

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
FEBRUARY 12, 2008

PRESIDING: Deborah Hoefler, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lynne Sorlye, Brunella Gualerzi, Rick Martindale, Nathan Knoll, John Williams, Steve Meyer, Paul Petersen

MEMBERS ABSENT: Brian Barry

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

GUESTS: Jammie McCloud

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m.

MINUTES OF JANUARY 8, 2008: Lynne Sorlye moved the minutes be approved as written, Rick Martindale seconded, passed unanimously.

HOST REMARKS: Paul Petersen welcomed the Board to Mesa Mall and gave an overview of 2007 activities. A total of 31,000 square feet of new space was opened in 2007, one-third of which was represented by Sports Authority. Macerich, the owner of Mesa Mall, purchased the Mervyn's facility and associated parking field of approximately 7 acres. Management does not expect that space to be occupied for at least a year.

ARTS, HEARTS & TARTS PROMOTION: The Bookcliff Barbershop Chorus performed. The five quartets in the Chorus have 140 singing valentines booked for this year. The VCB scheduled performances at each of the Rotary clubs to pre-promote the month-long Arts, Hearts & Tarts campaign.

BOARD ITEMS: Special Events Nathan Knoll and Rick Martindale reported the Committee's recommendations and the Board discussed each event.

- Country Jam \$30,000 request and Rock Jam \$20,000 request – the committee suggested a total of \$4,000 for both events for radio advertising only; VCB staff must approve before spots are aired, VCB tag line has to be included. The VCB supports these events by purchasing listings in the Colorado Official State Vacation Guide and on Colorado.com as well as listing both events in the Grand Junction Visitor Guide. Staff also conducts lodging availability surveys and responds to a high volume of telephone inquiries from festival attendees.

- Spring Barrel Tasting \$5,250 request – this event has expanded (in its second year) to two weekends, 85% of attendees are from out of town; recommend \$1,500 for printing and mailing, the balance toward marketing, but no funding for administrative costs (taking reservations, organizing starting points)
- Art & Jazz Festival \$3,500-\$4,000 request – this is the 20th year for the festival, the committee believes it needs to be self-supportive at some point; recommend \$3,000 for print advertising in resort areas and eastern Utah
- Colorado Mountain Winefest \$8,000 request – committee believes the Winefest needs to become self-sufficient and organizers need to target a younger market by expanding beyond Denver Smooth Jazz radio; recommend total \$6,000 for Salt Lake City radio, Colorado Springs *Independent*, Smooth Jazz radio. This is a signature event that the VCB will support.
- NPR StoryCorps request \$3,000 – This is a project of National Public Radio in which personal stories are collected from individuals throughout the country, and then stored in the National Archives at the Library of Congress. Grand Junction and Denver are the only Colorado locations selected to tape these individual interviews. The local Colorado Public Radio station needs sponsors and assistance with some groundwork; sponsors will receive mentions on the station. This does not fall within the criteria of the Special Events Policy but does fit within Community Awareness outreach identified by the Board and the committee recommends the VCB support StoryCorps through other marketing programs.

Additional applications that have been received or are anticipated include the Air Show, Pork & Hops (which is the same weekend as Winefest), Palisade Peach Festival and Downtown Car Show. Staff has received indications of a potential combined application for marketing assistance from the Downtown Car Show, Fruita Fall Festival and Air Show, all of which are scheduled for the weekend of September 26-28. The regional Rotary Conference will also be held that weekend.

Special Events marketing assistance was voted on as follows, with all votes being unanimous:

- Country Jam – No Special Events marketing assistance awarded, on motion of Steve Meyer and second of Paul Petersen.
- Rock Jam – No Special Events marketing assistance awarded, on motion of Steve Meyer and second of Rick Martindale.
- Spring Barrel Tasting - \$5,250 for marketing as directed by VCB staff, no funds to be used for administrative expenses, on motion of Steve Meyer and second of Rick Martindale.
- Art & Jazz Festival - \$3,500 for print media in resort areas and eastern Utah, not to be used for Denver advertising, on motion of Brunella Gualerzi and second of Steve Meyer.
- Colorado Mountain Winefest - \$6,000 (\$1,250 for Salt Lake City radio, \$732 for Colorado Springs *Independent*, balance for Denver Smooth Jazz radio) on motion of Steve Meyer and second of Lynne Sorlye.

