

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
September 10, 2002

PRESIDING: Peggy Page, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Alan Friedman, Jill Eckardt, Wade Haerle, Linda Smith, Jane Fine Foster

MEMBERS ABSENT: Michael Somma, Tillie Bishop, Kevin Reimer

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Irene Carlow, Kayla Arnesen

GUESTS: Linda Hill, Anna Maria Ray

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m.

MINUTES OF JULY 9, 2002: Wade Haerle moved the minutes be approved as written, Alan Friedman seconded; approved unanimously.

BOARD BUSINESS: Budget update The Director recommended that two revisions be made to the 2003 budget. The Travel Expo be added as a line item for a total of \$29,250; revenue is projected at \$11,250. Staff recommends budgeting the Expo as a direct operating expense rather than redirecting Special Events funds as was done in 2002. The fund balance is in a strong position and we will maintain funds in excess of the City's required minimum working capital. An additional \$9,000 is budgeted in 2003 to upgrade communications wiring throughout the building. This is necessary to support data and voice communications through our network and to City Hall. Staff was directed by the Board to increase the Board Retreat line item in the 2003 Training account by \$2,000.

In the 2002 budget, staff recommends redirecting funds from Special Programs: \$6,500 to the Governor's Conference for the opening reception and other host expenses and \$6,500 to Advertising for regional marketing. The balance of \$2,000 would remain in the Special Programs line item.

Alan Friedman moved that the budget revisions be approved as presented, Linda Smith seconded; approved unanimously.

TIA Odyssey Award The Mayor, Board Chair, Director, Linda Hill and Tim Campbell will attend the awards presentation October 10 in Hollywood, Florida. (Council budget will cover the Mayor's travel costs; the VCB will pay expenses for the Chair and Director.) Board members are very pleased that all five individuals will be able to make the trip and accept this prestigious award on behalf of the City/VCB/Hill & Co. Wade Haerle recalled that the previous Board had lengthy discussions before changing the branding to "Colorado's Wine Country". Results of that change include: shifting our

demographics; elevating Grand Junction to the next level; presenting a more sophisticated image to the visitor. Staff and Hill & Co. are to be congratulated on implementing and executing this successful campaign and the well-deserved recognition by their industry peers.

On Tuesday, October 15, the VCB will host a “bring home the prize” reception at the Visitor Center from 5:30 – 7:30.

Special Events Everything is in order for the Kokopelli Adventure Race and funds have been disbursed. The Celtic Festival is running both TV and radio ads promoting the event. Numerous events for the weekend of September 20-21 have led to hotels being sold out 2-3 weeks earlier than usual. Events for that weekend include the Winefest, Celtic Festival, AKC dog show, American Planners Association Conference, Worldwide Church of God conference, and the Air Show. Staff designed a promotion to encourage Front Range visitors whose plans are flexible to come to Grand Junction the following weekend, September 28-29, for Color Sunday, the Fruita Fall Festival and to tour the wineries. Callers to the 800 line were offered a coupon for \$10 of gas at Zarlingo’s on Horizon Drive if they visited Grand Junction before September 30, excluding September 20-21. Those who were interested received a special mailing with details instructing them to come to the Visitor Center and exchange their coupon for the gas certificate redeemable at Zarlingo’s.

(Jane Fine Foster arrived during the Special Events discussion.)

HILL & COMPANY: Linda Hill distributed results of the Winery Intercept Study. Two-thirds of the respondents had tasted Colorado wine before visiting Grand Junction. This refutes the Wine Board’s perception that visitors to tasting rooms hadn’t tried Colorado wine before. Other results of the study:

Pre-planned their visit to the wineries	59%
Colorado residents	52%
Arizona residents	6.7%
California residents	6.7%

Anna Maria Ray reported that improvements and upgrades are being made to the Meetings section of the website. Additionally, web visits peaked in August, with the highest number of unique users ever. Staff members from Hill & Co. and the VCB have held three planning sessions in preparation of the 2003 marketing campaign. One additional session will be held in early October.

STAFF REPORTS: Governor’s Conference on Tourism: The VCB is sponsoring the opening reception Wednesday, October 23. The theme is “Art, Culture, History” and, rather than a typical trade show exhibit, the displays will showcase the cultural aspects of the exhibiting cities. Staff has met with several local arts organizations to solicit their involvement; the Symphony has offered either a chamber group or a pianist. The Downtown Association has also been very supportive of the conference and is exploring different types of involvement, including a possible dine-around night.

American Society of Association Executives Annual Convention Because Denver was the host city for the 2002 convention, the VCB was able to send several staff members to this prestigious conference. Five staff served as volunteers at various events, as well as attended conference sessions. The Denver Metro CVB coordinated the efforts of several hundred industry professionals from throughout the state who volunteered their time to help showcase Denver as a meetings venue. It was a wonderful

opportunity for staff to be involved in a major convention (5,200 delegates) and experience the trade show floor first-hand.

Soccer Tournament October 4-5 Barb Bowman and Erin Chapman have worked very closely with the Grand Mesa Youth Soccer Association to ensure room placements for the out-of-town teams. (Other events occurring at the same time include the annual Marching Band Festival, Oktoberfest, and a tennis tournament being hosted by District 51.)

OTHER BUSINESS: In September 2001, the Chamber of Commerce made a presentation to this Board regarding an events center for Grand Junction. Several of the Chamber's subcommittees met over the course of 8-9 months. The Chamber is now ready to hire a consultant to conduct a feasibility study and asked that this matter be placed on today's agenda. Eleven Colorado firms with experience in this field will receive an RFP. The Chamber expects to have a consultant selected in early November and the study completed in early 2003; the intent is to bring the events center (and funding mechanism) to the voters in 2004. The exact cost of the study has not been determined, but the Chamber will request funding from the following organizations:

Grand Junction Economic Partnership	\$ 5,000
City of Grand Junction	5,000
Mesa County	5,000
School District 51	5,000
Mesa State College	5,000
Horizon Drive Association	5,000
Downtown Development Association	5,000
VCB	10,000
Chamber	10,000

Alan Friedman moved the matter be tabled until the Board has more information on the specific cost of this study. Several members indicated they need much more specific information before they could make a decision on this matter. At this time, an indication of interest from the Board – rather than a decision – may be more in order. The Board also felt that it is more appropriate for Council to take this matter up first, then provide direction to the VCB. Although the funding mechanism will not be finalized until the feasibility study is completed, the current suggestion of a 3% increase in lodging tax could be a concern for local hotels and the VCB. The consensus of the Board is to invite the Chamber to the October meeting to respond to specific questions submitted by the Board within the next 10 days.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm on motion of Jill Eckardt and second of Wade Haerle.