

MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MARCH 10, 1992

MEMBERS PRESENT: Don Bramer, Juli Cogdill, Frank Bering, Tom Ralser, Steve Hilliard, Paul Nelson, Karen Moore

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

GUESTS: Jody Kole, Linda Hill, Marshall Harris, Jan Ertl, Jann Ertl, Mike Saelens, Bonnie Pehl-Petersen, Diane Schwenke, Diana Saya, Maria Kosztolanyi, Cindy Sherrill, Pat Cleary

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 12, 1992: Juli Cogdill moved for approval; Tom Ralser seconded; approved unanimously.

COUNTRY JAM USA: Marshall Harris handed out a flyer and map that is being distributed in areas such San Diego, Los Angeles and at RV centers. Organizers have filed for additional use at the festival location, but will need County Planning & Zoning approval. Marketing efforts include cross-selling Colorado Stampede, which is a week before the festival. Estimates 10,000 people per day; will talk with Mesa Mall management to explore possibility of festival parking at the Mall with shuttles to the concert area. Organizers hope to eventually purchase land for this annual festival. The Director noted that a similar festival is scheduled for the same weekend in Steamboat Springs. Marshall is not concerned about that event drawing from Country Jam; believes that the location and land area available here are superior.

SIGNAGE/ENTRYWAY COMMITTEE: Establishing an ad hoc committee was discussed at the Board retreat. Membership would include representatives from: lodging community, Mesa Mall, (City) Department of Public Works, DDA, (State) Department of Transportation, Chamber. Frank Bering noted that signage in Europe is excellent; he would like to see Grand Junction be a leader in Colorado for creating a super plan for signage. This budget item needs to be incorporated in the City's Capital Improvements Plan, to be submitted to Council May 15. Frank Bering will chair the committee; Norm Cook and Marjorie Richardson will be asked to represent lodging properties; Diane Schwenke will ask a member of the Chamber's Beautification Committee to serve.

PROPOSED HORIZON DRIVE LOCATION DISCUSSION: Copy of a proposed resolution for consideration by the Board was distributed.

Jann Ertl: opposed to the VCB office staff moving. If the operations are consolidated, he thinks that the VCB would support only Horizon Drive hotels and that the move would create division between Horizon Drive and North Avenue properties. He quoted a

passage from Marle Research that "Chambers of Commerce greatly influence visitors..." If the Chamber gets a call concerning visitors or conventions, Chamber staff needs to be able to step next door to pass that information to the VCB in order for the two organizations to work together. He also feels visibility for the Visitor Information Center at the interchange is important, but there would be two changes to catch visitors with the office staff downtown serving as a visitor center.

Steve Hilliard: Jann brought up some good points; the Board has discussed those matters among themselves as well as with members of the community. The Board has to look at what is the best way to serve the community while accomplishing the VCB's mission. From a business standpoint, moving the administrative/sales operations away from where you do business is not workable. The VCB has an opportunity to locate the administrative/sales staff where the bulk of the business is. The best way to operate a business and the best way to serve guests is to combine the operations. This would be easiest for potential visitors; it would also give the VCB the ability to direct more people around town and expose more people to the entire community.

Karen Moore asked what are the Board's plans for relations with North Avenue properties, the Chamber and other interests? Paul Nelson responded that the Board expects three times the current visitor contacts, which would increase traffic to all parts of the community. Steve Hilliard stated that the VCB and Chamber play complementary roles; the VCB is not saying that the Chamber no longer assists visitors. The concerns raised by the Chamber are mechanical only and can all be worked out.

Juli Cogdill: this is a window of opportunity that comes along once in a lifetime. We will be able to better utilize volunteer hours with such things as mailings and directions and staff will not have to travel to separate locations. The Board must decide how the VCB's budget can best be spent and efficiency is the #1 concern. Expects that the VCB and Chamber will always work together. The end result is that it is the VCB's job to get people here and get them to stay an extra night. She noted three major points: (1) the VCB and Chamber have separate mission statements; (2) combining VCB operations is (management) cost effective; (3) location.

Jann Ertl: Thinks the Board is rushing through a decision. He suggested a discussion group have several meetings before the Board makes a decision; requested this be postponed for a couple of weeks.

Don Bramer: does not view this as "rushing through". The proposed resolution states the Board's intent to Council and tells Council the Board wants to move forward. Expects much more discussion.

Jann Ertl: The public was notified of this only three days ago.

