

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

March 8, 2011

PRESIDING: Per Nilsson, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Williams, Paul Petersen, Glen Gallegos, Jessica Stimmel, Nathan Knoll, Renae Phillips, Ron Beach, Lynne Sorlye

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

GUESTS: Kevin Reimer, Julie Shafer

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

The Chair welcomed to the Board Lynne Sorlye, General Manager of The Clarion Inn.

HOST REMARKS: Prior to the meeting, Kevin Reimer gave a tour of SpringHill Suites, which is expected to open in early June. It is a 100-suite property offering a complimentary breakfast buffet and WiFi (both wireless and wired). Other amenities include a lobby bar, some retail and Seattle's Best Café.

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 1, 2011: Paul Petersen moved to approve the minutes as written, Renae Phillips seconded, approved unanimously.

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

*Colorado Lavender Festival – requested \$6,220* This is a first-time event scheduled for July 16-17 in Palisade. Organizers have done quite a bit of research, including attending lavender festivals in other parts of the country, and have secured several local sponsors. This is definitely targeted to a niche demographic, but the committee feels that it meets the spirit of the Special Events policy to support and develop new events. The committee recommends an award of \$2,550. The Board asked if the Town of Palisade is contributing to this event. Barbara Bowman will contact the Town of Palisade and report back about the level and type of support the Town is providing. Jessica Stimmel moved to award \$2,550 in Special Events marketing assistance to the Colorado Lavender Festival, Renae Phillips seconded, approved unanimously.

*Flyin' Miata – requested \$1,200* This will be the 14<sup>th</sup> year of the 3-day event in early August. The event has not grown the past several years but 90% of the 100+ attendees are from out of town and they stay 2-3 nights. The committee recommends

\$750 for a postcard mailer. Glen Gallegos moved to award \$750 in Special Events marketing assistance to the Flyin' Miata, Jessica Stimmel seconded, approved unanimously.

*Gifts of the Gardens Dance – requested \$2,000* The Western Colorado Botanical Gardens will host this evening of music, dancing, dance performances and tethered hot air balloon rides. The committee sees little if any potential for overnight stays and recommends no funding. Jessica Stimmel moved that no Special Events marketing assistance be awarded to the Gifts of the Gardens Dance, Renae Phillips seconded, approved unanimously.

Annual Planning Retreat: Members would like to adjust the agenda to devote more discussion time to goal setting and planning for the future, less time on history and organizational structure. Miles Media and CCT should attend the entire day, in a listening role during the morning discussions, but fully participating in the afternoon. Staff pointed out that, even though the Marketing Plan has already been distributed, the contractors' presentations will include a full roll-out of the Plan because it is very different than previous years.

STAFF REPORTS The Grand Junction Symphony Orchestra has requested a letter in support of their application to Colorado Creative Industries for operating funds for the coming season. The Board approved by consensus.

February lodging tax receipts declined 7.4%; YTD revenues are down 2.6%.

Sales: Erin Chapman reported that the sales division issued 17 leads in February vs 5 in February 2010. Barb Bowman attended Go West Summit in Boise and met with 39 international tour operators and travel writers.

Convention Servicing: Layne Whyman reported that the World Race 2011, from New York to Paris, will do a brief stop-over April 23 on the way to Gateway Canyons. The group will be at the Fruita Welcome Center at 1:00, then at the Colorado National Monument Visitor Center at 1:30, departing for Gateway by 2:30. The public is invited to come to either location to talk to race participants.

Visitor Center: Melanie Wiseman distributed copies of the Volunteer Newsletter she writes each month to keep the volunteers informed and engaged. Fam tours to local attractions and tourism partners are scheduled monthly so the volunteers can stay up-to-date on area activities and be able to provide accurate information to our visitors. The VCB is fortunate to have over 90 volunteers who are enthusiastic and committed to promoting and serving their community.

Marketing/Promotions: Jennifer Grossheim-Harris presented the new creative campaign which will begin April 1 with billboards in the Denver area. CCT presented these

creative concepts during the RFP process last summer. The website will undergo a gradual transition to the new artwork.

The Denver Golf Expo was very successful. There was good traffic to our booth and the lodging partners did very well.

OTHER BUSINESS: Barbara Bowman stated that Country Jam had contacted the VCB and asked if the bureau calculates the economic impact of the event. The VCB does not have a multiplier and referred Country Jam to the National Association of Festivals and Events for that information. Barb Bowman did contact several hotels regarding business over Country Jam weekend; 7 properties reported a total of \$289,000 in direct revenue that they attribute to Country Jam.

Julie Shafer, Sponsorship and Marketing Director for Country Jam/Rock Jam discussed Country Jam's concerns about the strain on community resources and potential negative impacts if Bobby's Birthday Bash is held the same weekend as Country Jam. She also reported that Country Jam's payments to local businesses and individuals for services related to the event – including items such as energy costs, equipment rental hiring locals, etc. – is \$971,000 with an additional \$100,000 contributed to local non-profits. The Board thanked Julie for providing this information and for sharing Country Jam's concerns about the proposed event.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm on motion of Nathan Knoll and second of Lynne Sorlye.