

VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
AUGUST 13, 1996

PRESIDING: Brad Higginbotham, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Doug Gust, Bill Miers, Tom Kleinschnitz, Ken Smith, Fay Timmerman, Karen Berryman, Lon Carpenter

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ron Maupin, Dan Sharp

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

GUESTS: Linda Hill, Paul Nelson, Mary Verdick

The meeting was called to order at 3:07 pm.

MINUTES OF JULY 9, 1996: One correction was noted: bottom of Page 2, Air Show '92 should read Air Show '96. Lon Carpenter moved the minutes be approved as corrected, Bill Miers seconded; approved unanimously.

BOARD BUSINESS: Paul Nelson updated the Board on the activities of the Riverfront Commission and the Legacy Funds recently awarded. Several municipalities and agencies in Mesa County assisted with an application for \$12 million in lotto funds for expansion of and major improvements to the Riverfront Project. The funding review board received sixty-six applications from around the state; six projects were funded. The Riverfront Commission is honored to receive an award of \$4.5 million. Some of the improvements include a major project in Fruita, near Devils Canyon. Some land has been donated, other parcels will be purchased. There will be a State Parks campground, the revenue from which will be used to fund other Riverfront improvements. Palisade will also have its own trail. The Commission will work toward connecting all the trails.

World Travel Partners Ski Charters: The Director will attend travel agent shows in Atlanta September 16-18; consumer shows will also run September 19-21 in Florida. The VCB is investing approximately \$10,000 to facilitate marketing these important charters into Walker Field. World Travel Partners is contemplating continuing charters into Grand Junction through the summer. Staff will contact Airport management about setting up a hospitality table when the charters arrive. The Board's direction is that a hospitality table would be staffed only with VCB volunteers and/or staff, rather than include private businesses. Tourism businesses that might also wish to have some type of display would need to negotiate directly with the Airport. Staff will contact World Travel Partners about putting our Visitor Guide in seat pockets of the planes as well as on transportation to the ski destinations.

Air Service Task Force: Karen Berryman discussed Michael Boyd's report, which was previously sent to the Board. Mr. Boyd feels Norwest Airlines is a good target and that Frontier is a strong possibility. He feels that TWA, Northwest and Western Pacific have the strongest potential to respond to Grand Junction's solicitation. Brad Higginbotham will attend the Task Force meeting on Tuesday, August 20.

Special Events: Doug Gust reported on the Grand River Indian Artists Gathering and the Art & Jazz Festival. Both events were very successful, spent the funds appropriately, and made effective use of

Special Events Fund. He would recommend funding both events in the future, if they apply. The Indian Artists Gathering had 6,200 paid attendees; the Art & Jazz festival raised \$5,504 for Art on the Corner. Dinosaur Days has not submitted a final report (due September 20). Bill Mears noted that this is primarily a local event with few out-of-town attendees. The Norwest Bicycle Classic, a sanctioned event, was well-attended and local sponsors think this event has good potential to grow. A final report is due in late September.

A workshop to discuss Special Events Policy revisions will be held from 2:00-3:00 pm September 10, followed immediately by the regular monthly Board meeting. Any policy revisions will have to be submitted to Council for approval at a September meeting.

Staff continues to receive funding requests from sporting event organizers. The Board appointed a Sports Marketing Committee to study the possibility of funding sporting events. Committee members are: Ken Smith, Bill Mears, Lon Carpenter, Brad Higginbotham.

TASHIRO MARKETING & ADVERTISING: TV ads will run August 19 - September 20, highlighting the Winefest and Fruita Fall Festival. We are evaluating fall and winter advertising; public relations may be expanded to spotlight local products. One idea is to send a gift basket of Grand Valley products to selected writers.

Research continues for the economic impact/return on investment project. We have information from local businesses and are getting sales tax information by business segment. Terry Marle's report, based on the conversion study results, will be presented at the September Board meeting. Tashiro is attempting to contact Tucker Hart Adams to analyze the economic data.

The group sales direct mail will include a questionnaire designed to allow staff to qualify leads in the database and purge those who request they be removed from our mailing list. Separate questionnaires will be sent to meeting planners and motorcoach tours. We will ask how many have CD-ROMs, how many are on the Internet, and try to get e-mail addresses for our records.

The CTTA Board's next meeting is August 21. At that time, they will discuss advertising opportunities in all CTTA publications, including the state map. Maps will be mailed with all State Vacation Planning Guides, and distributed at Welcome Centers and visitor centers throughout the state.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: July lodging tax receipts are up .3%, YTD collections are up 3.1%. Staff's recommendations for 1996 budget revisions were distributed. Revisions to the 1996 and 1997 budgets will be made (probably in September) as part of the City-wide budget process.

Fruita Welcome Center statistics are still down for the year; the Chamber's statistics were not available. We are regaining some ground in the number of inquiries from the State Vacation Planning Guide, but will look at scaling back the size of the ad so that some funds can be re-directed.

The Director attended a technology seminar at the International Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaus annual conference. Significant changes are anticipated in communications methods, resulting in changes in staff mix/assignments. One North Carolina bureau has a full-time staff member devoted to technology (phones, computers, etc.). Many bureaus are trying to phase out their central reservations systems. Denver reports they will continue room blocks for groups/meetings & conventions.

Visitor Center: Judy Shormann reported on a comparison of the origin of visitors for the period January-July 1995 vs 1996:

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|------------------------|------|
| Foreign countries | even |
| International visitors | even |
| Colorado visitors | + 3% |
| Out-of-state visitors | - 5% |

In looking at total visitation, staff discussed adding hospitality table counts to Visitor Center numbers since we are, in essence, taking the Visitor Center to the visitor. We could compile some of the same information we ask for in our guest register so that state of origin, length of stay and other pertinent information would be tracked.

Group Sales: Barbara Bowman stated that we are at 73% of our 1996 goal for sales leads issued, and commended Erin Chapman for her excellent work. The Denver sales blitz will be August 26-27, with the closing reception Wednesday, August 28. More partners are participating in sales calls this year than last, and we will have a total of 8 2-person teams making calls in the Denver Tech Center area.

The VCB and Colorado West Tourism Council are working on a co-operative mailing to local clubs, organizations and Chamber members. CWTC members have offered to make follow-up calls after the mailing.

Tom Kleinschnitz moved the meeting adjourn; Lon Carpenter seconded. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm.