

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
June 8, 1999

PRESIDING: Dan Sharp, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Wade Haerle, Brad Higginbotham, Alan Friedman, Robin Kleinschnitz, Rich Nicholls

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ken Smith, Don Teets, Jamee Simons, Bill Miears

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Irene Carlow, Judy Shormann, Erin Chapman

GUESTS: Meggen Bernstein

The meeting was called to order at 3:12 p.m.

MINUTES OF MAY 11, 1999: The spelling of Alan Friedman's name needs to be corrected on pages 2 and 3; Brad Higginbotham moved the corrected minutes be approved, Alan Friedman seconded; approved unanimously.

BOARD BUSINESS: Special Events: Rich Nicholls reported that the Gaited Horse Show attracted a good crowd, but organizers felt that attendance was down slightly. Alan Friedman has received no further word from the Celtic Festival; we are still awaiting worker's compensation coverage.

A workshop to review second funding cycle applications will be held from 1:30 – 3:00 PM Tuesday, July 11, followed immediately by the regular monthly meeting. Board members are asked to return their rating sheets to the office by July 1 so that a tabulation of the scores can be distributed at the workshop.

HILL & TASHIRO MARKETING AND ADVERTISING: Meggen Bernstein met with the Director and staff to resolve questions and issues that have arisen as the new website is being constructed. Staff is sending a form to all lodging properties requesting expanded information for the new site. Links from the VCB's lodging section will be only to a local property's site, not to a "national" site of a chain/franchise or to a multiple-property site that includes both local and out-of-town lodging. When the site is launched, everyone in the existing database who has asked to be kept informed will receive an email announcing the new site.

Meggen distributed a report of website banner advertising activity. The Board suggested advertising on Yahoo; the VCB's preferred keywords are not available currently, but HTMA will stay on top of that availability. The consensus of the Board is to be aggressive in experimenting with website advertising

STAFF REPORTS: Lodging tax receipts continue to be strong and are up 6.2% YTD. Internet activity is up dramatically, offsetting a significant decrease in advertising responses.

Through the end of June, 37% of our budget has been expended. Staff will meet July 1 and 8 to begin discussing the 2000-2001 budgets and recommendations from those meetings will be brought to the Board at the July meeting. A budget workshop will be held at 2:00 PM August 10, immediately before the regular monthly meeting.

The Visitor Center has been very busy, even though the monthly visitation numbers show a decline. Three volunteers are scheduled per shift as the Center reverts to summer hours of 8:30 am – 8:00 PM.

Sales/Convention Servicing: The Senior Commercial Officers conference was very well attended and drew participants from around the world. Staff has also worked with several sports activities. Sixteen of our volunteers devote additional time outside their regular shifts in the Center to staff hospitality tables for group functions.

The newly instituted weekly events calendar staff compiles and faxes to hotels has been very well received. We are doing this on a trial basis during the peak season and will assess this project at the end of the summer. Pow Wow follow up is nearly completed. As a result of contacts at Pow Wow, American Airlines has indicated an interest in flying fam participants into the Eagle airport and would include Aspen and Grand Junction on the itinerary.

State Tourism Funding: Both the Colorado Tourism Board and Colorado Travel & Tourism Authority boards agree that those organizations should be dissolved and a new agency created to market Colorado as a tourism destination. Approximately 30% of the total advertising funds will be spent on winter advertising. Because of publication deadlines, advertising expenditures for the 1999-2000 ski season will be made before the Governance Committee has decided on the details of how the total marketing funds should be spent. The Committee's next meeting is June 24.

NEW BUSINESS: The Director will get possible dates for a Council/Board dinner or breakfast; the Board would prefer this be in September or October.

Club 20's Tourism Committee will meet in Silverton on June 17. Rich Nicholls will contact Wade Haerle to see if Wade can attend that meeting.

Rich Nicholls moved the meeting adjourn, Brad Higginbotham seconded; there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.