

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MAY 12, 1998

PRESIDING: Brad Higginbotham, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Robin Kleinschnitz, Bill Miers, Ken Smith, Dan Sharp, Jamee Simons

MEMBERS ABSENT: Rich Nicholls, Lon Carpenter, Peggy Page

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

GUESTS: Meggen Bernstein, Judy and Howard Martsof, Caryn Penn

Judy and Howard Martsof, managers of LaQuinta Inns and Suites, explained that LaQuinta's target market is the business traveler. The Grand Junction property will be featured in LaQuinta's June audio newsletter, which is sent to 130,000 business clients (those who stay 50 or more nights per year in a LaQuinta property).

The meeting was called to order at 3:20 pm.

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 10, 1998: Ken Smith moved the minutes be approved as written, Dan Sharp seconded; approved unanimously.

BOARD BUSINESS: Economic Impact Study - The Chair stated that Dr. Adams' presentations were well received and he has heard much positive feedback about the report. It was suggested that the monthly Fast Facts have 1 or 2 facts from the study and perhaps a new heading touting tourism as the Grand Valley's #1 basic industry.

Special Events - The South West Fest had a great turnout; the final report will be due June 18. Attendance at the Grand River Indian Artists Gathering improves each year and the Museum is expecting good attendance; this is the third year of funding for the event. Final report will be due July 15. The MOPARS Power Cruise was very well run and had an excellent turnout; an estimated 700 room nights were sold for this event. Final report will be due July 8. Registration for the Paint Horse Show is strong; this show is on the circuit and riders can earn national points.

Applications for the second funding cycle are due June 2. A workshop to review the applications will be held from 2:30 pm - 3:30 pm Tuesday, June 9 at Walker Field, 2nd floor conference room, followed immediately by the regular Board meeting.

HILL & TASHIRO MARKETING AND ADVERTISING: Meggen Bernstein presented copies of ads for the Grand River Indian Artists Gathering; these will run in Western Slope resort papers. All national publications have reported a decrease in reader response levels; some attribute the decline to consumers' greater use of the Internet. In an effort to increase responses, National Geographic Traveler and AAA magazine will provide listings in their summer issues at no charge, and Front Range travel advertising will increase.

The new creative campaign has been fully integrated in all materials; samples of the new presentation folders were distributed.

STAFF REPORTS: Lodging tax is up 4% YTD; the Director is optimistic and does not foresee the need for any program changes at this time. City sales tax collections for the 1st quarter are up 10.3% Internet inquiries are up 33%.

Visitor Center: The Natural Resources Tourism Council provided training sessions for volunteers from the VCB, Fruita Welcome Center, Monument and Grand Mesa. Visitor traffic in the Center is picking up; beginning 5/15 the Center will be open until 8:00 pm every day. Exhibits will be upgraded this summer, utilizing the "pop-up people" in the new creative.

Group Sales/Convention Servicing: RFP for a contract salesperson in Denver is nearly finalized; interviews are scheduled in mid-June with an anticipated start date of early July. Hospitality training will be held May 13; 45 people are registered. Representatives of the Hilton, Holiday, Grand Vista and Airport will accompany VCB staff to the international trade show Pow Wow May 23-28. Ten partners have committed to participate in the Denver Sales Mission in October. Staff has been successful working with the Downtown Association: the Rockslide and other merchants have inquired about providing coupons for convention groups.

NEW BUSINESS: The Chair reported on the Air Service Task Force's meeting with United Airlines and Air Wisconsin. United is committed to continuing service to Grand Junction. United is in charge of marketing, schedules, pricing and the GJ staff will be United employees. Pricing will be available on 21-, 14-, and 7-day advance purchase; one way walk-up fare will be \$169. The first flight out of GJ will be at 7:55 am; Task Force members expressed concern, but United officials have tailored this schedule to connect to the greatest number of flights leaving DIA. Jet service will leave Denver at approximately 5:30 pm, with an immediate return to DIA.

Ken Smith moved the meeting adjourn, Jamee Simons seconded; there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00.