

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU  
MINUTES OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
MAY 13, 2008

PRESIDING: Steve Meyer, Chair Pro-Tem

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lynne Sorlye, Brian Barry, Rick Martindale, Nathan Knoll, John Williams, Paul Petersen

MEMBERS ABSENT: Brunella Gualerzi, Deborah Hoefler

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Jennifer Grossheim-Harris, Barbara Bowman, Melanie Wiseman, Irene Carlow

GUEST: Amy Jordan

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

MINUTES OF MARCH 11, 2008: Rick Martindale moved the minutes be approved as written, Lynne Sorlye seconded, approved unanimously.

HOST REMARKS: Steve Meyer, President of Shaw Construction, gave a brief history of the company, which was founded in 1962. Shaw occupies the second floor of this building and the other three floors are fully leased. Phase II construction has already begun. The company's marquee project during the last 3-4 years was Arrabelle in Vail. Gateway Canyons Resort is now the marquee project and Shaw is managing all construction at Gateway Canyons.

AMERICAN AIRLINES RECEPTION: Amy Jordan thanked the Board and staff for hosting the very successful reception for American Airlines in Dallas. The initial two flights per day have a load factor of over 90% and a third flight is planned to be added in July, if not sooner. Staff reported that attendees at the reception included the CEO of American Eagle. Personal sales calls were made to leisure travel agencies, AAA offices, tour operators and meeting planners. Four media outlets were visited, two of which committed to a FAM to Grand Junction.

BOARD DISCUSSION: The Director reviewed notes and discussion points from the retreat. Topics included:

- Expand the Tent
  - Research best practices
  - Partnership approach with Palisade and Fruita
  - Keep current program

Rick Martindale, Lynne Sorlye and Paul Petersen were appointed to serve as the Expand the Tent Committee to discuss this program in greater detail; 2-3 staff will also serve on the committee.

- Challenges
  - New hotels
  - Unstable and volatile national economy
  - Labor pool, housing costs
  
- Goals for 2008-2009
  - Develop contingency plan for economic downturn
  - Continue Community Awareness committee and initiative
  - Continue to develop web presence
  - Develop plan to market new hotel rooms that are anticipated by 2010
  - More off-season promotions
  - Develop higher demographic customers

Hotel occupancy has been at record levels for the past year, but travel to Grand Junction could be impacted by rising gas prices and instability in the national economy. Staff will make recommendations on new/additional marketing that could be implemented if hotel occupancy declines. The current marketing budget would remain intact and additional advertising expenses would come from the fund balance. The Board and staff need to establish triggers for implementing this additional marketing.

STAFF REPORTS: Miles Media has implemented a new web analytics program that can provide much more information about web users, including geographic identify, and can track individual campaigns. Karin Mast will present this new program at the June Board meeting.

The Director introduced Melanie Wiseman, who joined the staff as Visitor Center Coordinator. Melanie reported that two sessions of “Know Your Own Backyard” volunteer/hospitality training will be held May 20 at the Holiday Inn.

Sales: Barb Bowman reported that representatives of the Grand Vista, Doubletree and Gateway Canyons will attend Pow Wow as part of the Grand Junction delegation. Over 85 emails have been sent to international tour operators requesting appointments with them at Pow Wow.

(Paul Petersen joined the meeting at 4:25.)

City Administration Update City Manager Laurie Kadrach briefed the Board on the expanded role that Debbie Kovalik will have within the City management team. Debbie will participate in a broader range of administration-related programs and projects which will demand a significant amount of her time. The initial project will be an evaluation of operations at Two Rivers Convention Center/The Avalon Theater and a recommendation on whether those facilities are a better organizational match with the VCB or with Parks & Recreation. The need for this evaluation has been briefly discussed in the past but it has been brought to the forefront with the recent resignation of Parks & Recreation Director Joe Stevens. The evaluation and recommendation will be finalized over the next month and before the search begins for a new Parks & Recreation Director. In response to questions from the Board, Laurie stated that the two

budgets – VCB and TRCC/Avalon – would remain separate even if the organizational structure changes.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm on motion of John Williams and second of Brian Barry.