- StoryCorps – No Special Events marketing assistance but the VCB will provide support through the Community Awareness Committee, on motion of Brunella Gualerzi and second of Paul Petersen.

Annual Retreat The Director discussed potential locations within a 2-hour drive (e.g., Glenwood Springs, Montrose, Ridgway, Moab, Powderhorn, Gateway Canyons); Powderhorn is available April 14-15 and has provided a rate quote. Board members expressed a desire to meet within an hour's drive of Grand Junction and those members who have attended past retreats expressed a preference for Gateway Canyons. Staff is directed to check availability and rates with Gateway and report back to the Board for a final decision.

The Board wants to spend less time on personality profiles/decision-making styles and more time on strengths and opportunities with specific discussions on technological opportunities and where to direct resources. It was suggested that presentations by Hill & Company and Miles Media be the first items on the retreat agenda; break-out sessions could be more productive if their input is received first. The Director will schedule a conference call with the Chair, Vice Chair and Jasper Welch to discuss the format and agenda.

Lynne Sorlye moved that the April 8, 2008 regular monthly meeting be canceled, Paul Petersen seconded, passed unanimously.

American Airlines On February 25, Debbie Kovalik, Barb Bowman and Amy Jordan (Grand Junction Regional Airport) will travel to Dallas to conduct training sessions with American Airlines reservationists. A year ago, the VCB committed \$20,000 for new airline service promotions and those funds will be tapped to promote American Eagle flights that begin April 7. During the first year of service, American Airlines' "new market support team" will assist the VCB with promotions, including reduced airfare for travel writers.

The VCB will host a reception in Dallas during the week of April 21; invitees will include American Airlines executives, Dallas-Ft Worth travel media, AAA representatives and corporate clients. The Grand Junction delegation will consist of VCB staff, two VCB Board members, City representatives and community leaders. Hotels that have existing clients in Texas will be encouraged to make sales calls and attend the reception.

STAFF REPORTS: The 2008 Visitor Guide was handed out. Staff has completed a mailing to AAA offices in several states and shipments will go out to Colorado Welcome Centers. The new Guide will also be mailed to the entire sales database.

The Director announced that Vivian Brodine is retiring April 4 as the Volunteer Coordinator/ Visitor Center manager. The position is posted and applications close February 22. Becky Wilken has accepted the position of Receptionist and will join the staff February 25.

Marketing/Promotions: Jennifer Grossheim-Harris will travel to Miles Media's offices February 18-22 for hands-on training and final approvals of the new website which is expected to launch March 1.

Arts, Hearts & Tarts Since February 1, there have been 1,322 hits on this section of our website. Participating event organizers report a mixed response – some events are very successful while others have low turnouts. Next year staff expects to receive more requests for events to be included on the calendar and the Board may need to provide direction on what events (and what types of events) are included.

The 2008 Marketing Plan was distributed and the advertising plan reviewed. There is a large increase in meetings and convention advertising which is partly due to the addition of co-op ads with Two Rivers Convention Center. The advertising plan also includes ads purchased in the silent auction at the Governor's Conference on Tourism, even though those expenditures were made in 2007.

Sales: Barb Bowman reported that 15 sales leads were issued in January, which is a record for a one-month period.

Director's Report: January lodging tax receipts increased 6.6% over last year. The 2007 year-end statistics were distributed; lodging tax receipts increased the projected 24% and an increase of 15% is projected for 2008.

The VCB will provide convention services and support for the Energy Expo February 22 at Two Rivers Convention Center.

AAA will have four wine trains this year: April 11-12, April 18-20, October 10-12 and October 18-20. The October 18-20 train will be AAA Colorado's President's Wine Train, a prestigious event which will be expanded to include a wine maker's dinner at The Chateau and a tour of Colorado National Monument.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 pm on motion of Paul Petersen and second of Lynne Sorlye.