

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
JULY 9, 2002

PRESIDING: Peggy Page, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jane Fine Foster, Linda Smith, Michael Somma, Alan Friedman, Tillie Bishop

MEMBERS ABSENT: Wade Haerle, Kevin Reimer, Jill Eckardt

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Irene Carlow, Barbara Bowman, Layne Whyman, Kayla Arnesen, Erin Chapman, Sharon Delay

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION: Three volunteers were recognized for 1,000 hours of service at the Visitor Center: George Bennett, Lou Morton and Theresa Marion. Since most of our volunteers work an average of 4 hours per week, it takes nearly 5 years to reach the 1,000 hour milestone.

BOARD BUSINESS: Special Events Linda Smith has received no new information from the Celtic Festival, and no advertising materials have been submitted. Alan Friedman reported that most of the cars at the Country Jam site had Colorado license plates, with the second-most common plate from Utah (approximately 10:1). Staff noted that attendees at a major swim meet helped fill hotel rooms Country Jam week and weekend. Michael Somma reported that media is in place and everything is on track for the Winefest.

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 3:20 pm.

The Air Show will be held September 20-21. Alan Friedman stated that the VCB will be listed as a sponsor as an apology for lack of recognition of Special Event funding for the 2001 Air Show.

MINUTES OF JUNE 11, 2002: Jane Fine Foster moved the minutes be approved as written, Alan Friedman seconded; approved unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS: The Director discussed the potential need for a policy on how the VCB represents tourism businesses, particularly in regard to similar-sounding names, e.g., Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express. The City Attorney advised that it would be appropriate for the VCB's marketing efforts to provide information that will assist consumers in making informed decisions. One possible way to identify similarly-named lodging properties would be "Holiday Inn on Horizon Drive" and "Holiday Inn Express on 24 Road". Another instance in which this type of geographical identification may be helpful to consumers is the recent name change of the Peachtree Inn to Horizon Inn. The general manager of the Best Western Horizon Inn advised the Director that he will pursue his interest in protecting the business identity of his property, which has operated under that name for many years.

Alan Friedman moved that staff research appropriate language and present a proposed policy on how the VCB might provide identifying information that could assist the traveling public; Michael Somma seconded, passed unanimously.

Statistics: Lodging tax receipts are up 10% YTD; Internet users declined in June for the first time; advertising responses are affected by the timing of our receipt of reader service labels from Parade Magazine. (Parade is going out of business; the last issue will be September 2002.) TV spots are running on cable this year instead of the network channels. We will track the Internet closely to help make the decision on the TV buy for next year.

Sales: The Colorado Society of Association Executives presented a "team award" to the VCB, Holiday Inn and Adam's Mark. This award recognizes our promotional efforts throughout the year. Staff conducted a site inspection for the Vintage Chevrolet Car Club of America, which will meet here in July 2006. This group will book approximately 500 rooms for 5 nights. Grand Junction will host the Governor's Conference on Tourism October 23-25. Staff has prepared a mailing to surrounding communities inviting them to participate and exhibit. Alan Friedman asked if staff could attend Incentive Travel Meeting Expo (ITME) to determine if the show holds potential for Grand Junction. Michael Somma indicated that, in his experience attending ITME, exhibitors were mainly resort destinations and that the Grand Junction product isn't developed enough for the ITME market. The Director responded that ITME might have been considered for this year if the annual conference of the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) were not being held in Denver this year (August 17-21). This is a great opportunity for all staff to attend at least part of this prestigious conference and participate in the largest trade show/conference of its kind. ITME will be reviewed along with other trade show opportunities when staff meets with area hotels to discuss the 2003 trade show schedule.

Promotions: Staff attended the Lafayette Wine Festival June 22. This was a good first-time event, and staff plans to attend again next year. Local growers have donated over 2,000 peaches for the Denver peach promotion August 7. Three rounds of intercept studies have been conducted at the wineries. The Front Range impression of Grand Junction has improved dramatically in the past several years.

(Michael Somma left the meeting.)

Budget: The Director discussed the City's budget process, 10-year plan, and revenue/expenses through the end of June. As originally approved, the 2002 budget overspends revenues by \$16,000; the fund balance, however, would still show an excess over minimum working capital of \$67,000. The Olympic Torch Event was an unbudgeted expense of \$14,000 but it also provided \$8,300 in unbudgeted revenue. Total expenses for the Travel Expo will exceed the \$15,000 allocated from Special Events; however, staff has identified other areas of the budget that will be underspent without compromising existing programs. (The Travel Expo also provided \$5,200 of unbudgeted revenue.) After all the Travel Expo expenses are finalized, staff will present the Board with optional funding levels for 2003.

The consensus of the Board is to approve the 2002 budget revisions as presented.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm on motion of Alan Friedman and second of Jane Fine Foster.