

Visit Grand Junction  
Advisory Board of Directors Meeting  
April 8, 2025, 3 pm - 5 pm

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

**Presiding:** Elizabeth Fortushniak, Chair

**Visit Grand Junction Board Members Present:** Joe Burtard, Theresa Horvat, Tevfik Demirciftci, Tammy Anderson, Pat Nichols-Perrin, Julie Shafer

**Absent:** Manon Desrosiers, Brenda Greene

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

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

**Guests:** Allana Olbrich, Acting Superintendent, Colorado National Monument

The meeting was called to order at 3:06 p.m. by Board Chair Elizabeth Fortushniak.

Minutes from the March 11, 2025, advisory board meeting: Pat Nichols-Perrin motioned to approve the minutes as written; Tammy Anderson seconded. Motion passed.

**Community Updates and Q&A – Colorado National Monument**

Allana Olbrich, Acting Superintendent of the Colorado National Monument (CNM) since February 2025, provided an update on CNM's programs, activities, trails, infrastructure maintenance, upgrades, and park statistics for 2024. Recreational visits increased 0.4% compared to 2023, a level of growth considered sustainable and preferable. Allana noted that the three primary focus areas for 2024 were interpretation, education, and volunteer programs. These included ranger walks and talks, the Resiliency Ranger Program, youth crews, field trips, and volunteer recognition efforts. Allana also highlighted resource protection efforts, such as bat and raptor studies, invasive species removal, fire prevention, and emergency response. Additionally, Saddlehorn Amphitheatre is now open to the public.

Elizabeth Fogarty thanked Allana for the update and asked how Visit Grand Junction could further support or improve its partnership with the Colorado National Monument. Allana responded that Superintendent Nathan Souder and the CNM staff are grateful for the ongoing partnership and support. Allana mentioned she was impressed with the level of collaboration and partnership the park has with Visit Grand Junction and stated it's not always the case; so she has enjoyed her time in Grand Junction. She encouraged Visit Grand Junction to continue its efforts, communicate any concerns to the park, and help educate visitors.

**Visit Grand Junction Updates**

Elizabeth shared an update on Grand Junction's lodging tax collections and hotel performance metrics for February 2025's business activity.

For February 2025's business, Grand Junction's lodging tax collections were 4.4% below February 2024. February 2025 hotel occupancy was 50.1%, ADR was \$89.39, and RevPAR was \$44.80. Notable hotel metrics include:

- February 2025's ADR of \$89.39 was the highest recorded for the month of February, 4.7% above February 2024 ADR of \$85.41, and outpaced the U.S., and Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns. Grand Junction has achieved record-high monthly ADR for 11 consecutive months.
- February 2025's RevPAR of \$44.80 was the highest recorded for the month of February, excluding February 2022, 4.1% above February 2024 RevPAR of \$43.06, and outpaced the U.S., and Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns.
- The YTD February 2025 occupancy pace was even compared to YTD February 2024 occupancy pace, and outpaced Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns.
- The YTD February 2025 ADR pace was 4.2% above YTD February 2024 ADR pace, and outpaced the U.S., and Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns.

- The YTD February 2025 RevPAR pace was 4.2% above YTD February 2024 RevPAR pace, and outpaced the U.S., and Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns.

The topic of declining lodging tax revenue, discussed during the March 11, 2025 meeting, despite positive KPI trends, was discussed further. Elizabeth reiterated that the increase in lodging stays of 30 days or more is a key factor, as these extended stays are exempt from both lodging and sales tax. As a result, while overall lodging business revenue has increased, the lodging tax continues to decline. Potential strategies to address this trend were discussed and will continue to be explored.

Other updates include:

- The Grand Junction Economic Partnership's Western Colorado Economic Summit is scheduled for April 24, 2025, at Colorado Mesa University. Advisory board members are invited to attend. Visit Grand Junction will cover the registration cost. In addition to Elizabeth Fogarty, the following advisory board members will be attending: Julie Shafer, Theresa Horvat, Pat Nichols-Perrin, Manon Desrosiers, Brenda Greene, and Tevfik Demirciftci.
- A recap of annual events and activities involving Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board members was shared, along with key reminders about the Colorado Open Meetings Law, specifically the importance of avoiding discussion of Visit Grand Junction board business outside of the regularly scheduled monthly meetings, including during social gatherings.
- The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Grand Junction Regional Air Service Alliance (GJRASA) remains under development. The Board commended Visit Grand Junction for including data reporting as part of the MOU.
- Elizabeth shared a 2025 travel outlook for the U.S. and Grand Junction and what has shifted since the previous month's meeting.
- Visit Grand Junction contributed Grand Junction tourism content for the Colorado Business Economic Outlook Report for 2025, produced by the Leeds School of Business at the University of Colorado. This is the third consecutive year of Visit Grand Junction's participation. Printed copies of the Grand Junction tourism section were distributed to the advisory board members, and noted a link to the full report would be shared.
- The Grand Junction two-page ad spread in the Colorado Official Travel Guide and the 4-page Grand Junction exclusive insert were displayed. The insert features various experiences throughout the Grand Junction area, and is mailed globally with every copy of the guide.
- Visit Grand Junction secured a two-page spread placement, featuring the inside front cover and page one, in the Colorado Tourism Office's new Field Guide. The guide will be displayed at Colorado's two most visited State Welcome Centers: Silverthorne and Julesburg.
- An advisory board member shared positive feedback from a client who praised both the quality of the Grand Junction Adventure Guide and the design of VisitGrandJunction.com.

Mayor Pro Tem Randall Reitz provided a council update.

Board Chair, Elizabeth Fortushniak, reported that the Grand Valley River Fest is scheduled for May 17, 2025, at Las Colonias Park. Additional details are available at [GrandValleyRiverFest.com](https://GrandValleyRiverFest.com). Elizabeth highlighted what is new for this year's event.

There being no further business, Julie Anderson motioned to adjourn; Theresa Horvat seconded. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m.