

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU  
MINUTES OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
MARCH 12, 2002

PRESIDING: Peggy Page, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jane Fine Foster, Tillie Bishop, Linda Smith, Michael Somma, Wade Haerle, Larry MacDonald

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kevin Reimer, Alan Friedman, Jill Eckardt

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

GUESTS: Charlotte Palmer, Merlin Smith, Bill Anderies, Linda Hill, Anna Maria Ray, Diane Schwenke, Chris Thomas, Barbie Miller

The meeting was called to order at 3:07 pm.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION: Three volunteers were recognized for contributing 1,000 hours of service to the Visitor Center: Merlin Smith, who began volunteering in 1994; Charlotte Palmer and Bill Anderies, who both joined the volunteer staff in 1996. Our volunteers work an average of one 4-hour shift per week, so the milestone of 1,000 hours represents 250 weeks or nearly 5 years.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE: Chris Thomas and Diane Schwenke spoke on behalf of the Chamber's Transportation Committee. They asked the Board to support the Chamber's effort to encourage changing the airport name to Grand Junction Regional Airport. Benefits of this name change include:

- Improve competition with other Western Slope "Regional" airports, e.g., Montrose, Telluride, Vail/Eagle County
- Stronger identification of the facility by the traveling public
- Convey message that large jets can be accommodated ("field" suggests limited size and capabilities)

Grand Junction Economic Partnership has indicated its support of this action and the Chamber committee will seek the endorsement of both City Council and County Commissioners.

In response to questions from the Board, the Chamber representatives stated that costs associated with the name change would be an estimated \$20,000, mostly for printing and signage. The Chamber suggests designating the terminal "Walker Terminal". Linda Hill said that the airport name change could help Internet users find the airport site quicker. Future public relations and marketing opportunities may be identified that could expand upon the VCB's existing efforts.

Tillie Bishop requested a motion to support the Chamber's recommendation. Michael Somma moved and Jane Fine Foster seconded that the VCB Board Chair send a letter to Walker Field Airport Authority in support of changing the airport name to Grand Junction Regional Airport and Walker Terminal. Passed unanimously.

(Wade Haerle arrived)

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 12, 2002: Jane Fine Foster moved the minutes be approved as written, Linda Smith seconded; approved unanimously.

BOARD BUSINESS: The annual retreat will be held at The Chateau at Two Rivers Winery Tuesday, April 9 from 8:30 am – 5:00 pm. At the retreat, Linda Hill will report on the results of a focus group of local stakeholders. This is the third community focus group that has been conducted over the past several years and the discussion was very positive.

Western Colorado Travel Expo: The name "Western Colorado Travel Expo" led some potential Front Range exhibitors to believe that this event was only for Western Colorado tourism businesses. To overcome that perception, a tagline was added: "Colorado's Hidden Treasures" at the Western Colorado Travel Expo. Six members of the Colorado Association of Destination Marketing Organizations are committed to attend. The Daily Sentinel will print a special insert of either four or eight pages to be distributed with the Sunday, May 5 edition. An RFP will be issued to all local media for radio and TV advertising. We currently have 9 registrations; the Director will make personal sales calls to local outdoor recreation businesses to increase registrations.

Special Events: Fat Tire Festival We received confirmation of the City of Fruita's matching funds; everything is in order for the event. Country Jam Organizers will host their "client appreciation" reception at the Adam's Mark on March 20. The Director will meet with Country Jam's marketing representative to discuss media, advertising direction, etc.

HILL & COMPANY: Linda Hill presented the three GJVCB 2001 HSMAI awards. Over 1,800 entries were received. Entries are judged on the objectives of the specific campaign and how well the message conveys and achieves the objectives. The Director will take the awards to Council on March 20.

Spring/Summer Promotions: Regional ads for April-May will focus on golf and biking events. AT&T Cable is the recommended TV buy for the period May – August because of the very strong promotional value that was offered. Ads will highlight the variety of activities within Colorado's Wine Country. This strategy responds to the Front Range focus group discussions in which participants wanted to know what activities there are in addition to winery tours.

The sales division's direct mail/promotional piece is awaiting final approval from VCB staff.

Information about the fruit industry and orchards is in progress and awaiting additional information from the Palisade Chamber and fruit growers.

The Colorado Wine Industry Development Board is in the midst of identifying funding levels for the coming year. The Wine Board and VCB plan to partner on ads in Gourmet Magazine in May and possibly in September.

STAFF REPORTS: Visitation at the Visitor Center increased dramatically in February as local residents came in to pick up Olympic Torch Relay memorabilia. Volunteer training for the coming month includes tours of area golf courses and bed and breakfasts, as well as the annual Natural Resources Tourism Council training.

Year-to-date lodging tax receipts are up 4.5% over last year. Internet usage continues to increase, and telephone inquiries are even with last year.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 pm on motion of Michael Somma and second of Wade Haerle