

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
JULY 11, 2006

PRESIDING: Lynne Sorlye, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Deb Hoefler, Bill Hill, Steve Meyer, Denise Henning, Eric Feely, Brunella Gualerzi, Kevin Reimer, Jane Foster

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Barbara Bowman, Irene Carlow, Erin Chapman, Jennifer Grossheim-Harris, Nora Welch

GUESTS: Tim Sarmo, Leif Johnson

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

MINUTES OF JUNE 13, 2006: Jane Foster moved the minutes be approved as written, Eric Feely seconded, passed unanimously.

HOST REMARKS: Tim Sarmo, Palisade Town Administrator, thanked the VCB for its efforts that promote all of the Grand Valley. Palisade benefits from the VCB's marketing and the Town looks forward to continuing a good working relationship with the bureau. The Town and Chamber are working together to enhance local marketing efforts that will complement the fruit and wine industries that are so important to the area. Agritourism is gaining popularity with the traveling public and has strong support from many of the local growers. Downtown activities include a Sunday Farmers' Market that celebrates Palisade's family- and community-oriented atmosphere. New businesses downtown include a winery that will produce champagne, a restaurant and bike shop.

There are concerns about construction costs of the proposed whitewater park that supporters hope to build in conjunction with a Bureau of Reclamation project. Cost estimates won't be known until late September when the Bureau of Reclamation receives bids for its project.

Leif Johnson, Executive Director of the Palisade Chamber of Commerce, distributed the Chamber's current marketing materials as well as a schedule of events for the upcoming Peach Festival. The Peach Festival, which is owned by the Chamber, is the organization's major fundraiser. Several orchards will offer free tours on Friday and Saturday; also new this year are several self-guided tours (historical, bike, river floats). Over 100 vendors are registered for the Saturday event at Riverbend Park. The Chamber also extends it thanks to the VCB for its support in promoting events and attractions in Palisade.

STAFF UPDATES: Building Remodel Project submittals to the Community Development Department are schedule. The architect and electrical engineer met with the City's Information Services manager and staff. Original construction was more residential than commercial and,

consequently, there is no “attic space” to accommodate re-wiring necessary to upgrade the data/communications systems that will occur as part of this project. The IS manager reports that Internet access will be disrupted for an indeterminate amount of time during construction because the T-1 line from City Hall will be out of service. An option is to relocate some staff for a couple of months, possibly to another City facility so there would be no loss of data communication.

BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS: The luncheon meeting with Council is confirmed for September 18. The Director suggested the Board discuss potential agenda items at the August meeting. Staff will likely do a brief presentation prior to the broader discussion. Possible agenda items include the Visitor Center remodel; air service; how residents might benefit from expanding Two Rivers Convention Center and other City facilities (e.g., soccer fields, the Avalon); TABOR issues.

The Chair contacted members about serving on committees to address specific items identified at the annual retreat and at the June monthly meeting. The following committee appointments were made:

Bylaws, Ethical Standards, Job Description, Recruiting

Eric Feely, Chair
Brunella Gualerzi
Irene Carlow

A copy of the Ethical Standards for Boards was distributed to all members. One outcome of the committee's work may be development of an information packet for Board candidates/new members that clearly presents the responsibilities and expectations of VCB Board members.

Public Awareness

Deb Hoefler, Chair
Denise Henning
Steve Meyer
Barbara Bowman
Jennifer Grossheim-Harris

This committee will address public relations, the VCB's image in the community, relationships with tourism partners; this may become two separate committees in the future.

Street Banners

Jane Foster, Chair
Kevin Reimer
Bill Hill
Layne Whyman

The VCB has independently ordered some banners and had them installed along Horizon Drive and North Avenue. The City has designated the VCB to design a policy regarding installing banners (for what entities or events, how often they would be changed, who would bear the cost [the City has historically paid for installation]). The DDA has a plan for banners in the downtown area.

Public notice must be given of any meeting of three or more Board members; staff representatives will be responsible for posting notices at City Hall.

OTHER BUSINESS: Barb Bowman reported that the Vintage Chevrolet Club of America (VCCA) held its annual gathering in Grand Junction the week of July 3 with 720 confirmed attendees from throughout the US and some international. Attendees stayed from 5 - 7 nights versus an average of three nights for most groups. Staff conducted the first site inspection with VCCA planners in 1997 and several other site visits were conducted during the intervening years. Our competition for this group included Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Ft Collins, Colorado Springs, Jackson Hole and Pueblo. VCCA booked Grand Junction because of the enthusiasm and professionalism of the VCB staff; convention organizers stated they recognized their group would get tremendous support from the VCB. Kudos to Erin Chapman for her diligent work with this group through the booking stage; and to Layne Whyman for managing all the details that surround hosting a group this size and for the very high level of service she provided that made this convention a huge success.

The biennial Denver sales reception will be held at the University of Denver Thursday, August 24. Catering will be by the DU School of Hotel, Restaurant & Tourism Management and five wineries will donate wine for the event. Invitees will receive two direct mail pieces leading up to the reception; the number of attendees average 100-150. Staff will also host three open houses in Denver the two days before the reception.

The VCB will participate in a direct mail program called RSVP that targets the Front Range leisure market. A packet of postcards is delivered to homeowners with incomes above \$100,000 in select zip codes in Denver and Colorado Springs. The Grand Junction offer will feature our golf packages and AMTRAK tours through RMA Tours; recipients will be directed to the Specials and Packages section of our website. The August 1 Denver mailing will go to 100,000 households, the Colorado Springs mailing on September 1 will go to 50,000 households.

The Denver peach promotion is scheduled for the second week in August. Fruit will be shipped to media outlets in Denver and Colorado Springs and staff will make personal visits to select Denver media.

Grand Junction will be featured in the July 14 issue of *USA Today*. The story – “Emerging Wine Regions” – is the direct result of a fam the VCB hosted June 13-14 in cooperation with the Colorado Wine Industry Development Board.

AAA reports that both wine trains – the last two weekends of October – are sold out.

Bill Hill inquired about the decreasing numbers of in-state visitors reported on the monthly statistics. The Director expects the trend of declining numbers at the Visitor Center to continue. Travelers have less need to stop at visitor centers as more information becomes available on the Internet.

The Director and Jennifer Grossheim-Harris met with Chris Adams of Miles Media on July 10. The newsletter program is producing results: the highest activity on our site was logged the day

our most recent newsletter was launched. The search engine optimization project, which was accepted as part of Miles Media's original proposal, is ready to begin with completion slated in late September.

The Board requested that representatives of both Hill & Company and Miles Media report on activities at the September meeting. The Board was reminded that the annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet will be held at Two Rivers Convention Center following the September meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 pm on motion of Kevin Reimer and second of Jane Foster.