

Visitor & Convention Bureau
Grand Junction, CO

July 9, 1991
3:30 p.m.
Chamber Building

**MINUTES
of the
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

PRESIDING: Don Bramer

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vicki Felmlee, Cindy George, Paul Nelson, Tom Ralser, Frank Bering, Dennis Wagner

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Barbara Bowman, Judy Manning, Irene Carlow

GUESTS PRESENT: Jody Kole, Linda Hill, Diane Schwenke, Cindy Sherrill, Don Zarndt, Richard Sims, Tim Shafer, Elizabeth "Willie" Williams, Bill Culver

MINUTES OF THE JUNE 11, 1991 MEETING: Paul Nelson moved the minutes be approved; Vicki Felmlee seconded; approved unanimously.

Don Bramer welcomed Dennis Wagner as the Chamber's ex-officio member of the VCB Board.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Tour Around: Vicki Felmlee expressed her thanks to the volunteers and staff for all their efforts. Attendance figures have not been received from ABC, but she estimates that attendance was lower than last year. Approximately 40 other areas/resorts were represented. The people who stopped at our booth were enthusiastic and we received a lot of positive feedback on our advertising campaign. Admission fee was increased from \$3 to \$5, and the Tour Around exhibit did not have good placement in the hall. Exhibitors on the aisle behind Grand Junction's booth received very little traffic. Vicki recommends that, before next year's Expo, we write a letter to ABC asking that the increased fee be reconsidered. The Board concurs with her recommendation and directs Debbie Kovalik to write a letter to the ABC regarding the admission fee as well as the placement of the Tour Around exhibit.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Hospitality Training: Judy Manning reported that the "Colorado Loves Company" program did not meet our needs. Currently, Feather Petroleum and Walker Field have indicated an interest in training but, for the most part, we are too far into the season to expect any wide-spread interest. Recommendations for the future include: emphasizing our program in March, April and May; follow-up with participants to track satisfaction with training; incorporating the Ambassadorasaurus into the VCB marketing plan; improved communication and follow-up to determine why sessions are cancelled and not rescheduled.

The Visitor Information Center had 4,862 visits in June, up from 4,353 the previous year. The pattern of visitors from representative states remains fairly stable. June represented the largest retail sales figures. Judy did not have a compilation of comments concerning the Center's location, but lack of restroom facilities continues to be the biggest problem.

Group Sales: Barbara Bowman is working with Colorado National Bank on a brochure about foreign currency exchange. Grand Junction is the only city in Colorado doing this. Barbara reported on the results of tour operator contacts and reviewed highlights of convention business booked. Articles that resulted from the travel writers' fairs were distributed as part of the Board packets. The weekend of July 6-7, Barbara hosted representatives of Nippon Travel Agency and the Tom Sawyer Club, a Japanese educational travel club. They were especially impressed with the dinosaur dig and staff is optimistic about the potential results of this tour. Both this tour and an inquiry from England are direct results from our efforts at Pow Wow.

The Director read a letter from Ann Seewald of Colorado Cellars. Ms. Seewald was very complimentary of the staff and expressed her thanks for all the staff's promotional efforts. She stated that their sales figures are proof of the VCB's productive efforts. She also noted that nearly 100% of their visitors either have the VCB brochure in hand or came to their winery as a result of reading the brochure.

The Director reviewed lodging tax receipts, mailings and WATS line inquiries. Don Bramer reminded the Board that all the statistics are evidence that our advertising is working. When the public inquires about the VCB efforts, Board members might want to respond with information about the number of WATS line inquiries and visits to the Information Center, rather than relying on just tax receipts.

The Director gave an overview of the staff planning day and discussed the time sheet analysis staff will be compiling.

Tashiro Marketing

A preliminary draft of the video script will be presented at the Board retreat July 12-13. Ads in the Rocky Mountain News and Denver Post will continue on Sundays through July 21.

New Business

Visitor Information Center

The Site Selection Committee met and reviewed the proposals for the Visitor Center location. The Director met with the current landlord, who is anxious to maintain the Center as a tenant.

Bill Culver, who responded to the RFP in conjunction with a Burger King location, addressed the board concerning the proposed location. Removal/clean-up is scheduled to begin August 19. He has been advised there is co-mingled waste, but the DOE and ChemNuclear Geotech see no problem. His proposal included a separate building bordering the Hilton greenbelt with the same square footage as the current location. The Director expressed concern about the amount of available parking and code restrictions. Additionally, the City requires an environmental audit and report of remediation, both of which were discussed by Tim Woodmansee. During the Board retreat, dates will be set for meetings with both Mr. Culver and the current landlord. The Site Selection Committee will meet at the VCB offices July 16 at 3:00 p.m.

Museum of Western Colorado

Richard Sims distributed the 1990 Annual Report and the newly-developed brochure, and presented to the Board his views of the Museum's future. The science of paleontology, while relatively new, will be a very strong part of the Museum. At the same time, other areas that have been neglected in the past will have a stronger presence. Relocating Dinosaur Valley was considered, but there is no affordable space available; it will remain in the current location until the museum can be consolidated. Sims would like to sell some of the aging inventory, and eventually have some robotic dinosaurs that are representative of this area. This is the only museum in the country that purchased, rather than leased, dinosaurs from Dinamation and Sims is not optimistic about finding a market for resale. Sims assured the Board that nothing is happening at Dinosaur Valley for the next 3-4 years and that there will be no problem with the shelf life of the VCB video.

Sims would like to fill the dinosaur space with something interesting and exciting, but has concerns about the entertainment world vs. a "museum" as we know it. Sims would seek people who want a "moment of introspection - a sanctuary from the hustle and bustle - to take a moment to engage in the private act of learning". Sims would like to emphasize mining more than ranching because mining had the greater historical impact on this area. He would also like to show how towns were built with the irrigation system.

Tourists are a big part of the growth plan, but he would like visitors to be educated at the individual's speed. Improved interpretive signage at Rabbit Valley and Dinosaur Hill is being worked on now. George Woolsey is to prepare a proposal on how to expand the hours that Cross Orchards is open; the volunteer base is the biggest challenge.

Board Retreat

Due to conflicts with several members' calendars, the Board retreat needs to be rescheduled. The retreat will be one full working day and will be held in Grand Junction. A new date of Monday, August 5 was agreed upon.

Sunshine Taxi

Tim Shafer and Willie Williams addressed the Board seeking support for their application to supplement their current PUC license. Sunshine Taxi is requesting "sightseeing" authority to add sunset Monument tours to their current services. They would carry up to 7 passengers and charge a minimum of \$68. They acknowledged that sightseeing has not been a big part of their business in the past but are hoping it will grow. Others currently offering a similar service are Colorado Airlines, Michael O'Boyle and Meander Tours. Board members noted that Michael O'Boyle has recently begun such a service and received a letter of support from the VCB. While the Board supports having this type of service available to tourists, it does not want to be in the position of endorsing one entity over another. The Board asked the Director to discuss the matter with the City Attorney and ask the City Attorney to contact the PUC concerning support for this service and the appearance of favoring one operator over another.

Special Events

Dennis Wagner was appointed to the Special Events Committee. The Committee will meet at the VCB offices Tuesday, July 16 at 2:00. At that time a public forum date will be selected for the Committee to explain and discuss the procedure for applying for special events funding.

Vicki Felmlee moved the meeting be adjourned; Cindy George seconded. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.