

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
JANUARY 18, 2005

PRESIDING: Jane Fine-Foster, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lynne Sorlye, Kevin Reimer, Jane Fine Foster, Jill Eckardt, Linda Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT: Steve Meyer

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Irene Carlow, Layne Whyman, Tamara Vliek, Sarah Allen, Barbara Bowman

GUESTS: Aleta Davy

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm.

MINUTES OF DECEMBER 14, 2004: Jill Eckardt noted a correction to the Minutes: Page 2, last line of paragraph 2, change “appreciate” to “appreciation”. Jill Eckardt moved the minutes be approved as corrected, Linda Smith seconded, passed unanimously.

HOST REMARKS: Lynne Sorlye said that meetings bookings were very strong through December and continue through January. Installation is complete of high-speed internet access (T-1 line) to all guest rooms; this is the fastest and most secure internet connection. WIFI is now available in Coco’s restaurant, the hotel lobby and the Holidome. The local property has converted to the Holiday Inn’s new property management system that manages such things as reservations, accounts receivable and housekeeping statistics. The system can also maintain a thorough guest history including a personal profile with an individual guest’s preferences.

BOARD BUSINESS: All members should have received an invitation to the City Council’s annual volunteer recognition luncheon at Two Rivers Convention Center, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm, February 8, the same day as the VCB’s regular monthly meeting. The Chair suggested re-scheduling the Board meeting to 1:15, immediately following the luncheon, to make it more convenient for members to attend both the lunch and the meeting. All in attendance concurred with that change.

Annual Retreat Some of the top items for discussion at the retreat include:

- City 2-year budget process (2006-2007)
- Advertising agency RFP
- Possible new staff position (2007), which would necessitate an addition to the building (2006)

The consensus of the Board is to hold a 1 ½ day retreat, out of town, with Jasper Welch again serving as facilitator. All present agreed to hold the dates of April 11-12 and April 14-15; staff is directed to check availability and rates at Powderhorn, Redstone and Aspen Meadows.

Special Events Members will serve as liaisons as follows:

Air Show 2005 – Lynne Sorlye
Art & Jazz Festival – Kevin Reimer
Downtown Car Show – Linda Smith
Fruita Fat Tire Festival – Jill Eckardt
Grand Valley Bicycle Classic – Steve Meyer
Colorado Mountain Winefest – Jane Fine Foster

Reporting requirements were developed for each event. Staff will prepare a letter to each organizer advising them of the requirements and the respective Board liaison. Staff will develop standard a demographic questionnaire and provide it to the funded events.

Fruita Fat Tire Festival - zip codes and cities (from registrations); length of stay; accommodation type (hotel, camping, friend/family)

Colorado Mountain Winefest – zip codes and cities of at least 2,000 (from ticket sales); assist VCB with on-site intercept surveys (minimum 250). Include a reminder that Tour of the Vineyards event information is to be included on Winefest website and printed materials.

Grand Valley Bicycle Classic – zip codes and cities (from registrations); zip code survey of spectators at Criterium, 5% of the estimated attendance indicated on funding application (but not less than 100)

Art & Jazz Festival – intercept survey on Saturday of 5% of estimated attendance indicated on funding application (but not less than 200)

Air Show 2005 – intercept survey of not less than 250 attendees

Downtown Car Show – zip codes and cities of registrants; length of stay, number of people in party; accommodation type (hotel, camp, friend/family); intercept study of 200 spectators

Website Links Staff recently received requests for links from the VCB site to a tour operator (that does not come to Grand Junction) as well as to various golf courses on the Western Slope. At the National Tour Association convention, staff heard general requests for a page that lists tour operators that come to Grand Junction, with links to those companies. Staff requested direction on how to respond. The Board restated its policy to link to tourism related businesses that are located in Mesa County, as well as to public agencies. The Board will discuss this topic in greater detail at the annual retreat.

PROMOTIONS: Tamara Vliek gave an update on promotions and public relations activities:

- 403 rooms were sold as part of the Holiday Shopping package
- Powderhorn packages will be posted on the website through March
- Print and radio ads for the Valentine's Day (unescorted) wine train will begin January 31
- Will exhibit at the Denver Golf Expo February 11-13; approximately 7,000 attended in 2004
- Local press provided excellent coverage of Dr. Adam's Economic Impact Study
- Skywest's in-flight magazine has a very good article about Grand Junction

TravelHero reports 3,186 click-throughs from the VCB site for the period July – December. The look-to-book ratio is 5.5%, well above the national average of 1%. The website re-design is on track; Hill & Co. has done great work on the CRM module. A first draft of copy has been edited and is ready to return to Hill & Co.

The 2005 Marketing Plan will be distributed at the February 8 Board meeting.

HILL & COMPANY: The 2005 Visitor Guide is in the final edit stage. The 2005 advertising plan is in place; minor adjustments have been made to include advertising in two meeting planner association newsletters. New headlines are being developed for ads targeting the group market; samples were displayed.

The 2004 year-end ADR/Occupancy Study will be distributed at the February 8 meeting. The Overnight Visitor Study is ready to launch; eight properties will be asked to participate.

STAFF REPORTS: December lodging tax receipts increased 6.6% over 2003; total receipts for the year were up 1.7%.

Amtrak service through Grand Junction has been suspended because of track damage and other weather-related issues. Amtrak has given assurances that service will be fully restored by January 21, so the VCB will proceed with the Valentine's Day package.

Staff has secured placement of a map and photos in both the Amtrak station and Walker Field terminal.

OTHER BUSINESS: The March 8 agenda will include an update on the Riverside Parkway Project; the meeting is tentatively scheduled to be held at the Project office.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm.