

MINUTES OF THE
VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
SEPTEMBER 14, 1993

PRESIDING: Frank Bering, Jr.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cindy George, Paul Nelson, Barney Barnett, Steve Hilliard, Lon Carpenter, Karen Berryman

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Irene Carlow, Barb Bowman

GUESTS: Harvey Tashiro, Cindy Sherrill, Bob Taylor, Jann Ertl

MINUTES OF AUGUST 10, 1993: Barney Barnett moved the minutes be approved, Karen Berryman seconded; approved unanimously.

SPECIAL EVENTS: Grand West - Final report is due October 1; Karen will contact event organizers and remind them of deadline. Wine Fest - Local advertising has begun; promotions are going well. AMTRAK packages are selling. Dolphins Invitational - The final report was received well within the deadline. Twenty-eight teams participated, as well as individual swimmers; 70% stayed at least one night. Total revenue was \$13,243.13; expenses were \$5,841.00 for a profit of \$7,402.13. The VCB funds were used for program postage and supplies. Apple Jubilee - A full day of events is being planned; advertising will appear in The Denver Post (VCB ad will be in the Rocky Mountain News). Renaissance Faire - No report; the event will be held this Saturday, September 18.

Special Event Policy - Any recommended changes to the policy must be approved by Council. Funding for-profit events was discussed; the VCB would have to delve into such an event's financial situation and insure that the VCB funds were not paying the promoter's fee. No changes will be made to the policy for the upcoming funding cycle. Staff will arrange to publicize the availability of applications. Applications will again be due by 5:00 pm the first Tuesday in November.

TASHIRO: Harvey distributed samples of the direct mail piece and described the three-part process: (1) postcards were mailed to Affordable Meetings attendees in advance of the show; Debbie attended the show with representatives of the Hilton and Holiday Inn; a reply card was provided for individuals to indicate interest in participating in an October FAM trip. Additional qualifying information was requested from those who returned the reply card. Continental Airlines will provide airfare for 8 meeting planners to participate in a FAM October 21-24. The VCB, Hilton and Holiday Inn will pre-screen all responses and recommend FAM participants; Continental will review and approve the selected meeting planners.

1994 advertising strategies will depend upon the outcome of the statewide tourism tax vote. Tashiro has developed two scenarios -- one for passage of the tax, one for defeat -- and will be prepared to react quickly. There have been discussions about other associations picking up and producing the Official State Vacation Guide (OSVG), but there is no organization currently scheduled to do it. If this tax is defeated, Colorado will be the only state without a state-wide tourism entity. Research indicates that most people on the Front Range are in favor of tourism as an industry; however, 80% of the people are misinformed about the referendum and the structure of the CTB tax.

The Board discussed its role in educating voters about the CTB tax. Neither the staff nor the VCB as an entity will endorse or take a position on this or any other ballot issue. Individual Board members can, however, speak to service clubs and other organizations as proponents of the tax. Paul will call Tillie Bishop and ask that they get together to meet with George Orbanek. Steve stated that everything the Hilton does will change if the CTB ceases to exist. The losers will be small communities like Grand Junction; smaller ones will have nothing in the way of marketing. Steve noted the significant financial impact to the VCB if we lose the 800 calls generated by the OSVG and travel writer leads from the CTB.

The VCB Annual Meeting will be a breakfast meeting Tuesday, October 26 at 7:30 am at Two Rivers; October 27 will be the alternate date. It was suggested that the meeting include a panel discussion about the CTB tax. Suggested panel members included Tillie Bishop, a CTB Board member and a local business owner who is supportive of the tax. Continental Airlines will be asked to co-sponsor the meeting this year and give away airfare for two.

VISITOR CENTER: September 15 there will be a meeting with the Public Works Department, contractor and architect to finalize change orders. The contractor cannot get a building permit without the change order drawings. Both the drawings and additional expense estimate were due last week.

Responses to the Exhibit RFP were reviewed yesterday. Condit Exhibits and Proctor Productions were the number one and two choices, respectively. Condit's response proposes design work by the Museum of Western Colorado and actual exhibit construction by Condit. Some of the Board expressed concern about \$9,000 in fees to be paid to the Museum of the total \$25,000 budgeted for the project. There was also discussion about the Museum's mission to interpret local history versus the VCB's need to entice people to stop, stay in Grand Junction and visit the various attractions that will be represented in the Center. The Building Committee will meet with Condit's representative and Richard Sims on Thursday, September 23 at 3:00 to discuss the proposal in detail. Cindy moved the Building Committee be authorized to make a recommendation for award of the exhibit bid directly to Council, rather than the VCB Board; Karen seconded; passed unanimously.

BUDGET: The Board's comments have been incorporated in the proposed 1994-95 budget and those revisions were distributed. Personnel is budgeted at 10% less than originally anticipated because of this year's market survey. Three of the five staff members are aligned with the local market and they will receive no increase in 1994. Paul told the Board that the pay structure was revamped a few years ago in response to criticism of City wages. All the professional categories are compared to the Front Range market, then equalized up or down as appropriate. All other City employees are compared to the local market.

Response to JUCO advertising was discussed. Karen will talk with Sam Suplizio regarding a greater VCB presence at the JUCO games.

Lon moved the 1993 Revised and 1994-95 Proposed budgets be approved; Cindy seconded; passed unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Lodging tax receipts are up 10% for the month as well as year to date. Visitor Center is up 7% for the month, 9% year to date; Monument is up 6% for the month, 20% year to date.

Group Sales: The writer from the Holland Herald has completed his article; the majority of this 9-page article is devoted to Grand Junction. This is an advertising equivalent of \$15,000 per page.

In-Focus film crew from Germany will return this month. Their piece will be aired five times in Spring 1994, to a market of 350,000 - 500,000 people. A film crew from Holland will also be here this month; their program will reach 1.2 million people in the Dutch, German and Belgian markets. We will host the Director of Sales from Moab on a personal tour in an effort to work more closely with that community.

Lon moved the meeting adjourn; Paul seconded. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.