

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU  
MINUTES OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
March 14, 2006

PRESIDING: Lynne Sorlye, Chair

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

ABSENT: Steve Meyer, Denise Henning, Jane Fine Foster, Kevin Reimer

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

GUESTS: Anna Maria Arizzi, Charlie Novinskie

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

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 14, 2006: Deborah Hoefler moved the minutes be approved as written, Eric Feely seconded, passed unanimously.

The Director introduced Jennifer Grossheim-Harris as the Marketing & Public Relations Coordinator for the VCB.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION: The Chair recognized Doris Blake and Sharon Vogel, both of whom have volunteered at the Visitor Center for 10 years. Doris is recognized for 3,000 hours of service, Sharon for 2,000 hours.

HOST REMARKS: Ron Hodgen, Manager of GJ Scores, welcomed the Board to Grand Junction's newest entertainment center. Ron and his partner own a similar facility in Newcastle and saw an opportunity to building in Grand Junction's growing market; they've received a very good response from the community. GJ Scores appeals to a different customer base, partly because it is not league-dominant, and the facility offers a wide range of promotions and special offers. GJ Scores gave out 22,000 free game passes – one for each child in District 51 – for the 2005 Christmas break, for Spring Break (this week) and will again for the summer vacation. Management hopes to host the 2008 World Games (April) which will attract teams from 20 countries for a total of three weeks. The 2005 Games held in Orlando had an estimated economic impact of \$18 million.

BOARD BUSINESS: Building Remodel At its March 15 meeting, Council will consider the architectural services contract for design and construction oversight/administration. If the contract is approved, the Purchasing Division hopes to bid out the project in May.

Annual Retreat The May 1-2 retreat will focus on goals for 2007 and long-term planning. Jasper Welch will send a survey to Board members to begin developing the agenda. Brunella Gualerzi moved that the regular monthly meeting for May 2006 be canceled in lieu of the retreat, Eric Feely seconded, passed unanimously.

Special Events Committee Brunella Gualerzi briefly reviewed yearly Board activities regarding Special Events and the lengthy discussion that took place at the 2005 annual retreat. Special Event funding is on hold for 2006 pending an intensive review and re-write of the policy and the process. The \$25,000 Special Events funds budgeted in 2006 will be spent on VCB direct marketing of events rather than disbursements to events. The committee (Eric Feely, Deb Hoefler, Brunella Gualerzi) has met several times; drafts of the revised Policy and Application were distributed for discussion at the retreat May 1-2.

JUCO The JUCO Committee has requested that the VCB continue its support by sponsoring a team in the 2006 tournament. The \$1,000 sponsorship is budgeted in the general advertising line item. The Board supports continuing this sponsorship. 2007 will be the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of JUCO and the Director is aware that discussions have begun to bring back a major network to televise the championship game.

HILL & CO.: Anna Maria Arizzi discussed the spring and summer campaigns and the group market direct mail. She also displayed the mock-up of the “cultural passport” that is being produced in cooperation with the City’s Commission on Arts & Culture. Research indicates that cultural and heritage tourism is up 82% in the last 5 years, and this piece will complement the CTO’s major programs that target the heritage tourism market. The passport features the Grand Junction brand, coupons or promotions for each cultural entity such as the Botanical Gardens, Museum, Dinosaur Journey, Cross Orchards, Math & Science Center and the Art Center. Visitors will have the respective page stamped at each facility they visit. A limited quantity (2,000-3,000) will be printed the first year and will be distributed to visitors who will be here 2-3 days. Passports can be included in welcome packets for convention attendees as well as packets distributed to hotel guests who register for a VCB-sponsored special/package.

Research All ADR/Occupancy data has been received and is being tabulated; the final 2005 report will be distributed at the April meeting. March 15 is the final cut-off for responses to the Overnight Visitor Study. That report is also expected to be presented at the April meeting.

STAFF REPORTS: Promotions Layne Whyman discussed upcoming promotions:

- Art & Jazz Festival – AAA Encompass magazine, regional newspapers, Denver jazz radio CD104.3. RMA Tours is also offering a weekend package (either rail or drive). Staff designed the package that includes a reception with artists, unique gift created by the downtown glassblowing shop, limousine winery tour and Monument tour.
- Wine Train – both weekends are sold out; 8 wineries, 3 hotels and American Spirit Shuttle are participating. An article appeared in AAA Encompass
- Spring Break (March 10-31) – attractions are partnering with hotels for packaging; examples of participants include Harley Davidson, LaQuinta, Gateway Canyons, golf courses, Dinosaur Journey, Banana Fun Park
- Golf – this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year that Denver radio AM950 The Fan will do a live remote from Redlands Mesa and Tiara Rado; dates are May 5-6

Statistics: February lodging tax collections were up 21% over 2004. Year-end budget reports will be distributed at the April meeting.

Sales: Barb Bowman and Cat Coughran of Gateway Canyons just returned from the ITB trade show in Berlin, where they had 50 appointments with tour operators. Gateway Canyons will be included in three more brochures as a result of attending this year's show.

OTHER BUSINESS: There is strong support in the Legislature for a proposed new funding source that could result in an estimated \$15 - \$18 million in tourism advertising dollars. If the bill becomes law, the VCB expects to see increased staff workloads as the number of inquiries increase from the Official State Vacation Guide, colorado.com, travel writer fairs and other activities. By comparison, the Colorado Tourism Board's budget was \$11 million in the period 1991-93 and the VCB hosted 2-3 travel writers per week during summer months. The VCB will need to prepare for increased activity in 2007.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm on motion of Deb Hoefler and second of Eric Feely.