

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
SEPTEMBER 13, 2005

PRESIDING: Jane Fine Foster, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lynne Sorlye, Eric Feely, Brunella Gualerzi, Steve Meyer, Kevin Reimer, Deb Hoefer

ABSENT: Steve Bailey, Linda Smith

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Erin Chapman, Barbara Bowman, Irene Carlow, Sarah Griffith

GUESTS: Julie Hendricks, Linda Hill, Anna Maria Arizzi

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

MINUTES OF AUGUST 9, 2005: Steve Meyer moved the minutes be approved as written, Lynne Sorlye seconded, approved unanimously.

The Chair welcomed Deb Hoefer, who was appointed to fill the vacancy created by Jill Eckardt's resignation.

BOARD BUSINESS: Advertising Agency Presentations: Julie Hendricks reviewed the August 15 oral presentations/interviews. Three advertising agencies made presentations to an 11-member evaluation panel. Total point scores were:

Hill & Company	2,223
Cohn Marketing	2,037
Ryan Whitney	1,319

The evaluation panel recommends that the advertising agency contract be awarded to Hill & Company. Kevin Reimer moved to accept the recommendation and award the 2006 advertising agency contract to Hill & Company Integrated Marketing and Advertising; Brunella Gualerzi seconded, approved unanimously.

Three website design/marketing companies, usdm.net, Miles Media and Hill & Company, were invited to make presentations to a 12-member panel. Representatives from usdm.net were unable to attend and that company was not considered. Point scores were:

Hill & Company	1,842 total points, 153 average individual score
Miles Media	1,794 total points, 150 average individual score

The evaluation panel recommends that the website marketing contract be awarded to Miles Media. This was a very difficult decision but one that is believed to be in the best interest of the City. The panel believes that the partnership of two dynamic companies – Miles Media and Hill & Company – will give the VCB greater depth in both the creative and marketing arenas. Lynne

Sorlye moved to accept the recommendation and award the 2006 website marketing services contract to Miles Media Group; Brunella Gualerzi seconded, approved unanimously.

The Director contacted four destination marketing organizations as references for Miles Media. Three responses were received, all of which spoke very highly of Miles Media's strengths in forging partnerships and in client communications. The VCB's account representative is based in Golden and company headquarters are in Sarasota, Florida.

Both the advertising agency and website marketing contracts will be renewable annually.

Special Events: Kevin Reimer reported that the Art & Jazz Festival final report was filed on time. The weather was rainy and cold which had a negative effect on attendance; the musical acts were well received. Organizers are considering changing the date to either May or September.

Lynne Sorlye reported that the Air Show appeared to be very successful. The VCB wants to ensure continued good relations with the Air Show Committee and will ask to attend an upcoming meeting of the event's Executive Committee to discuss how the two entities can improve communications and work together successfully. The VCB conducted 340 attendee surveys; final tabulation is not complete but it is estimated that 30%-40% of attendees were from out of the area.

Steve Meyer reviewed the circumstances of rescinding funding of the Grand Valley Bicycle Classic. The event did not comply with criteria of the Special Event Policy: the actual event was different than what was stated on the funding application, which was the basis of the award. Printed promotional materials were minimal and did not include the VCB's logo or recognition of the VCB as a sponsor, as required. The event suffered from a lack of leadership which made communication extremely difficult. Staff will meet with representatives of Gateway Canyons, the main sponsor, to discuss the Special Events policy and the Board's efforts to communicate with the event representative.

Kevin Reimer will contact the Downtown Association regarding attendee surveys at the Downtown Car Show. The VCB ran an ad in the Denver Post and in regional papers; the VCB has met its funding obligations under the Special Events award to the Car Show.

VIP ticket sales for the Winefest are up substantially although individual tickets sales for the Saturday festival are slow. Advance tickets are only \$5 less than at the gate, so people may be waiting to see what the weather will be for that weekend. Area hotels have been sold out for two weeks.

2006 SPECIAL EVENTS: A general discussion followed regarding Special Events funding and the difficulties experienced this year. Discussion items included:

- Take a one year break to revise the policy
- Retain the \$3,000 grant procedure for 2006
- More follow-up with events, adherence to the 60-day paperwork requirement
- Consistency in working with events

- Lack of event leadership
- Put 2006 funding on hold and take time to re-think and revise the policy
- Freeze award funding, VCB develop a marketing plan for event advertising
- Consider which events would get stand-alone ads, which would be promoted in an event-listing type ad or as a weekend package
- Have a policy review workshop in November when the Board would normally review applications

Eric Feely moved that the Director report to Council that a moratorium on direct event funding is in effect while the policy is under review and that budgeted Special Events funds will be spent on event marketing; Brunella Gualerzi seconded, approved unanimously.

Expand the Tent: The Director reviewed the expand the tent program which provides an opportunity for lodging properties outside the city limits to participate in the VCB's marketing programs. Seven properties are participating in 2005. The Board believes that this program continues to benefit the VCB by providing additional lodging options to visitors without adversely impacting lodging facilities inside the city limits. Deb Hoefler moved that the expand the tent program be continued in 2006, Lynne Sorlye seconded, passed unanimously. The Director will report the Board's recommendation to the City Manager.

HILL & COMPANY: Linda Hill distributed copies of the Denver Post ads that featured the Air Show, Fruita Fall Festival, Downtown Car Show and Color Sunday.

The October wine trains (14-16 and 28-30) sold out quickly and two more weekend packages have been added: September 30-October 2 and November 11-13. AAA started selling the new dates September 13; a broadcast email was sent to our database; and ads will begin soon on CD 104.3 Denver radio.

A new research project will be a demographic/psychographic analysis of the VCB's inquiry database. Results of the Overnight Visitor Study, which is in progress, will be compared to the database study results. This additional visitor information will be used to refine the marketing message. An online conversion study is proposed before year-end so that those results can also be incorporated into the 2006 marketing plan.

STAFF REPORTS: August lodging tax receipts were up 25% with YTD receipts up 16.7%. Holiday Shopping ads will begin November 1; the Director asked for guidance on whether the end date on the advertising lodging rates should be December 30 or December 31. Both Lynne Sorlye and Kevin Reimer agreed that the rates should run through and including December 31 because there are no New Year's Eve events scheduled.

Group Sales: Barb Bowman reported that the meeting planner dinner in Denver August 24 was very successful. Plans are nearly complete for the National Tour Association Board of Directors meeting in Grand Junction September 22-25.

The Marriott properties have broken ground with a projected opening of Fall 2006. The Director and Barb Bowman expect to meet with the management firm's regional vice president in the next few weeks.

OTHER BUSINESS: The VCB typically pays lodging expenses for the Chair and/or Vice Chair to attend the Governor's Conference on Tourism and those funds are budgeted for this year. Kevin Reimer is the only Board member who is able to attend this year. The consensus of the Board is to pay Kevin's expenses; at his request, the VCB will reimburse Kevin for the conference registration fee.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:07 pm.