., are the designated posting locations."

The motion was approved unanimously.

Election of Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board of Directors Officers: Elizabeth Fortushniak and Manon Desrosiers expressed interest in serving as the Board Chair for 2025. Pat Nichols-Perrin and Manon Desrosiers expressed interest in serving as the Vice Chair for 2025. An election by written ballot was held for the board members. No other board member had expressed interest in serving as an officer. By a majority vote, Elizabeth Fortushniak was elected to serve as Board Chair, and Pat Nichols-Perrin was elected to serve as Vice Chair for 2025.

## Visit Grand Junction Updates

Elizabeth shared an update on Grand Junction's lodging tax collections and hotel metrics for November 2024's business activity. For November 2024's business, lodging tax collections were estimated to be 2.0% above November 2023. Year-to-date lodging tax collections are 2.1% higher through November 2024's business compared to the same eleven-month period in 2023.

Highlights of Grand Junction hotel metrics were shared for the months of November. Notable metrics included:

- November 2024 occupancy of 49.5% was 1.6% above the U.S. occupancy and 0.5% above Colorado, including ski towns, occupancy.
- November 2024 ADR of \$92.43 was the highest ADR ever recorded for the month of November and was 4.5% above November 2023 ADR of \$88.46.
- The YTD November 2024 ADR pace of \$110.42 was 4.7% above YTD November 2023 ADR pace of \$105.46.
- The YTD November 2024 ADR pace was above the ADR pace for the U.S. overall, as well as for Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns.

Other updates include:

- Elizabeth shared information on the Colorado Tourism Office Tourism Exchange USA program and how Visit GJ will be involved.
- The Volunteer Ambassador Appreciation Luncheon is scheduled for January 21, 2025, from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Warehouse 2565 Kitchen + Bar. Advisory board members are invited to attend.
- City Council will consider an extension for the current, but expired, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Grand Junction Regional Air Service Alliance and Grand Junction Sports Commission during the January 15, 2025, City Council meeting.
- Elizabeth shared information from the BLM Blueprint for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Outdoor Recreation Summit. She was able to share with the large group in attendance the City's significant investment in trail connectivity and upkeep as well as economic impact and destination management strategies.
- The TODAY Show featured Grand Junction online and in a live television broadcast title, "Canyon Bathing, Contrast Therapy, More 2025 Wellness Travel Trends."

There being no further business, Joe Burtard motioned to adjourn; Julie Shafer seconded. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.