

Visit Grand Junction
Advisory Board of Directors Meeting
February 11, 2025, 3 pm - 5 pm

The meeting was held at Residence Inn, 767 Horizon Drive, Grand Junction, CO.

Presiding: Elizabeth Fortushniak, Chair

Visit Grand Junction Board Members Present: Brenda Greene, Joe Burtard, Julie Shafer, Pat Nichols-Perrin, Manon Desrosiers, Tefvik Demirciftci, Tammy Anderson

Absent: Theresa Horvat

City Council Members Present: Mayor Pro Tem Randall Reitz

City of Grand Junction and Visit Grand Junction Staff Present: Mike Bennett, City Manager; Elizabeth Fogarty, Director; Kim Machado, Administrative Specialist; Teagan McLennan, Visit Grand Junction Intern

Guests: Kirk Oldham, Area Wildlife Manager, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m. by Board Chair Elizabeth Fortushniak.

Minutes from the January 14, 2025, advisory board meeting: Pat Nichols-Perrin motioned to approve the minutes as written; Brenda Greene seconded. Motion passed.

Elizabeth Fogarty introduced and welcomed City Manager Mike Bennett. Each of the Advisory Board Members introduced themselves and shared their background, including why they enjoy being a Visit GJ Board Member.

Community Updates and Q&A – Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Kirk Oldham, Area Wildlife Manager for Mesa & Garfield Counties, provided updates on Colorado Parks and Wildlife's (CPW) key initiatives, agency goals, projects, and programs. He discussed the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), and highlighted the long-term sustainability efforts under the Future Generations Act (Senate Bill 18-143). Kirk also provided information on COTREX, a free Colorado recreation app that provides trail and avalanche information. Additionally, he shared key economic and wildlife impact statistics, covering outdoor recreation's financial contributions, funding allocations, and conservation efforts. Big game hunting licenses are allocated at a rate of 75% to Colorado residents, while 25% are issued to non-residents.

Elizabeth Fogarty shared an overview of Visit Grand Junction's trail conservation efforts, highlighting the outdoor adventure gamification platform used by residents and guests. The app is designed to promote trail disbursement from high-traffic areas to lesser-known trails, while collecting valuable anonymized data on trail usage. She thanked Kirk for his update and asked how Visit Grand Junction could provide additional support or enhance its partnership with CPW. Kirk expressed appreciation for Visit Grand Junction's efforts in managing and preserving the area's natural resources. He further encouraged ongoing engagement by continuing to stay informed with related issues and information.

Visit Grand Junction Updates

Due to time constraints, Grand Junction hotel metrics for the month of December 2024 and the full year of 2024 were not presented and will be shared during next month's meeting.

Other updates include:

- Visit Grand Junction's Snapshot of 2024 Accomplishments, Projects, Partnerships, Data, and Outreach was included in the January 2025 Stakeholder eNewsletter. Elizabeth shared a few of the significant highlights and commended staff achievements and dedication.
- The Official Grand Junction Visitor Guide was distributed to the advisory board members, who expressed positive comments on the quality and content.
- City Council approved to extend the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Grand Junction Regional Air Service Alliance and Grand Junction Sports Commission for six months during the January 15, 2025, City Council meeting, as it remains under development. Advisory board members reiterated their concerns regarding the lack of specificity in the current MOU and the need to define roles and responsibilities to avoid conflict of interest and dilution of Visit Grand Junction's core responsibilities.

Mayor Pro Tem Randall Reitz provided a City Council update.

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

The meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.