

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
AUGUST 14, 2001

PRESIDING: Wade Haerle, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Peggy Page, Larry MacDonald, Kevin Reimer, Jane Fine Foster, Frank Bering

MEMBER ABSENT: Linda Smith, Alan Friedman, Bill Miers, Chris Blackburn

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Layne Whyman, Erin Chapman, Irene Carlow, Barbara Bowman, Karin Mast, Bethany Thompson

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

10 YEAR REVIEW: Karin Mast introduced Bethany Thompson, an intern who researched and prepared a report on the VCB's first 10 years. The report is an overview of tourism in the Grand Valley and how it has changed in the past decade.

- Demographics – Conversion studies conducted in 1992 and 1995 indicate that most visitors are Colorado residents, followed by California and Texas; income levels are fairly consistent with the majority having a household income of \$50,000-\$75,000; average expenditures are over \$200 and average length of stay is 1-2 nights
- Transportation – Most visitors drive to Grand Junction; the I-70/Horizon Drive interchange has experienced a 30% increase in the 10 year period
- Accommodations – 398 hotel rooms have been added and the average daily room rate has increased \$24 since 1991
- Attractions – The Bureau of Land Management has experienced a 67% increase in users; visitation at the Grand Mesa Visitor Center has increased 21% since 1996; the number of wineries in Mesa County has increased from 4 to 10 and visitation, while not closely tracked, has certainly increased.
- Economic impact – Results of a 1998 economic study indicate that tourism is Mesa County's #1 basic industry; the estimated economic impact of group business alone has increased 378%
- Internet usage – Usage has increased 810% since the original site was launched in 1995.

MINUTES OF JULY 10: Jane Fine Foster moved and Kevin Reimer seconded that the minutes be approved as written; approved unanimously.

BOARD BUSINESS: Special Events Organizers have cancelled the Chet Peach Ride, Race & Roast for a variety of reasons, including time constraints involving funding disbursements from the Fruita Tourism Board. VCB funding was contingent upon the City of Fruita providing matching funds. Fruita's funding decisions, however, will not be made until late August/early September. The timing of the award and the uncertainty of the funds that will be available prevent the organizer from placing advertising far enough in advance to be effective. Ads have run in

Colorado Golf magazine and *Colorado Golfer* newspaper promoting the Rocky Mountain Open. The balance in the Special Event line item is \$29,844. Staff and Hill & Company will explore additional event promotion opportunities and bring those recommendations to the Board.

The Board was reminded that breakfast with Council will be Wednesday, August 29 at 7:30 am at the Hawthorn Suites.

STAFF REPORTS: Staff met with an architect regarding remodeling the deck area. Blueprints and specs will be completed by September 1, then the Purchasing Division will publish a Request for Bids. Staff accepted the architect's suggestion to convert the area into a conference room, rather than storage area. The existing conference room will become office space for the Promotions Coordinator and seasonal intern.

The Director presented and reviewed the 2002-2003 proposed budget and 10-year projection. 2002 operating expenses will increase 5%. We expect our methods of information delivery to continue changing. Telephone inquiries are declining as increasing numbers of consumers use the Internet as their primary source of information. However, the length of calls to our toll-free number is increasing as staff assumes more of a "sales" role, and the number of individual responses to email inquiries is also rising.

Promotions: The VCB, KMGH and 6 other partners are sponsoring a recipe contest in which entrants pair their favorite recipe with a Colorado wine. Five to six winners will be selected to come to Grand Junction via AMTRAK, stay at the Adam's Mark, take a wine tour, etc. Posters and entry forms were distributed to cooking schools, gourmet food stores, AAA offices, liquor stores that sell Colorado wines and other locations along the Front Range. KMGH is producing a promotional spot for the contest.

The downtown Denver peach giveaway was a big success. VCB staff, three peach growers from Palisade and an AMTRAK representative handed out over 2,000 peaches. On September 8, representatives of five wineries and VCB staff will attend a promotion at Tattered Cover's Fourth Story Restaurant in Cherry Creek.

Sales: Board members are invited to attend the Denver Sales Mission reception at the Metropolitan Club Thursday evening, September 6. Staff and several of our local tourism partners will make personal calls on prospective clients the day before the reception.

NEW BUSINESS: The proposed bylaws were distributed and reviewed in advance of this meeting; no suggested revisions were received. Peggy Page moved that the bylaws be recommended to Council for approval, Jane Fine Foster seconded, passed unanimously. A draft job description for Board members was distributed; the purpose is to be more specific as to the responsibilities and expectations of a Board member. This document will be provided to Council for review and possible use beginning in January 2002.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m. on motion of Kevin Reimer and second by Larry MacDonald.