

VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU  
MINUTES OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
MARCH 9, 1993

PRESIDING: Frank Bering, Jr.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Linda Afman, Steve Hilliard, Cindy George, Lon Carpenter

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

GUESTS: Linda Hill, Jann Ertl

A general discussion took place regarding the multi-agency funding for the Visitor Center in Moab. The Director was contacted by Catherine Robertson, Area Manager for the BLM, concerning the Moab project and the possibility of some public land management agencies participating in some way with our Visitor Center. The Moab project is very different than the VCB's, relative to ownership and responsibilities of the involved agencies. The City of Grand Junction likely would find it unacceptable for any other entity to own the VCB's Visitor Center building or otherwise have control of the facility. However, this may be an opportunity for some type of assistance with exhibits, etc.

The Director met with Ted Swanson, Mesa State College, who is interested in becoming involved with the VCB. He discussed various projects that students could work on and how those projects would be mutually beneficial.

Chairman Frank Bering called the meeting to order.

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 9 AND MARCH 1, 1993: Steve Hilliard moved both sets of minutes be approved. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

SPECIAL EVENTS: The Chairman reminded the Board that each member will be asked to accept responsibility to serve as a liaison between a funded event and the VCB. Board members should attend some of the event's organizational meetings to stay informed of the activities planned, as well as be available to respond to questions about the types of expenditures that are appropriate under the Special Event Policy. Members are requested to accept the following appointments:

Wine Festival - Steve Hilliard and Frank Bering  
Renaissance Faire - Cindy George and Tom Ralser  
Dolphins Invitational - Linda Afman  
Grand West - Lon Carpenter and Karen Berryman  
Apple Jubilee - Barney Barnett and Tom Ralser

BOARD RETREAT: Two facilitators prepared proposals for the retreat, both of whom have very strong credentials. Terry Marle has conducted our research projects for the past two years, and is very experienced in working with focus groups. Her fee would be \$500 plus expenses, discounted from the normal rate of \$1,500. Rich Weight, who was recommended by the Colorado Hotel & Motel Association, is also well regarded and has experience working with boards of directors. His fee is \$1,500 plus expenses. The consensus of the Board is to retain Terry Marle for the retreat; the Director will confirm this with Terry and work with her on the format and topics, as prioritized by the Board.

There was a brief discussion about the multi-purpose event center that has been suggested for Intermountain Events Center. The Board voiced concern about transportation from lodging properties to that location. Linda said that Casper, Wyoming (same population as Grand Junction) built a beautiful coliseum, and the city had the foresight to build it in the part of town that growth was moving toward. Steve said he has heard talk recently of a multi-purpose facility being planned in Moab.

Government lodging per diem rates have been set for 1993. Grand Junction's rate remains at \$41 -- the lowest rate is \$40. Glenwood Springs increased to \$53 and also has a higher allowance for meals than Grand Junction. Durango received a substantial increase over 1992. Steve said that this low rate makes it very difficult for Grand Junction to bid on large meetings. The Board is concerned about how the rates are set as well as how the rate survey is conducted and by whom. The Chairman will write a letter to Scott McInnis to forward the VCB's concerns and gain additional information on what might be done to reflect more realistic rates for 1994.

TASHIRO: Linda Hill distributed a copy of the bicycling ad that will run in the Rocky Mountain News and several resort papers. The ad will be revised to delete all mention of the Mesa because of snowpack. A mock-up of a postcard was also distributed; this will be used for direct mail campaigns as well as retail sales.

The Rocky Mountain News will focus on Grand Junction and dinosaurs in their summer kick-off issue (approximately third weekend in May). Staff has provided the News with names of co-op prospects to try to build a Grand Junction page. Steve voiced his concern about selling dinosaurs and not having dinosaur attractions. He noted that the Dinosaur Valley exhibit is being sold off, and Fruita has not yet been notified about their application for funding Devils Canyon.

Linda discussed 1993 research projects. She is recommending a lodging occupancy rate study to be sponsored by the VCB, conducted by Tashiro. The goals of this research are to establish benchmark numbers; identify trends; determine what our marketing impact has been, not just rate increases; project future growth patterns. It

is hoped that every lodging property would participate and that they would provide information from 1991 and 1992. Each property would receive its own confidential report as well as a comprehensive report. Reports would not identify properties by name. For an additional fee, a hotel could request a report that would compare the subject property with its four key competitors; again, properties would not be identified by name. The MRS is difficult to manage and takes a lot of hotel staff time. This research would be a better indicator of lodging business.

An average rate report for Grand Junction and an occupancy report for the community (1991 vs. 1992) could be generated by month. This would provide quantitative information; we would have concrete data on how the community is performing. Steve's concern would be how these reports would be distributed; if this were available to the public on request, it could generate potential competition. Linda stated that the VCB would not have information on individual properties.

The Director pointed out that the VCB will also do individual leisure surveys in conjunction with NTA and IACVB as well as a motorcoach survey.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Lodging tax receipts will not be available until next week, due to vacation schedules in the Finance Department.

**Visitor Center:** On March 4, the Director, Mark Achen, and Jim Shanks met with Ken Hunt. The results of the "reality check" Ken is conducting should be available within 7 - 10 days. This does include using a moderate design ("footprint") to arrive at estimated costs. Ken was asked to detail in writing his potential fees and all associated costs for a re-design. Ken was not promised any additional contract work. A special Board meeting may need to be called, depending upon when this information is received.

The State Department of Transportation is reviewing our impact study for the access road. The State will give us access from the North end of the property, possibly with conditions attached to that approval. We hope to have a decision early next week.

The City is formulating contingency plans for potential flooding. This could be a PR problem for Grand Junction, depending upon how much and what type of media coverage it receives. The staff will stay abreast of the City's efforts and will prepare to respond to potential negative press.

At Club 20's Annual Meeting, the Executive Committee voted to support reinstatement of the CTB tax if 12% of the gross budget is devoted to regional marketing. The VCB Board's position is to support reinstatement of the CTB tax with no preconditions; the topic of regional funding should not be addressed at this time. The Director is instructed to write a letter to Rich Meredith, Club 20 and local legislators informing them of the Board's position.

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