

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
October 10, 2000

PRESIDING: Bill Mears, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Alan Friedman, Robin Kleinschnitz, Wade Haerle, Brad Higginbotham, Linda Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT: Peggy Page, Chris Blackburn, Dan Sharp

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Barbara Bowman, Beverly Craddock, Layne Whyman, Irene Carlow

GUESTS: Rod Scheetz, Ron Watkins, Linda Hill, Anna Maria Ray

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

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2000: Brad Higginbotham moved the minutes be approved as written, Wade Haerle seconded, approved unanimously.

The Director introduced Layne Whyman, who joined the staff as Visitor Services Coordinator in late September.

HOST REMARKS: Rod Scheetz, paleontologist for the Museum of Western Colorado's Dinosaur Journey, welcomed the Board. The Museum has contracted to purchase some of the robotics, displays and equipment from Dinamation. Other items and exhibits not purchased will be removed in early November; at that time, remaining items from Dinosaur Valley will be brought to Dinosaur Journey. Visitation increased 2% over 1999. The summer quarry digs, offered twice a week, were completely sold out and likely would have filled if there were adequate staff to run the program several times a week. This is by far the most popular program the Museum offers. On behalf of the Museum, Rod expressed appreciation to the Board and staff for the strong support the VCB gives to Dinosaur Journey.

BOARD BUSINESS: Alan Friedman reported that the volunteer banquet was a great success and a very enjoyable way to spend an evening. He encouraged all Board members to attend next year.

Advertising Agency Contract: The Board discussed the elements of each agency's presentation and reviewed composite scores. While Hill & Tashiro's presentation (and resulting score) was far and away the best, awarding the contract doesn't mean acceptance of the campaign outlined without Board input. The Board wants to explore suggestions offered by the other two agencies and brainstorm ideas for the coming year's campaign.

Alan Friedman moved that the advertising agency contract be awarded to Hill & Tashiro Marketing and Advertising, Brad Higginbotham seconded, passed unanimously. A workshop with Hill & Tashiro will be held November 16 from 10 – Noon.

Special Events: Applications are due Tuesday, November 7. A review workshop will be held November 16 from 9 am – 10 am. Everyone agreed there have been difficulties with events' general compliance with the Policy, including use of the VCB logo and deadlines for paperwork. Alan Friedman offered discussion items for a future meeting:

- Allow funding beyond the current 3 year limit
- Distribute funds after the event upon proof of adherence to the policy
- Include the review/scoring form in the application packet

Possible changes to the scoring form could include increasing the points for multi-day, off-season and repeat events; negative points for events that do not conform to the criteria, seasonal ratings, receiving funds from other City sources. The Director noted that changes to the policy and/or contract need Council approval and could not be implemented for the current funding cycle.

Reports on Committee Discussions:

Economic Impact – We need to educate the community on what the VCB does and the importance of the tourism industry in Mesa County. Tucker Hart Adams' economic impact report (based on 1997 data) should be updated soon and regular updates continued. The VCB could issue a press release the week after a big event/convention to publicize the estimated economic impact. (The Director reported that we will “piggy-back” on a Longwoods International survey being conducted for the Denver Metro CVB and Colorado Ski Country. We can participate in the existing study at a cost of \$3,500 which is substantially less than an independently commissioned survey would cost.)

Communications – Try to partner with retailers during hunting season (per person expenditures range from \$1,700 - \$4,000); put more hunting information on the website; need a link to the Division of Wildlife; try to get stories in the Daily Sentinel special section about guide and outfitters in Grand Junction.

Packaging & Positioning – Currently there is not enough business in Grand Junction to support a destination management company (DMC); staff is trying to work with a DMC in Vail to expand into this area. We have initiated talks with America West and are looking for ways to expand existing packages (particularly for international visitors). A major difficulty is that most of our business is the SMERF market (Social, Military, Educational, Reunion, Fraternal) where volunteers do all the work and there are no funds to pay a DMC. Staff is waiting for feedback from the Adam's Mark on a recent trade show targeting the incentive market.

HILL & TASHIRO: Linda Hill thanked the Board for their continued confidence in her agency. The entire staff at Hill & Tashiro looks forward to continuing the successful working relationship that has been established with the VCB. Linda and her staff will be prepared to discuss the creative direction for 2001 and beyond at the November 16 workshop.

The final Overnight Visitor Study was distributed. The report covered the months of August, September, December 1999 and March, May and June 2000. Significant results include:

- 85% of the respondents rated their experience in Grand Junction at 7 or higher, on a scale of 1-10
- 74% were previous visitors
- 46% were Colorado residents
- Utah represented the second-highest visitation during the holiday shopping season

The holiday shopping package will run again in Colorado resort areas as well as eastern Utah. Both newspaper and radio ads will be utilized, with a push toward the website to download the lodging coupon.

OTHER BUSINESS: By consensus, the regular meeting for November 13 was cancelled because the date conflicts with staff, Board and Council attendance at the National Tour Association Annual Convention in Salt Lake City. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be December 12.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 on motion by Linda Smith and second by Wade Haerle.