

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
October 12, 1999

PRESIDING: Dan Sharp, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Mears, Ken Smith, Brad Higginbotham, Alan Friedman, Robin Kleinschnitz

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jamee Simons, Wade Haerle, Don Teets

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Irene Carlow

GUESTS: Meggen Bernstein

The meeting was called to order at 3:12 p.m. by Vice Chair Bill Mears

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 14, 1999: The minutes incorrectly reflected that Ken Smith was present. Alan Friedman moved the minutes be approved as corrected, Brad Higginbotham seconded; approved unanimously.

BOARD BUSINESS: Pride of the Valley The perfect weather Labor Day weekend contributed to the strong attendance of approximately 4,000 people; visitors came from the front Range, Aspen and Vail. VCB funds were spent appropriately. Celtic Festival Organizers estimate attendance at 6,000 although only 4,000 admission tickets were sold. Gate security will be strengthened next year to increase revenues. Tour of the Vineyards The event was very successful and most of the participants were from the Front Range. The Wine Festival filled Palisade Park. One winery representative doubled the amount of product brought to the event and they still ran out before the day was over. Fruita Bluegrass Festival The Fall and Bluegrass Festival was well attended. A license plate survey of 865 cars indicated 93% from Colorado, 78% from Mesa County.

Special Events applications are due by 5:00 PM Tuesday, November 2. Applications will be reviewed at a workshop at 2:00 PM Tuesday, November 9 immediately before the regular monthly meeting. The meeting will be held at the MCEDC conference room at Walker Field.

Alan Friedman reported that the Volunteer Appreciation Banquet was a very enjoyable evening and expressed his gratitude for the dedication and efforts of the Visitor Center volunteers.

HOST REMARKS: Michael Varnum, manager, welcomed the Board to Two Rivers Convention Center. The TRCC staff is wrapping up a two-day strategic planning session. Prior to this session, facility users were asked to provide input on their vision/image of TRCC and vision/expectation of the renovation project. The City is in negotiation with an architect.

HILL AND TASHIRO MARKETING & ADVERTISING: Meggen Bernstein distributed the proposed schedule for the holiday shopping/millennium event ads; a combination of press releases, print ads and radio spots will be utilized. Funds for the total cost of \$17,792 will come from the advertising contract, Special Events balance, contingency and supplemental marketing (previously allocated to the TLN/Discover America project). New Year's Eve event ads will target closer communities, highlighting Grand Junction events as more affordable than resort areas. Radio spots will be used as a supplement, e.g., "look for our ads" in local papers. The Internet home page will have separate buttons for the holiday shopping package and New Year's Eve celebrations.

The ADR/Occupancy study is complete through the 3rd quarter. Some of the previous participants have opted out and the study now includes only Horizon Drive properties rather than the broader mix the historical data reflects. The current results show occupancy is increasing and does not match up with actual lodging tax receipts. Comparisons between 1998 and 1999 cannot be drawn from the report in its current format because of changes in the survey sample.

A mock-up of the meeting planner lure brochure was displayed. This new promotional piece is an additional sales tool that can be handed out during sales calls and mailed to selected prospects.

STAFF REPORTS: Nearly every lodging property in the Valley was sold out the weekend of October 8-9 because of several big events: Grand Mesa Fire Classic Soccer Tournament with nearly 90 teams participating; Mesa State homecoming and parents' weekend; gymnastics tournament; nurses convention. For nearly four weeks the VCB staff doubled as a housing bureau and put a great effort into ensuring that our guests were able to secure accommodations. This is the first time a major scheduling conflict has put such pressure on lodging availability and our visitors were very appreciative of our time and efforts in their behalf. Staff will work with the organizations involved to get these event dates for 2000 as far in advance as possible and encourage the smaller events to select a different weekend. (The dates of the two larger events – MSC homecoming game and the soccer tournament – are not scheduled locally.) Staff and volunteers who worked at the soccer tournament hospitality table heard very complimentary remarks about the VCB and all the assistance we provided the teams and parents.

The VCB and the Wine Board co-hosted a reception at the Cook Street Culinary School in Denver. Invitations were sent to chefs, retail distributors, wine buyers for resorts/hotels and selected media; approximately 150 attended. Eleven of the state's wineries participated, including four from the Grand Valley. Two Denver TV stations covered the event.

NEW BUSINESS: Ken Smith announced his resignation from the Board effective December 31. The City Clerk is accepting application letters through November 30 for the two vacancies as well as three terms that expire the end of this year.

Ken Smith moved the meeting adjourn, Alan Friedman seconded; there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.