

Visit Grand Junction
Advisory Board of Directors Meeting
June 10, 2025, 3 pm - 5 pm

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

Presiding: Elizabeth Fortushniak, Chair

Visit Grand Junction Board Members Present: Theresa Horvat, Manon Desrosiers, Brenda Greene, Pat Nichols-Perrin, Tevfik Demirciftci, Joe Burtard, Tammy Anderson

Absent: Julie Shafer

City Council Members Present: Mayor Pro Tem Laurel Cole

Visit Grand Junction Staff Present: Elizabeth Fogarty, Director; Kim Machado, Administrative Specialist; Teagan McLennan, Content Specialist

Guests: Candace Carnahan, Executive Director, Grand Junction Area Chamber of Commerce

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Board Chair Elizabeth Fortushniak.

Minutes from the May 13, 2025, advisory board meeting: Brenda Greene motioned to approve the minutes as written; Pat Nichols-Perrin seconded. Motion passed.

Community Updates and Q&A – Grand Junction Area Chamber of Commerce

Candace Carnahan, Executive Director of the Grand Junction Area Chamber of Commerce, provided an update on the Chamber's initiatives centered around supporting local businesses in Grand Junction. She shared insights from a recent community survey focused on Downtown Grand Junction and explained the Chamber's role in fostering workforce development through partnerships with District 51 high schools, including a workforce coordinator and programs such as Workforce Development Day and the Young Entrepreneurs Academy. Candace also summarized findings from the Regional Talent Summit including, barriers in construction, early childhood education, and healthcare, noting that solutions were already implemented in early childhood education. Additionally, she outlined the Chamber's position on four proposed bills that could impact businesses: Labor Peace Act Overhaul, Extreme Temperature Mandates, Enterprise Zone Credit Rollback, and Workers' Comp Overhaul. A brief discussion followed regarding economic challenges facing the restaurant industry.

Fogarty thanked Candace for the Chamber's great work and inquired how Visit Grand Junction could further support the Chamber and was there anything Visit Grand Junction can improve upon. Candace thanked Visit Grand Junction for their partnership and ongoing communication.

Visit Grand Junction Updates

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

For April 2025's business, Grand Junction's lodging tax collections were 13.4% below April 2024. April 2025 hotel occupancy was 64.7%, ADR was \$106.32, and RevPAR was \$68.77. Year-to-date lodging tax collections are 7.2% below through April 2025's business compared to the same three-month period in 2024. Notable hotel metrics include:

- April 2025's ADR of \$106.32 was the second highest recorded for the month of April, 4.8% below April 2024 ADR of \$111.72, which is the highest ADR for April in Grand Junction's history.
- The YTD April 2025 ADR pacing was 0.8% above YTD April 2024 ADR pacing, and outpaced Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns.
- The May 2024 through April 2025 rolling 12-month ADR pacing was 3.4% above the May 2023 through April 2024 rolling 12-month ADR, and outpaced the U.S., and Colorado, both including and excluding ski towns.

Other updates include:

- The latest figures regarding the decline in lodging tax revenue due to the sales and lodging tax exemption for stays of 30 days or more, along with current budget predictions. It was shared that continued loss in revenue is prolonging reduced marketing, which will equate to less visitation.

- The 2025 travel outlook for the U.S., including changes from the previous month and the estimated outlook for Grand Junction.
- An overview of the new and current Grand Junction City Council Members.
- The latest discussions on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Grand Junction Regional Air Service Alliance (GJRASA). Visit Grand Junction continues to update and share monthly the proprietary data worksheet to assist the GJRASA with their strategies.
- Community and industry meetings, conferences, and events that Elizabeth attended recently, which include the Monument Trail Phase II Chain Breaking, JUCO Banquet, Art Center of Western Colorado Board Meeting, Tourism Workforce Video Shoot, JUCO Game with Volunteer Ambassadors and Advisory Board Members, MOU discussion with City Manager and City Attorney, Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board Orientation, Outdoor Recreation Intergovernmental Agency, Get to Know Your City, Community Recreation Center Brand Development Meeting, and Destination Think! Collective Quarterly Leadership.
- Pictures captured during the filming of the Workforce Campaign and Resident & Tourism Campaign was shared.
- A presentation of video survey responses highlighting guests' interest in art- and history-related activities while traveling. The feedback will be woven into Visit Grand Junction's brand strategies, content, and messaging to elevate awareness and champion Grand Junction's arts, culture, and history.
- Advisory Board Member Joe Burtard expressed appreciation to Visit Grand Junction for providing marketing support to promote the Colorado Stampede Rodeo, and shared it was a huge success.

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

The meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m.