

MINUTES OF THE
VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
AUGUST 10, 1993

PRESIDING: Frank Bering, Jr.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cindy George, Paul Nelson, Barney Barnett, Steve Hilliard, Lon Carpenter, Janet Comerford

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Judy Manning, Irene Carlow, Nancy Buettnner, Barb Bowman

GUESTS: Linda Hill, Steve Colony, Kevin Nourse, Cindy Sherrill, Jane Prinster, Jim Shanks, Dave Varley

MINUTES OF JULY 13, 1993: Paul Nelson moved the minutes be approved, Cindy George seconded; approved unanimously.

SPECIAL EVENTS: Wine Fest - Colorado Cellars will not be able to participate because of a change in their licensing. Dolphins Invitational - Attendance was excellent. Organizers are preparing a final report. Apple Jubilee - The event is being expanded this year to include a full day of activities, beginning with a Lions Club pancake breakfast and ending with a barbecue dinner.

VISITOR CENTER: The Building Committee reviewed their discussions with Kevin Nourse and Steve Colony of Alpine C.M.; change orders that would save \$40,000 have been identified. A significant savings will be in eliminating the retaining wall on the east side of the property, adjacent to the subdivision. By moving the parking lot 6 feet, a sloping grade can be used instead of a retaining wall. Other savings will be in roofing materials, cabinetry and some landscaping that was included in the bid. Changing the Payment and Performance Bond requirement to a Performance Bond only had been discussed previously. Staff will request an opinion from the City Attorney to make sure that there is consistency in the way all contractors are treated by the City.

The \$40,000 in negotiated reductions in the bid will not require a new RFP. Council will approve or reject the low bid in the full amount; if approved, change orders will be executed to reflect changes in conditions or specifications. Kevin Nourse stated that, if Council approves the contract, excavation will need to begin as soon as possible to ensure all exterior work would be completed prior to winter conditions.

Lon reviewed the costs and financing recommendations for the construction project. The fund balance will be reduced an additional \$77,000, but will still remain higher than the original budget proposal. This increase in available funds is due to approximately \$55,000 in increased revenues; 1993 expenditures for

the Visitor Center budgeted but not spent; \$15,000 in 1993 programs budgeted but not spent. The original project required \$35,000 in VCB marketing program reductions for 10 years. The final project requires no such reductions and the fund balance will remain higher than the recommended minimum. John Moss will donate \$5,000 toward landscaping. When the Taco Bell was approved, he committed \$15,000 toward installation of a traffic light in 1994.

Barney Barnett moved to accept the low bid of Alpine C.M. for construction of the Visitor Center; Paul Nelson seconded; passed unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Lodging tax receipts are up 19% for July. While July receipts do include Country Jam weekend, the entire month of June was very strong. Calls to the 800 number were up as a result of our Front Range advertising, and visits to the Visitor Center were up. Visits to the Monument showed a 23% increase year to date.

The 1994-95 preliminary budget assumes the CTB tax will not pass. If the tax does pass, the budget can be revised in November. The Travel Industry Association of Colorado has hired an agency to mount a campaign for passage of the tax and set a fundraising goal of \$600,000. Rick Rider, chairman of the campaign, would come to Grand Junction to work with volunteers on how to increase voter turnout for this tax. If the CTB tax is not reinstated, a Special Board Meeting may need to be held the day after the election.

Visitor Center: The Visitor Center is operating with three shifts a day; we have a total of 65 volunteers. There has been an increase in international visitors representing countries we have not previously had visitors from. The volunteers are providing as much information as possible about the Papal visit to visitors planning to go to Denver. Erin continues to survey local lodging properties so we can provide visitors and callers with current information on availability. We provided services to several large conventions during August. Attendance at the Kiwanis convention this month will be higher than last year's gathering in Pueblo.

Group Sales: Sales leads issued during July 93 represented twice the economic impact as sales leads issued in July 92. At the September meeting, staff will have additional information on the NTA Board of Directors post-meeting FAM. We will host six fams during August, including Fettes Tours (our first Canadian tour) and a travel writer whose article will appear in the KLM in-flight magazine next April. National Geographic is working with Dinamation on a 13-part series. We have sent information to convenience stores and all tourism partners advising them of the influx of visitors during the Papal visit. Groups stopping in Grand Junction for meals only will bring an additional \$23,410 to the local economy.

TASHIRO: Photos are being submitted for a full-page advertorial in Continental's in-flight magazine. The magazine will reach 400,000

passengers and will remain in seat pockets for 6 months. A copy of the Peach Festival ad was distributed; the Wine Fest ad will run in September. A proposed contract between the hotels and Tashiro for the ADR study was given to John Shaver for review. Upon Mr. Shaver's approval, the study will be completed and submitted to the Board. 1994 budget planning is underway; a research project at the new Visitor Center is proposed and the feasibility of TV advertising is being studied.

OTHER BUSINESS: The Museum Board would like to hold a workshop with the VCB Board to discuss and develop strategies regarding responsibilities/obligations to help visitors in other parts of town (e.g., Mesa Mall, Downtown, Museum). Debbie will see if the Museum Board could meet on September 23 at 3:00 p.m.

Continental Airlines would like to bring officials from Denver International Airport to Grand Junction September 30 to discuss the new airport. Continental would host a reception from 5:00 - 7:00 for approximately 100 people and has approached the VCB, MCEDC, Walker Field and the Chamber to assist with invitation lists and mailing.

A Budget Workshop is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. September 1. No additional full-time staff is recommended at this time, although part-time staff hours may need to be increased. Staffing needs can be better assessed after spending several months in the new Visitor Center. We can approach Council with additional requests in mid-year, if necessary.

The BLM raft trip will depart the Loma Boat Launch at 7:30 a.m. on Friday, August 20.

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