

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
SEPTEMBER 14, 2004

PRESIDING: Jane Fine-Foster, Vice Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lynne Sorlye, Jill Eckardt, Kevin Reimer, Steve Meyer, Alan Friedman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Linda Smith, Peggy Page

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Irene Carlow, Erin Chapman, Tamara Vliek, Layne Whyman, Sarah Allen

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm.

MINUTES OF AUGUST 10, 2004: Jill Eckardt moved the minutes be approved as written, Lynne Sorlye seconded, passed unanimously.

BOARD BUSINESS: Special Events Revisions to the Special Events application process were reviewed. The Special Events Policy, which details the funding criteria and requirements (such as using the VCB logo), will not change. The City Attorney has advised that the proposed revisions will not require Council approval. The existing application form asks for the number of out of town attendees. The Board could require additional reporting such as a zip code survey of attendees or paid participants. A fixed percentage of surveys at general attendance events may be unrealistic for large events such as the Peach Fest which drew an estimated 10,000-12,000 people. The Board could tailor the number of surveys required to each event after funding recommendations are made. Events that require registration (Tour of the Vineyards, Fruita Fat Tire Festival) or sell advance tickets (Winefest) could be expected to provide zip code information about most of their attendees/participants. Jill Eckardt asked what the Board would do if an event doesn't comply with this reporting? The reporting could be a stipulation of funding and award letters could specify what additional information will be required in the final report.

Steve Meyer moved that Special Events awards of \$3,000 or less be in the form of a grant rather than a sponsorship; that administrative portion of the forms require use of the VCB logo; and that a zip code survey of attendees/participants be included in final events reports, the number of surveys needed to be determined by the Board; Jill Eckardt seconded, passed unanimously.

Tour of the Vineyards expects 1,000-1,100 riders, a decrease of approximately 30% from 2003. The Front Range Wines for Life event conflicts with the Tour of the Vineyards and is likely drawing participants away from the Tour.

The **Winefest** is expecting higher attendance than last year; all lodging properties in Grand Junction that accept reservations are reporting they are sold out for the weekend. The VCB will survey attendees at the Park.

Registrations for the **Downtown Car Show** are ahead of last year. Organizers are accepting only a few vendors because they don't want to take business away from Main Street businesses and they want to preserve as much space as possible for participants' cars.

Kokopelli Adventure Race has only 10 teams registered, down from 27 in 2003. The organizer has stated this will be the last year for this event because of declining registrations.

Rim Rock Run Agreement is complete but we are waiting for a corrected insurance certificate.

The Holiday Wine & Food Pairing organizers want to change the date of that event to November 6-7 from November 20-21. Kevin Reimer moved the date change be approved and the funding award be preserved; Jill Eckardt seconded, passed unanimously.

Economic Impact Study Dr. Tucker Hart Adams can present the report either in January or in March. Dr. Adams will be in Grand Junction in mid-January to make a presentation for US Bank and she asked if the Board would like to schedule her Economic Impact report for the same day.

(Alan Friedman arrived.)

The consensus of the Board is to schedule Dr. Adams on a different day than the USBank presentation. The Director will ask Dr. Adams for other dates early in January.

Board Vacancies Members whose terms expire at the end of 2004 are: Peggy Page, Alan Friedman and Jill Eckardt.

Alan Friedman related a conversation he had with Michael Somma, who has moved to Arizona to pursue business interests. Michael asked that Alan convey to the Board that they accept his resignation; he also wanted to convey how much he enjoyed being a member of the Board, how much he appreciated the VCB staff and their dedication and his regret at being unable to complete his term.

Chamber of Commerce The Chamber has organized a trip to Loveland on November 12-13 to tour the Budweiser Events Center, learn more about the process that created the facility and attend a hockey game. Each Board member will receive an invitation from the Chamber. Lynne Sorlye, Alan Friedman and Jill Eckardt expressed interest in attending.

HILL & CO.: Hill & Co. and VCB staffs have begun preliminary planning for the 2005 marketing campaign. Denver-area billboards will be used again and we are working to secure better placements. Ad deadlines for the Colorado Official State Vacation Guide are approaching; we will have a 2-page spread if the Wine Board is able to partner again. The Wine Board will co-op with the VCB in the Denver Metro CVB's meeting planner guide.

Website VCB staff is working on copy for the re-design and we hope to launch in early December. Alan Friedman forwarded information on a free translation service; we will put this on the existing site to test it.

Gravity Metrics conducted an analysis of the log files for the period April-May-June. Access to the main URL is high among new and repeat visitors. A majority of visitors type in the URL rather than use a search engine. The Visitor Guide request page is one of the highest accesses and has a high conversion rate (12.3%). Over 60% of visitors go to the calendar of events; we will capitalize on that by linking more pages/sections of the site to the calendar.

The Director distributed a report from .ComMarketing. Suggestions include simplifying the keywords on each page (this is being done for the re-design) and having more links to relevant sites.

STAFF REPORTS: TravelHero reports that 97 reservations have been made through our site since July. We have a high look-to-book ratio of 5.29; the average is 1.8.

Approximately 100 people attended the Denver Sales Reception at the Culinary Institute.

The Fall Wine Train weekend will be October 22-24; 49 of 56 tickets were sold in the first 5 days and we expect it will sell out.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 for a presentation by Tim Foster, President of Mesa State College.