

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MAY 13, 1997

PRESIDING: Karen Berryman, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jack Scott, Sabrina Bebb-Jones, Jamee Simons, Dan Sharp, Lon Carpenter

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ken Smith, Brad Higginbotham, Bill Miers

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

GUESTS: Dave Fishell, Tom Kleinschnitz, Angie Sidwell, David Cooper, Ron Lappi, Caroline Morrell, Elizabeth Williams

The Director played the newly-produced TV commercials that will air in the Denver/Colorado Springs markets. The Board is very pleased with the spots; Tashiro did an excellent job on the animation and the custom music is very good.

The meeting was called to order at 3:15 pm. The Chair introduced and welcomed Councilman Jack Scott to the VCB Board.

MINUTES OF APRIL 8, 1997: Lon Carpenter moved the minutes be approved as written, James Simons seconded, approved unanimously.

BOARD BUSINESS: David Cooper – Visitor Guide Concerns – David Cooper read a prepared statement into the record (copy included with these minutes). Lon Carpenter pointed out that items added to or deleted from the Visitor Guide are done in response to visitor requests. He asked what advertising Cooper does. Cooper responded that the tour operators advertise in a variety of ways: brochures at the Visitor Center, listings in the yellow pages, wherever their business fits in the tourism world. The Chair referred to minutes of the December 14, 1996 meeting; the Board felt that only regularly scheduled tours should be included in the 1997 Visitor Guide. Elizabeth Williams asked if the VCB could fax potential visitors a list of all local tour operators; the Director responded that the volume of fax requests of all kinds makes this prohibitive. Williams suggested that, instead of naming any tour operators, the Visitor Guide could refer visitors to “check local listings.” The Chair reminded those present that tourism-related businesses in Mesa County can link to the VCB’s Internet website for \$150 per year.

Jack Scott asked what professional standards of insurance requirements exist for tour guides? Cooper responded that there are really aren’t any “standards” for tour guides; guides are far less controlled/restricted than those operators who transport people. Caroline Morrell does not conduct guided tours but provides transportation to accommodate an individual’s selected itinerary (e.g., Disneyland, national parks, Cheyenne Days, New Orleans). She holds an off-road PUC permit. Dave Fishell stated he does not want to be included in the Visitor Guide. He is a step-on guide (motorcoach tours, other groups) and holds no PUC license or permits from land management agencies. He understands Cooper’s concerns, but agrees that the VCB needs to publish regularly scheduled tours.

Perhaps the VCB could consider creating a second category that would include the other tour operators.

Dan Sharp said the Board is not intentionally excluding anyone and the Board may consider adding another category, based on the VCB's Mission Statement. If another category is established, the Board will set criteria that must be met for inclusion in that category. The following members will serve on a committee to review the issue: Bill Mears, Lon Carpenter, Jamee Simons, Dan Sharp.

The Director relayed some of the City Attorney's concerns: The VCB does not have to include any commercial businesses in the Visitor Guide, and may be tacitly condoning those businesses that are included. It may become necessary for all businesses included in the Guide to provide the VCB with proof of liability insurance, licenses, permits, etc. The New Orleans CVB does require that proof since being sued by a visitor. The visitor was mugged while on a walking tour, using a tour map that was printed and distributed by the CVB.

Budget: City Finance Director Ron Lappi discussed the City's biennial budget process, review teams, and timeline. Department budgets are essentially finalized at the end of August, followed by detailed reviews in September. After reviews and any revisions, the budget is presented to Council for review, discussion and approval. Council can approve carry-forwards from the previous or increases in a department's total expenditures by a Supplemental Appropriations ordinance in April and the Final Appropriations ordinance in October. VCB staff will meet May 17 to begin preliminary budget planning. The Board will discuss items identified at the retreat as well as staff recommendations at a budget workshop July 21, 2:00 – 5:00 at the VCB.

A tax study update "Sources of 1995 Sales Tax Revenues," prepared by Coley/Forrest, was distributed and discussed.

Special Events: Applications for the second funding cycle are due June 3 and will be distributed at the regular monthly meeting June 10. A workshop is scheduled for June 23, 3:00 – 5:00 at the VCB to review applications.

Board Vacancy: The Chair presented Doug Gust's letter of resignation; Doug has moved out of the area. Jack Scott will bring up this vacancy at the next Council Workshop.

Agency RFQ/RFP: The agency RFP was discussed and the timetable reviewed. Agency presentations are scheduled for Tuesday, August 5. Board members are asked to set aside the entire day; presentations will be in the morning followed by review and discussion.

STAFF REPORTS: Lodging tax receipts declined in April, but the increase YTD is 4.5%. Brochure mailings continue to be well ahead of last year (+28% YTD); some publications will continue to provide reader service labels through May. The Visitor Center was down in April after a very strong March; the decline is attributed to bad weather state-wide.

The VCB will host the next Dinosaur Diamond meeting Friday, May 30 at 10:00 am; all Board members are encouraged to attend.

The JUCO championship game will not be broadcast this year as a result of Prime Sports Network's increase in broadcast sponsorship from \$20,000 to \$48,000, which the NJCAA declined. The VCB will continue to promote JUCO in the Denver market as well as staffing hospitality tables at host hotels.

OTHER BUSINESS: Several Board members have written or called the Governor's office in support of legislation that would provide tourism promotional funds.

The Chair will host the June meeting at her home; the July meeting is rescheduled from July 8 to July 15 and will be hosted by the Grand Vista Hotel.

Lon Carpenter moved the meeting adjourn, Jack Scott seconded; there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.