

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
JULY 14, 1998

PRESIDING: Brad Higginbotham, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ken Smith, Dan Sharp, Lon Carpenter Robin Kleinschnitz, Peggy Page

MEMBERS ABSENT: Rich Nicholls, Jamee Simons, Bill Mears

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

GUESTS: Meggen Bernstein, Tom Mulholland

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

MINUTES OF JUNE 9, 1998: Lon Carpenter moved the minutes be approved as written, Ken Smith seconded; approved unanimously.

Barb Bowman introduced Tom Mulholland, who has accepted the Denver Contract Sales position. Tom has spent the day talking with VCB staff and participating hotel meeting properties.

BOARD BUSINESS: Special Events - The Desert Sun Half Iron has 150 more entrants than last year; participants will be limited to 500. The Celtic Festival is unable to secure Workers Compensation insurance and forwarded a letter from CCIA stating the reasons coverage cannot be extended. The City Attorney has a copy of that letter and staff is waiting for direction from the City Attorney's office. The Museum has requested a 1-day extension to file the final report of the Grand River Indian Artists Gathering; the staff member who will prepare the detailed accounting is on vacation. Dan Sharp suggested the Special Event Policy review be tabled until later in the year to allow more time to get input from previous award recipients.

Staff requests Board direction on responding to the increasing numbers of requests for outside use of VCB photographs and printed materials. Some requests are not tourism related and many are for Internet use. Photo use permission has generally been given to area tourism-related entities with restrictions on commercial purposes (e.g., real estate publications) and cover use; photo credits are required. There has also been an instance of sections of the 1992 Visitor Guide being scanned and loaded onto another website. This included verbatim copy, photos the VCB had limited rights use of, as well as the area map that had the old Visitor Center location and phone number. Owners of that website have been contacted and asked to delete the photos and correct the map information until the Board adopts a formal policy on this type of use; staff suggested a link to the VCB site to better serve potential visitors. The Board agrees that use of VCB materials should be restricted to tourism promotion. Staff is directed to develop a proposed policy for Board review.

HILL & TASHIRO MARKETING AND ADVERTISING: Meggen Bernstein presented and the Board approved a proposed schedule for additional ads promoting the Peach Festival, Winefest and Celtic Festival. Baskets of peaches will be sent to TV stations in Denver, Colorado Springs and Salt Lake City. Staff of the VCB's public relations firm will give out peaches on Denver's 16th Street Mall on August 5.

The updated ADR/Occupancy study was distributed; this is the first report that breaks out group and FIT business. Dan Sharp estimates that June occupancy was down 8 - 10%. A summary of the CTTA-commissioned Longwoods 1997 study of Colorado tourism was distributed. The report shows that 47% of pleasure travelers to Colorado are visiting friends and family, which generates moderate revenue per trip. This study indicates a lesser economic impact in Mesa County than Dr. Adams' report that was prepared for the VCB. Although Dr. Adams has not seen the Longwoods report, she believes her figures more accurately represent tourism's economic impact because her report is based on data that is specific to Mesa County rather than extrapolated from state-wide figures. Dr. Adams will respond in greater detail after she reviews the Longwoods study.

STAFF REPORTS: Lodging tax collections are up 5.7% YTD; Visitor Center visits are flat. The increase in Internet hits (33%) continues to mirror the decrease in brochure mailings.

Staff has obtained preliminary information on "Travelers Information Radio Systems", the AM stations interstate drivers can tune to for construction, weather and other travel-related information. These stations typically have a range of 2.5 miles. Production costs depend upon the length of the taped message; start-up costs are estimated at \$7,500, plus updates (seasonal or as-needed) with ongoing costs of approximately \$700 per year; neither item is budgeted. The only production costs that are included in the 1998 budget total \$5,000 for an in-room TV channel; no funds are budgeted for 1999. This could be a way of getting more traffic off I-70, but the 2.5 mile range gives a traveler very little time to hear the message and make a decision to exit. Staff/HTMA are directed to get more information.

NEW BUSINESS: The September meeting will be held in Palisade; the location will be secured by the date of the August meeting. The November meeting will be re-scheduled to either the first or third Tuesday to accommodate staff attendance at the National Tour Association Annual Convention. The date will be decided at the August meeting.

Lon Carpenter moved the meeting adjourn, Ken Smith seconded; there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm.