

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU  
MINUTES OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

PRESIDING: Wade Haerle, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Peggy Page, Jane Fine Foster, Frank Bering, Linda Smith, Alan Friedman, Bill Mears

MEMBER ABSENT: Kevin Reimer, Chris Blackburn, Larry MacDonald

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

GUESTS: Cindy Enos-Martinez, Dr. Mike Gallagher, Diane Schwenke, Linda Hill, Anna Maria Ray

HOST REMARKS: On behalf of the Chamber of Commerce, Dr. Mike Gallagher presented the Chamber's concept for an events center. An all-purpose regional facility with a minimum capacity of 10,000 could host trade shows, concerts, and entertainment and sports events. Such a facility would strengthen Grand Junction's status as a regional hub, provide employment opportunities and increase revenues without negatively impacting the infrastructure. Similar facilities in Billings, Montana, Casper, Wyoming, and Pocatello, Idaho were discussed. The Chamber does not propose a specific location at this time, but recommends it be in the Central Valley, in a non-residential area near major transportation links, on a minimum of 50 acres. The cost is anticipated to be \$25-\$30 million with a projected economic impact of \$5-\$6 million per year. The Chamber does not believe this type of facility would compete with existing facilities/venues. The Chamber asks the Board to consider the VCB's involvement in the following areas:

- Provide knowledge and expertise regarding the need for and design of such a facility.
- A representative from the VCB Board to work with the Chamber on this concept.
- Input on the need for a professional study. Would the VCB contribute to the cost of such a study?

The Board thanked Dr. Gallagher for his excellent presentation. This topic will be discussed at a future meeting and the Chamber will be kept informed of the VCB Boards' actions.

The meeting was called to order at 3:40 p.m.

MINUTES OF AUGUST 14, 2001: Bill Mears moved and Jane Fine Foster seconded that the minutes be approved as written; approved unanimously.

BOARD BUSINESS: Special Events The Rocky Mountain Open received very good press coverage. Staff is directed to contact the applicants and ask them to submit a report following the event. The Kokopelli Adventure Race, the largest race of its kind in the state, has 53 teams regis-

tered. Nearly all the 200 registrants are from out of the area. Wine Festival organizers report that advance ticket sales are 25% higher than last year.

The regular meeting for November is rescheduled to the 6<sup>th</sup> because both the Director and the Director of Sales will be attending the National Tour Association annual conference from the 9<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup>. A Special Events Workshop will be held November 13 at the VCB office from 3:00 – 5:00 pm.

City Council's authorization of the "expand-the-tent" program that offers Mesa County lodging properties the opportunity to participate in VCB marketing expires this year. After discussion of the program's benefits to both visitors and lodging properties, Jane Fine Foster moved to recommend Council re-authorize the program, Peggy Page seconded; passed unanimously.

HILL & CO.: Grand Junction's average daily rate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter held steady while occupancy declined 1%. Statewide occupancy for the month of July was down 5.7% and average daily rate declined nearly \$2. Hotel managers indicate that August business was good and bookings for Wine Fest weekend in September are strong. In late August, VCB staff met with Hill & Co. staff to begin discussing strategies for the 2002 campaign.

Preliminary marketing suggestions and budgets for promoting the Olympic Torch Relay were presented. Consideration will be given to how promotional materials look and how those materials will appear potentially on national TV. Up-front costs will be incurred because artwork, ads and sample promotional items must be created and submitted to the Salt Lake Organizing Committee for approval. Alan Friedman moved that up to \$2,500 in the Special Events account be used for creating advertising/promotional materials for the Olympic Torch Relay materials; Peggy Page seconded, passed unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS: The architect's preliminary drawings for converting the deck to a conference room were presented. An important consideration in this project is maintaining the aesthetics of the building. A Request for Bids will probably be issued in late September, with construction anticipated to begin in early December.

Sales: The Denver Sales Mission was very successful. Ten local tourism partners made sales calls, attended the Colorado Society of Association Executives monthly luncheon, and then hosted the reception at the Metropolitan Club.

Barb Bowman attended the regional Kiwanis conference in Grand Island, Nebraska August 9-12 in an effort to increase attendance at the 2002 conference which will be held in Grand Junction. Approximately 600 attendees are expected.

Promotions: Karin Mast reported an excellent turn-out for the wine tasting at Tattered Cover's 4<sup>th</sup> Story Restaurant in Cherry Creek September 8. Results of public relations activities in the past few months are very positive. Recent articles include:

- *Sunset Magazine* – September issue, winery tours
- *Small Market Meetings* – Two Rivers Convention Center and hotel meeting space renovations
- *Sports Guide* – Moab vs Fruita for mountain biking

- *Colorado Homes & Lifestyles* – writer spent 2 days in Grand Junction in June

Visitor Center: The annual volunteer banquet will be held at the Pinon Grill at Tiara Rado on Wednesday, September 19. All the Board members are invited to attend.

NEW BUSINESS: Main Street Bagels has a conference room available; staff will check this as a possible location for the October 9 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m. on motion of Peggy Page and second by Bill Miears.