

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
OCTOBER 10, 2006

PRESIDING: Lynne Sorlye, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Deb Hoefler, Bill Hill, Eric Feely, Brunella Gualerzi, Kevin Reimer

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jane Foster, Steve Meyer, Denise Henning

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

GUESTS: Richard Tally, Rick Martindale, Angela Harness, Tom Kleinschnitz

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

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2006: Deb Hoefler moved the minutes be approved as written, Eric Feely seconded, passed unanimously.

HOST REMARKS: Richard Tally welcomed the Board and thanked all the members for volunteering their time to the VCB and the community. Richard is president of the Horizon Drive Business Improvement District (BID), which is working with the City and CDOT on improvements to the I-70 interchange. The project should be completed in December. Other activities along the Horizon Drive corridor include street improvements and extensive landscaping at Walker Field. The BID wants to extend other improvements south from the airport. Commercial construction projects include the two Marriott hotels and the Shaw Construction office building. Richard pointed out that the majority of the lodging tax is collected by Horizon Drive properties; there are 2,500 hotel rooms listed in the Visitor Guide, 1,800 of which are on Horizon Drive. When the 240 Marriott rooms are completed, 75% of the rooms in Grand Junction will be on Horizon Drive. The BID is concerned about the visitors' experience and will present issues and recommendations to Council over time.

Rick Martindale, manager of the Quality Inn, reported that the property began a long range capital improvement plan two years ago. All guest rooms have been completely renovated and they are now ready to do the exterior; renovation of the public areas will be the third and final phase. Choice Hotels will use the Grand Junction Quality Inn as a pilot for other properties.

BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS: The Director read a letter she received from Joe Hunter, manager of the Doubletree Hotel, concerning the low average daily room rate in Grand Junction. The Chair stated that the VCB does not involve itself in room rates and that hotels do not and cannot discuss setting room rates. The Board agreed with and reinforced the Chair's comments. The Director will forward Mr. Hunter's letter to the City Attorney for a response. Staff will confirm that the Occupancy/ADR report is sent to each of the participating hotels. The year end

report will be sent to all hotels in the Visitor Guide; any property can receive the quarterly reports upon request.

Board Committees: Neither the Public Awareness nor the Street Banner committees had a report. The Recruitment committee has a list of several individuals they will contact and encourage to apply for appointment to the Board. Steve Meyer has requested reappointment, Denise Henning will not; Jane Foster and Kevin Reimer have both served two full terms and are not eligible for reappointment.

National Tour Association: Lynne Sorlye, Kevin Reimer and Brunella Gualerzi will attend the Executive Program. The group will depart Grand Junction Sunday, November 5 and return Tuesday, November 7. Additional details will follow.

2007 Visitor Guide: During the year staff has received several requests for inclusion in the Guide and asked for Board direction on the following:

- Orchards (new category)
- Breweries/brew pubs/distillery (new category)
- Billiard hall
- Go Kart track

Adding 2-3 new listings can be done within the existing design and layout. Gaining space to add new categories could be accomplished by either editing out some of the existing copy or increasing the size of the Guide from 24 pages to 32 pages (the printing process requires that increases must be in 8-page increments.) Cost comparisons are as follows:

	<u>24 Page</u>	<u>32 Page (Est.)</u>
Printing	\$24,000	\$35,000
Production/Design	6,000	15,000
Postage	<u>5,400</u>	<u>7,000</u>
	\$35,400	\$57,000

Brunella Gualerzi commented that if the Guide were expanded, more emphasis could be given to activities such as Farmers' Market and the fruit crop/agriculture. If the main purpose is as a planning tool or lure brochure, we don't need to include breweries and brew pubs. If the main distribution is to people when they are in Grand Junction, then the Guide should be expanded to give as much information as possible. (Staff confirmed that the main distribution is outside of the Grand Junction area.) Tom Kleinschnitz commented that the Visitor Guide is a very strong tool that helps him close a sale. Adventure Bound shares all its leads with the VCB so that everyone who requests rafting information also receives a Visitor Guide. Bill Hill and Lynne Sorlye are both reluctant to add 8 pages, but want to wait for results of the focus groups sessions scheduled for October 19 before making a final decision. Staff will provide preliminary focus group results/impressions to the Board before the November 14 meeting. This item is tabled until November 14.

STAFF UPDATES: Bids for the building remodel will be opened October 18.

Group Sales: The Denver sales representative is on goal for sales contacts. Convention servicing is 78% to goal for the year.

The District 5470 Rotary Conference awarded Layne Whyman a “Paul Harris Fellow” for her outstanding service in making the conference a big success. It is very unusual for this award to be presented to a non-Rotarian.

Promotions: Miles Media completed the Search Engine Optimization project. Staff will meet with both Hill & Company and Miles Media at the upcoming Governor’s Conference on Tourism to begin planning for 2007. We have hosted a very high number of travel writers, all on assignment, and continue to receive requests for media visits. Staff is struggling to get hotel rooms for media visits because occupancy is so high and we have had so many requests for complimentary rooms. We anticipate even more media inquiries in 2007 as a result of partnerships with the Colorado Tourism Office.

The Holiday Shopping promotion will run November 1 – January 8, with 15 hotels participating.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:25 pm on motion of Deb Hoefler and second of Eric Feely.

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