

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU  
MINUTES OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
August 8, 2000

PRESIDING: Bill Mears, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Alan Friedman, Peggy Page, Wade Haerle, Robin Kleinschnitz, Brad Higginbotham, Dan Sharp

MEMBERS ABSENT: Linda Smith, Chris Blackburn

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Beverly Craddock, Barbara Bowman, Irene Carlow, Erin Chapman, Sharon Delay

GUESTS: Carol Tadvick, Doris Blake, Linda Hill, Anna Maria Ray

The meeting was called to order at 3:07 p.m.

MINUTES OF JULY 11, 2000: Wade Haerle moved the minutes be approved as written, Brad Higginbotham seconded, motion carried.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION: The Chair recognized Carol Tadvick and Doris Blake and thanked them for 1,000 hours of volunteer service at the Visitor Center. Carol joined our volunteer staff in September 1993 and Doris joined us in May 1996.

HOST REMARKS: Billie and Bob Witham, owners of Two Rivers Winery, welcomed the Board and expressed appreciation for the numerous referrals from the VCB. Two Rivers produces Chardonnay, Riesling, Cabernet and Merlot; their wines are a "softer" style, similar to French wines. At full capacity (in approximately 2 years), the winery will produce 8,000 cases per year. In 1999, they crushed 37 tons of grapes; that will increase to 70 tons for 2000. The Riesling, which is made from 100% Colorado grapes, received a silver medal in a recent international competition. Construction of a conference center is planned in 2001. The facility will offer 10 sleeping rooms and a private dining room. Visitation this first year has been very good; Bob noted that 50% of their visitors are repeat customers who live in the Redlands area.

BOARD BUSINESS: Special Events: The City of Fruita awarded an additional \$1,500 to the Fall Festival for a total of \$3,500, which the VCB will match. The Air Show paperwork has been received and is awaiting approval from the City Attorney. Valley Pride Festival will feature numerous local artists and entertainers. The event will be alcohol-free this year.

Advertising Agency RFQ/RFP: The deadline for responses has been extended to Friday, August 11.

Retreat Follow-up: Wade Haerle, Robin Kleinschnitz and Dan Sharp will serve on the Communications/strategies committee. The Chair assigned Chris Blackburn to the Packaging & Positioning committee.

HILL & TASHIRO MARKETING & ADVERTISING: Linda Hill distributed 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter results of the Occupancy/Average Daily Rate survey. Both occupancy and rate increased each month; occupancy in June was up nearly 5%. The monthly figures track very closely to the Rocky Mountain Lodging Report.

The summer ad campaign wraps up this month with TV spots the weeks of August 14 and 21. Our next major push in print ads will be the Holiday Shopping Package.

The Overnight Visitor Study is nearly complete; the final report will be distributed no later than the October Board meeting.

(3:45 Brad Higginbotham left the meeting, Dan Sharp arrived.)

STAFF REPORTS: The Director and Chair have scheduled a meeting with the County Sheriff and Chair of the Commissioners to begin planning a community forum regarding Country Jam.

The National Tour Association (NTA) Annual Convention will be in Salt Lake City November 10-15. Because of the close location, the VCB wants to take advantage of NTA's Executive Orientation, a 1-day seminar for elected officials and CVB executives/board members. We have asked NTA to hold 5 spaces for us and hope to take 2-3 city government officials and 1-2 Board members. The group would leave Grand Junction Sunday, November 12 and return Tuesday, November 14. Invitations will be sent to City Council and our new City Manager; staff will report on their responses at the September meeting.

Year-to-date expenditures were reviewed. City-wide revisions to the 2000-2001 budgets will be made in September. Lodging tax revenue increases were projected at 4% for 2000 and at 5% for 2001; YTD receipts are up 1.7%. Staff will assess income projections after August lodging tax receipts are final.

Promotions: The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Denver peach promotion August 2 was a big success. Three area growers delivered 3,000 peaches and worked with staff from 11:00 – 2:00 handing out fruit on the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Mall. The giveaway was mentioned on Denver TV and radio stations that received a box of fruit the day before the promotion and the Denver Post ran a photo the following day.

Statistics: Lodging tax collections for July increased 2% over 1999; YTD receipts are up 1.7%. Internet usage continues to increase (+19%) and telephone inquiries decrease (-28%), which follow national trends.

Visitor Center: We sent a survey to our volunteers asking them to evaluate the Visitor Center program. We asked for input on training, educational tours, the annual banquet, and general comments on Visitor Center operations. The response was very good (2/3 returned the surveys) and the comments will be helpful when we hire a replacement for Judy Shormann. Applications for the vacancy will be accepted through September 1 and we hope to have someone in place by mid-October.

Sales: Our Denver sales representative, Tom Mulholland, has advised staff that he will not renew his contract at the end of this year. Tom's other business interests have grown and now require the majority of his time. Staff will review the results of this program and ask participating hotels for input before making a decision on whether to recruit another sales person.

One of our meetings properties requested leads, by market segment, from the VCB database. In the past, the VCB has had a verbal agreement with the lodging properties that the database remained confidential and is not distributed due to the fact that some records include information as to which local property currently has contracted business or is actively pursuing the client. To date, the City Attorney has counseled staff that an amendment in the City Charter allows the VCB to keep clients' information proprietary. The VCB will satisfy this property's request by reviewing the database for general information leads that have, to our knowledge, not been placed in a local property. It may be necessary to meet with the general managers of local lodging properties in the near future to review the lead distribution system.

Alan Friedman moved the meeting adjourn, Dan Sharp seconded; there being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m. for committee discussions.

2000 BOARD RETREAT FOLLOW-UP  
COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Increase Economic Impact/establish measurements

Bill Mears  
Peggy Page  
Linda Smith  
Irene Carlow

Communications/strategies

Wade Haerle  
Robin Kleinschnitz  
Dan Sharp  
Debbie Kovalik  
Erin Chapman

Packaging & positioning

Alan Friedman  
Brad Higginbotham  
Chris Blackburn  
Beverly Craddock  
Barb Bowman