

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
December 14, 1999

PRESIDING: Dan Sharp, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Mears, Ken Smith, Brad Higginbotham, Alan Friedman, Wade Haerle, Don Teets

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jamee Simons, Robin Kleinschnitz

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

GUESTS: Linda Hill, Lisa Rohe

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 p.m.

MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 9, 1999: Wade Haerle moved the minutes be approved as corrected, Brad Higginbotham seconded; approved unanimously.

HOST REMARKS: Dan Sharp discussed the numerous exterior and interior improvements the Grand Vista has made during 1999. Additional upgrades will be made in 2000, including a commissioned sculpture and fountain at the entrance.

BOARD BUSINESS: Special Events: The Fruita Bluegrass Festival's final report was filed on time. Festival Italiano organizers were granted a 10-day extension (to November 27) to file their final report. On December 6, Jamee Simons, Board liaison with the event, contacted Marcia Swain to inquire about the report. Jamee advised Marcia that Festival Italiano might not be considered for future funding under the terms of the Special Event Policy.

A total of 20 applications for Board positions were submitted to the City Clerk. Council will discuss the process for selecting interview candidates at the December 15 meeting.

HILL AND TASHIRO MARKETING & ADVERTISING: Linda Hill introduced Lisa Rohe, HTMA's new account executive who will work with the VCB.

Holiday shopping ads have been running in western Colorado/eastern Utah since early November. Millennium package ads will begin December 15 and post-holiday shopping ads December 26. All these packages will also be promoted on the website.

The 3rd quarter 1999 Occupancy/ADR report was distributed. Occupancy rates increased all but two months (January and February); the Average Daily Rate was mixed with increases reported for 6 of the 9 months. The Rocky Mountain Lodging Report for Grand Junction mirrors this data. The increases in occupancy could be a result of converting Internet users to visitors, since advertising responses have shifted dramatically to the Internet and away from the 800 line and brochure fulfillment. A website research project in 2000 should provide valuable data in evaluating the effectiveness of the site itself as well as our efforts to advertise the web address.

The 2000 advertising plan is nearly complete. More emphasis will be placed on the wineries; focus will shift to the in-state and regional markets; newspaper ad expenditures will decrease; billboards and radio will be explored. VCB staff will work with hotels to get better data on the percentage of business that is leisure and group.

The Overnight Visitor Study is in progress; 7 hotels are participating in this research project.

STAFF REPORTS: Internet usage continues to be very strong; the number of users YTD is up 47% over 1998. Lodging tax collections are down 1.3% for the year. Monthly receipts are mixed, reflecting the swings in the occupancy/ADR report. Results of our research projects in 2000 (Overnight Visitor Study, 800 line Conversion Study, Website research) should provide good data about our visitors and the effectiveness of our marketing programs.

NEW BUSINESS: Dan Sharp thanked outgoing Board members Ken Smith and Jamee Simons for their service to the VCB. Bill Mears extended the Board's appreciation to Dan Sharp for serving as 1999 Chair. Returning Board members look forward to welcoming Council's new appointees in 2000.

Alan Friedman moved the meeting adjourn, Ken Smith seconded; there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.