

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MINUTES OF MEETING
JANUARY 9, 1996

PRESIDING: Brad Higginbotham, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lon Carpenter, Tom Kleinschnitz, Karen Berryman, Fay Timmerman, Ken Smith, Paul Nelson, R.T. Mantlo

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dan Sharp

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Barbara Bowman, Judy Shormann, Irene Carlow

GUESTS: Char Shofner, Linda Hill, Cindy Sherrill, Bob Wilcox, Carla Pearson, Doug Gust, Sam Suplizio, Bruce Hill, Jamie Hamilton

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm.

MINUTES OF DECEMBER 12, 1995: Lon Carpenter moved the minutes be approved, Karen Berryman seconded; approved unanimously.

JUCO Sponsorship: Sam Suplizio addressed the Board on behalf of the JUCO Committee and gave a brief history of the VCB's sponsorship of the championship games. The VCB did receive very good response to its ads the first year. After that first year, however, PSN sold local ads that were run instead of the VCB's. In response to complaints from the JUCO Committee, PSN acknowledged that the VCB did not receive value from last year's sponsorship; therefore, PSN will not invoice the VCB for the 1995 broadcast.

Sam stated that JUCO is responsible for raising the \$20,000 production costs. He is asking the Board to apply the 1995 unspent funds toward sponsorship of the 1996 championship. JUCO will continue to look for other broadcast sponsors but, if unsuccessful, may ask the VCB to increase its contribution from \$15,000 to \$20,000.

Brad stated that the Board wants to develop ways to work more closely with sporting events and organizations in the Valley. We know that some tournament teams are not decided until a week before the opening game, but the VCB would like to send information to the teams as soon as they are identified. The JUCO committee volunteered to provide the VCB with the names and addresses of the top 20 teams. Additionally, the VCB's 800 number will appear on JUCO brochures sent to all regional directors. JUCO may develop its own website which would, in turn, direct individuals to the VCB for lodging and visitor information.

Sam thanked the Board for the opportunity to discuss continued sponsorship as well as other ways the JUCO Committee and the VCB can work together. Sam requested an early response from the Board so JUCO can meet the early March deadline for contracting with PSN.

The Board discussed the fact that the VCB received a strong return the first year the games were broadcast, with significant decreases each of the following years. Sponsorship was not budgeted

for 1996 following the Board's review of responses for 1995; the \$15,000 was added to Tashiro's contract for increased television advertising.

Paul Nelson moved: To approve \$15,000 expenditure for sponsorship of the 1996 JUCO championship games, and the Board will entertain a discussion of \$5,000 additional funding of the JUCO Committee is unable to secure other sponsors for that amount. R.T. Mantlo amended the motion: To approve \$20,000 expenditure for sponsorship of the JUCO championship games.

Discussion: Sponsorship funds not spent in 1995 could be carried forward to 1996 and the advertising plan will not be affected. Funding the entire production cost (\$20,000) would require using 50% of the Contingency funds budgeted for 1996.

Paul Nelson amended the motion: To sponsor the 1996 JUCO championship games in the amount of \$15,000 by carrying forward budgeted funds from 1995 to 1996; Fay Timmerman seconded the motion as amended; passed unanimously.

Results of the hotels' fam discussion is postponed to February.

The City Attorney has provided information regarding copyrighting the VCB's material, including the Visitor Guide, as well as registering a trade name with the Secretary of State. If an individual infringes on our copyrighted material, we would pursue legal action. This is oftentimes difficult and costly because venue is determined by the location where the material is distributed. Tashiro recommends registering two trade names: Official Grand Junction Visitor Guide and Official Grand Junction Vacation Guide. (Staff typically refers to our brochure as "Visitor Guide" and our ads encourage readers to call for a "Vacation Guide.")

Bob Jappe, a local businessman, is soliciting advertisers for a magazine that he proposes to distribute throughout Colorado at visitor centers, welcome centers, Chambers of Commerce and other locations. The publication, referred to as Grand Junction Visitor Guide, would not limit advertisers to Grand Junction businesses but would accept ads from Moab, Glenwood, etc. He has asked the VCB to use his publication as the fulfillment piece to all our inquiries, rather than the VCB's Visitor Guide. The Director advised Mr. Jappe that, if the VCB contracts for publishing, an RFP would have to be issued and a number of vendors would be asked to bid.

The Board is pleased to learn that a new private business has developed as a result of growth in the area's tourism industry.

After discussion, the Board advised the Director to speak with Mr. Jappe and request that he clarify to his potential clients that the VCB is not a sponsor of his magazine. Additionally, the VCB would include his publication at the Visitor Center within the criteria of the current brochure display policy and that the VCB will continue to use only VCB publications for fulfillment.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: The 1996 Visitor Guide will include four new lodging properties. The Clifton Inn and KOA Campground were annexed into the City in December 1995. As a result of the Board's efforts to "expand the tent," the Orchard House and Stonehaven have become partners for 1996.

Judy Shormann contacted other visitor centers around the state to survey how their visitor statistics are gathered. Most of the centers use methods similar to ours: visitors are asked to sign a guest register and provide minimal information about themselves. One of the centers adds 10% for slippage. The Fruita Welcome Center multiplies by 2.3% for the visitor count. Brad stated that

accuracy in our statistics is most important and we must be consistent to make historical comparisons valid. R.T. has volunteered at the Visitor Center in the past and thinks we might miss 4% - 5% of the traffic in our counts. He does think our accurate count is the best way of tracking visitor numbers. The consensus of the Board is to continue our current method of gathering visitor statistics.

Group Sales has seen a lot of activity in January, particularly from tour operators. We appreciate leads we have received from hotels that are unable to accommodate a particular group.

We continue to see success in our long-term sales efforts. After working with the Colorado Parks & Recreation Association for five years, we were successful in securing this group's convention for October 6-9, 1998. A German tour group we have met with for four years at Pow Wow has booked at the Hilton, and a British tour operator has booked a series of 10 coaches into Grand Junction.

The VCB's annual Hospitality Training Tour will be run in two sessions – April 22 and May 6. The timing of these tours was based on survey responses received from lodging properties.

Late this month, staff of the VCB and Hilton will attend the Religious Conference Management Association trade show for the first time. In early February, we will attend the European Symposium in Santa Fe; representatives of the Hilton, Holiday Inn and Ramada will also attend. The VCB has secured a double booth space at the Boat, Sport & RV Show in Denver March 6-10.

City Council approved staff request for a new position of Sales Assistant. The Director is pleased to announce that Erin Chapman has been promoted to Sales Assistant, effective immediately. We will advertise for a new receptionist and fill that position as soon as possible.

NEW BUSINESS: Country Jam representatives have asked the VCB to attend a County Commissioner meeting next Tuesday, January 16. The Commissioners will review assessment of an impact fee; Country Jam is requesting support for the event and the positive economic impact it has on the community. While the VCB is not able to speak to the specific economic impact of the event, hotel representatives present stated that they believe it is a good event; their properties fill up every night of the music festival. The Board, rather than staff, will address this issue as appropriate. Fay volunteered to represent the VCB at the Commissioners' meeting.

Fay Timmerman moved the meeting adjourn, Karen Berryman seconded; there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00.