Frank Bering: This proposal was presented at the February 1992 Board meeting; all Board meetings are public. This is far and away

the best alternative; is so obviously a superior way of doing business than splitting the VCB's functions. Jody Kole noted that an RFP was issued in August 1991.

Jann Ertl: Chamber has worked closely with the VCB and all of a sudden, the VCB wants to move to Horizon Drive, abandoning downtown.

Juli Cogdill: People see only the Horizon Drive corridor; we want to bring them into town.

Tom Ralser: We must pull people off the highway.

Diana Saya: the current Visitor Information Center is horrible; it needs to be visible. Visitors expect a separate building. Many of Howard Johnson's guests ask where they might get additional visitor information and they are surprised to find out there is a center just across the street.

Don Bramer: Different opinions have been expressed and will continue to exist. The VCB Board believes that this is the best direction. If someone proves it is not the best business decision, this won't come about. He looks at this as a business decision. His obligation as a Board member is to spend the VCB's budget with justification and in the best interest of the taxpayer. Announced to all guests that a meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 13 with representatives of the Chamber, VCB Board, DDA, local hotels. This is an open meeting and anyone interested may attend.

Frank Bering: The resolution as proposed is in the best interests of the City, the taxpayers and the visitors. Moves that the resolution be adopted as written.

Tom Ralser: Is it premature to adopt the resolution before the Friday meeting?

Frank Bering: The scheduled meeting is to address mechanics (telephone, etc.); if we do not start the process, this will stall 2 - 3 months. We need a decision to move forward; this is in the VCB's best interest and the right thing to do.

Juli Cogdill seconded the motion; passed unanimously.

EXPANDING VCB BOARD: During the retreat, the Board discussed the possibility of adding two new members. Frank Bering stated that these new seats should be members-at-large, not from a specific segment of the business community. Paul Nelson suggested there be no more than 9 members total. He explained Council's appointment process: vacancies are advertised with a deadline for letters of interest to be sent to the City Clerk. Council reviews applications, conducts interviews and makes appointments. Council does not interview all applicants. Paul moved the Board direct the Chairman to write a letter to Council recommending the Board be expanded; Juli Cogdill seconded; passed unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: A film crew from Romanian National Television visited Grand Junction last week; other cities visited were Joplin, Missouri and Clarksville, Tennessee. Crew members were very complimentary of our brochure and other materials we forwarded to them prior to their visit. The crew spent time with several City departments, attended formal Council, and toured the area. Their favorite thing about Grand Junction -- "the people".

A tour company that primarily goes to Yellowstone will bring 14 Belgian tour operators to Grand Junction May 24. These operators are managers of AAA offices of Belgium.

The Colorado Tourism Board will hold its monthly meeting in Grand Junction May 21.

"Welcome to Grand Junction" banners will be ready for three groups that will be here in two weeks. Copies of the map in the back of our brochure will be reproduced and padded for use at the Visitor Information Center and distribution at hotels, attractions, etc.

Steve Hilliard reported on the Grand Circle Association. Changes are being made on the map; while Grand Junction will not be in the Circle yet, it will be more prominent. The Holiday Inn is a full member, Hilton is upgrading its membership, and Best Western Horizon Inn is discussing becoming an associate member. This is a very effective organization and the more involved we are, the better chances are to get funds. Wendel McConnell is Chair of the annual motorcoach fam tour. Steve hopes the VCB Board will continue to look at membership in the Association. The next meeting will be in Salt Lake City, the following in Durango.

Wine Festival: Steve stated this seems to be a cohesive group; they are working on logistics of the festival. There are plans for a Friday night gala with a combination of food/wine/entertainment. The Wine Board asked to have this function at this Hilton; Steve expressed concern about a conflict of interest and the potential for criticism. He requests the Board's input on the situation; he will not accept this function if the VCB Board disapproves. He pointed out to the Wine Board that the Holiday Inn, Ramada and Two Rivers all have facilities to accommodate this event. The Holiday and Ramada were both booked for the night of September 25; Two Rivers was not the type of facility the Wine Board wanted for this particular event. The Wine Board wanted the Hilton because of the floor plan and the ability to have activities both indoors and outdoors.

Juli Cogdill believes that Steve has made every effort to disclose any potential conflict and that the Wine Board has looked at alternatives. Frank Bering stated that Wine Board made a decision to have this event at the Hilton after Steve had encouraged the Board to look at other facilities. None of the Board members sees a conflict of interest in holding this function at the Hilton. The Board appreciates Steve's concern and his bringing this to the Board for consideration.

Frank Bering moved the meeting adjourn; Tom Ralser seconded. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.