

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

February 9, 2010

PRESIDING: Paul Petersen, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brunella Gualerzi, Nathan Knoll, Deborah Hoefler, Rick Martindale, John Williams, Glen Gallegos, Jessica Stimmel

MEMBERS ABSENT: Per Nilsson

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

GUESTS: Kevin Reimer, Chris Muhr, Jen Taylor

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 pm.

The Chair introduced and welcomed to the Board newly-appointed members Jessica Stimmel and Glen Gallegos.

MINUTES OF JANUARY 12, 2010: Deborah Hoefler moved to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Rick Martindale, passed unanimously.

HOST REMARKS: Kevin Reimer welcomed the Board to Hampton Inn and gave an update of downtown activities. The Main Street Uplift is an exciting project and he is pleased that the DDA has the funds to do these improvements. As a Main Street business owner, he has developed creative ways to interact with customers and overcome the inconveniences of the construction period. Hawthorne Suites' name has been changed to Main Street Suites and will undergo a \$1 million renovation over the next 12 months. Work should begin in November 2010 and be completed in approximately 4 months. Construction of Springhill Suites, directly across Main Street from the two existing hotels, will begin in 2010 with an anticipated opening of Spring-Summer 2011. This will be a 5-story 100-room property with retail space.

COLORADO PLATEAU MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL ASSOCIATION (COPMOBA): Chris Muhr, President of the COPMOBA Board of Directors, presented an overview of the all-volunteer organization. COPMOBA was formed in 1989 for the sole purpose of building trails and since then has built or maintained over 1,500 miles of trails. Last year, the organization built 35 miles of single track in the Lunch Loop area and future plans include a series of trails in the Palisade area; trail building costs range from \$40-\$75 per foot.

Mountain biking is a \$5 billion industry in the US and the Grand Junction area has achieved international recognition as a premier mountain biking destination. According to a study conducted by Mesa State College/BLM, this area is experiencing 7-10% increase per year in trail use/visitors:

- Tabeguache/Lunch Loop Area: 30,000-35,000 visitors
- Kokopelli Trail system: 50,000 – 55,000 visitors
- North Fruita Desert Area: 40,000 – 45,000 visitors

COPMOBA's annual budget is \$25,000. The group is asking the VCB for ideas on how to increase funding so they can (1) hire a full-time person to manage the organization's activities and (2) increase the amount of funds available for trail work.

The Board suggested that COPMOBA explore funding opportunities through GOCO as well as other grant resources. (COPMOBA has received some Stimulus funds for work in the Gunnison/Montrose areas.) The VCB does not fund other organizations. The only "funding" provided by the VCB is event marketing assistance under the Special Event Policy and COPMOBA is encouraged to apply. Jen Taylor described the upcoming event "MOG Outdoorfest" scheduled for April 10; approximately 3,000 – 5,000 people are expected. The Board responded that the April 10 date falls outside the Special Events application deadline (minimum 120 days), but the event can certainly be promoted on the VCB's website calendar.

BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS: Special Events Nathan Knoll reported on applications reviewed by the committee:

*Palisade Bluegrass & Roots Music Festival additional information* - The Town of Palisade does own this event and has budgeted \$22,000 for promotion. Approximately 50% of last year's attendees were from outside of Mesa County (1,200-1,300); an estimated 800-1,000 were from the Front Range. \$6,325 is requested; the committee recommends \$2,500 for advertising 150-200 miles outside of Mesa County. John Williams moved to accept the committee's recommendation to provide \$2,500 Special Events marketing assistance to the Palisade Bluegrass & Roots Music Festival, Brunella Gualerzi seconded, passed unanimously.

*Colorado Pro Rodeo Association Finals \$5,000 requested* – This event draws approximately 1,000 people from outside Mesa County. \$3,500 was awarded last year but the full amount was not spent. The committee recommends a \$2,000 award for printing and advertising. Deborah Hoefer moved to award \$2,000 Special Events marketing assistance to the Colorado Pro Rodeo Association Finals, John Williams seconded, passed unanimously.

*Art & Jazz Festival \$3,500 - \$4,000 requested* – Approximately 12,000 people attended last year, 3,000 of whom were from out of town. The event's main sponsor has decreased their funding by half. The committee recommends \$4,000 for advertising in Salt Lake City, eastern Utah and Denver. Rick Martindale moved to award \$4,000 in Special Events marketing assistance to the Art & Jazz Festival, John Williams seconded, passed unanimously.

*Colorado Mountain Winefest \$13,000 requested* – This event has been expanded to 4 days, beginning with golf and a winetasting reception on Thursday and ending with a Sunday brunch. Over 7,500 people attended in 2009, 75% of whom were from out of town. Last year's award was \$7,500; the committee recommends \$5,000 for 2010. John Williams moved to award \$5,000 in Special Events marketing assistance to the Colorado Mountain Winefest, Deborah Hoefer seconded, passed unanimously.

#### Committee Assignments

Special Events: Nathan Knoll, Rick Martindale, Jessica Stimmel, Per Nilsson

Community Awareness: Deb Hoefer, John Williams, Brunella Gualerzi, Glen Gallegos

Annual Planning Retreat The one-day session will be held at The Chateau at Two Rivers Winery Thursday, March 18. Agenda topics will include:

- Expand the Tent
- Visitor Guide policy – out-of-area businesses
- Visitor Center policy
- Budget
- Contractors/RFPs

Hill Aevium and Miles Media will not attend the retreat. Staff is directed to ask both contractors to attend the March 9 regular monthly meeting; their presentation should be a short history of the brand development, then a snapshot of the 2010 campaign.

2010 Marketing Plan Jennifer Grossheim-Harris distributed copies of the plan and gave an overview of this year's campaign.

STAFF REPORTS: Barbara Bowman reported that January lodging tax collections were down 28%. January was a busy month for the Visitor Center, however, with visitation up 37%. The Go West Summit in Sacramento the week of February 1 was very successful; the VCB had 33 appointments with international tour operators.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm on motion of John Williams and second of Deborah Hofer.