

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MINUTES OF MEETING
JANUARY 14, 1997

PRESIDING: Karen Berryman, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Miers, Ken Smith, Lon Carpenter, Doug Gust, Dan Sharp, Brad Higginbotham

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ron Maupin

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Judy Shormann, Irene Carlow

GUESTS: Linda Hill, Viola Sis

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 pm.

MINUTES OF DECEMBER 10, 1996: Doug Gust moved the minutes be approved as written, Brad Higginbotham seconded; approved unanimously.

TASHIRO MARKETING & ADVERTISING: Linda Hill discussed the website revisions, which should be completed by the end of January. Linda will do a search of Grand Junction domain names and register available names to the VCB as appropriate. Four website contests are planned for 1997. Links to the Peachtree Inn and Hotel Melrose are in place. Linda confirmed the following fees for links:

- no charge - properties that collect lodging tax (including Orchard House)
- no charge - Mesa County tourism-related non-profits
- \$150/yr - Mesa County tourism-related commercial operations

The VCB has again won awards in the Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International annual competition. This is the 5th consecutive year we have received awards; there were over 1,800 entries. The VCB's website won a gold award and the World Travel Partners ad/rack card was selected for a bronze. The awards presentation is February 4 in New York; the Board supports the Director and Linda Hill attending the ceremonies.

Tucker Hart Adams will spend 3 days in Grand Junction in March as she begins her work on the economic impact study. She would like to have an intercept survey at various locations in the Grand Valley.

The Christmas shopping package promotion was a tremendous success, with over 418 room nights sold.

BOARD BUSINESS: Staff received requests for website links from American Meetings & Events, Inc. and Clifton KOA. The consensus is to keep the website more tourism related than meetings. A more detailed discussion of internet policies will take place at the Board retreat; the American Meetings request is tabled until after the retreat. The only lodging properties that will be included on the VCB's website (either listed in the lodging grid or as a link) are those that collect the lodging tax or participate in the "expand the tent" program.

Dinosaur Diamond: Viola Sis, Fruita City Councilmember, reported on the recent meeting in Price, Utah. The group approved a travel writer fam proposal presented by Kathleen Brown; target date is late April. Printing a "passport" for visitors to take to each location in the Diamond was discussed but no decision has been made; the group will focus on the travel writer fam at this time. The Director stated that fam costs to the VCB would be approximately \$600.

Board Retreat: Suggested locations are Moab or Glenwood Springs; participants would leave Grand Junction mid-day, returning late afternoon the next. Staff is directed to check availability and costs for possible dates of March 18, 19 or 20.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: December lodging tax collections were up nearly 23%. 1996 international visitation to the Visitor Center was up 48% over 1995; 57 countries were represented in 1996 vs 13 countries in 1993. Colorado visitors increased 17%, out-of-state visitors were down 1%.

We have received proposals for a new telephone system which would include voice mail on the 800 line and other features that would give us greater flexibility in responding to callers. The existing system is adequate for regular business lines, but will not support newer technology that would allow us to more efficiently manage a high volume of advertising responses. The Board supports the Director in requesting City approval to purchase a new telephone system.

The Visitor Guide press check is scheduled for January 23 or 24.

The hospitality tables for Signature Tours flights have been moderately successful.

Maverick Airways inaugural flight to Grand Junction will be January 21; a press conference will be held at the airport at 9:00 am.

OTHER BUSINESS: Diane Schwenke and other representatives of the Air Service Task Force will meet with officials of Northwest Airlines on January 16 and with TWA on January 17.

Diane discussed the Chamber's priorities for 1997:

1. Transportation, especially air service
2. Education
3. Building relationships with local elected officials
4. Assistance to existing businesses
5. Legislative efforts
6. Member services

Brad Higginbotham will serve as the VCB liaison to the Chamber for 1997.

Bill Miars distributed a copy of a letter Rim Rock Run organizers received from Steve Hickman, Superintendent of the Colorado National Monument. The letter states that Mr. Hickman cannot issue a special use permit for the event for 1997. The consensus of the Board is to encourage the event organizers to contact Senators Campbell and Allard and Representative McInnis for assistance.

Ken Smith moved the meeting adjourn, Bill Miars seconded; there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 pm.