

MINUTES OF THE VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
OCTOBER 10, 1995

PRESIDING: Paul W. Nelson

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom Kleinschnitz, Dan Sharp, Brad Higginbotham, Lon Carpenter, Barney Barnett, R.T. Mantlo, Karen Berryman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Fay Timmerman, Ken Smith

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Irene Carlow, Judy Shormann

GUESTS: None

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 12, 1995: R.T. Mantlo moved the minutes be approved, Brad Higginbotham seconded; approved unanimously.

BOARD BUSINESS: Special Events - The Kokopelli Marathon met the organizer's expectations for the first year of this event; of 91 participants, 72 were from out-of-town. The Marathon received good coverage from the Daily Sentinel.

Winefest attendance was down, attributed mainly to the heavy snowstorm in Denver.

Meeting date reminder: Regular November meeting will be the 7th at 3:00 pm at Horizon Park Plaza, Suite 211; Special Event Workshop will be November 28, 3:00 pm at the VCB office.

Policy Discussion - Publications

The new Adventure Guide was distributed. Inclusion in this piece is limited to the following:

- Suggested itineraries are consumer driven.
- Attractions, mostly non-profit; some commercial businesses are listed, but are those asked for by visitors and services provided can be done "today". Consumer research indicates 20% of our visitors come to Grand Junction to visit wineries.
- Under the category of museums and the arts are listed or described non-profit operations only; retail/commercial art galleries are not designated as attractions.
- Campgrounds listed are those on public lands and Junction West RV Park (the only campground currently paying the lodging tax).
- Shopping centers or major retail clusters in commercial areas inside the City limits are listed.

Tom Kleinschnitz pointed out that H Road is not continuous between 1st Street and 24 Road. It was also suggested that consideration be given to changing the airport graphic from a prop plane to a jet.

The Restaurant Guide is limited to those facilities within the City limits. Staff makes every effort to identify and include all restaurants by obtaining a listing from City Finance. Restaurants are categorized by type of food served.

The Visitor Guide policy was adopted by the Board in 1994. One option that was discussed is to decrease the quantity of Visitor Guides and produce an advertising-driven magazine for local distribution. This could be open to any potential advertiser and not criteria-driven like the Visitor Guide. The Board's general consensus was to continue publishing an advertising-free Guide in 1996.

Inclusion in the Facilities Guide is driven by what services and business information is requested by meeting planners and tour operators. Staff is currently updating this information and a new Facilities Guide will be printed in early 1996.

Itinerary development for both individuals and groups is guided by fulfilling the client's requests first. Staff makes suggestions, but the client makes the final decision.

A discussion followed regarding what is the VCB's responsibility to develop and provide leads. Meetings leads are not released to tour operators because meeting planners specifically request that their names be given to hotels only. The VCB sends all types of printed materials to meeting planners, so that the various tourism-related activities available are represented.

Fams are usually a result of attendance at trade shows; referrals from the Colorado Group Tour Committee; or from Eileen Gordon (Colorado Travel Marketing); staff qualifies all these leads. The question has arisen of who should pay to bring potential clients to Grand Junction, the VCB or the hotel(s) that will book the actual business? The consensus of the Board is that individual hotels should bear the costs involved of bringing a prospective client to the area.

Copies of the justification for adding the Sales Assistant position were distributed. If this staff position is approved, the VCB can become more pro-active in working the leads currently in our database and developing new leads.

Estimated costs of pursuing, developing and hosting the Dutch tour operator fam were distributed. This fam was unusual because participants paid to attend. Both the VCB and hotels incur costs of hosting a fam. All attendees are not housed at one hotel in an effort to spread out the financial impact. This is a local practice and is very unusual in the industry; generally, only one property is utilized. Business booked as a result of fams generally benefit the Hilton, Holiday and Ramada because tour operators request the largest properties. When those hotels are booked, however, other business flows out to the other properties.

Dan Sharp commented that it is difficult to do last-minute fams; he really needs 3 - 6 months' notice. The Director responded that many fam requests the VCB receives are short notice and staff contacts the hotels as soon as a request is received. An option to relieve this situation could be to determine how many fams a year the VCB will do. The hotels and the VCB can then co-operatively select which ones those will be. Any additional or last-minute fams could be declined with a request to schedule the fam for a future date.

The Ramada, Hilton and Holiday Inn will meet late this month to discuss fams. Dan Sharp suggested Barb Bowman attend that meeting and Tom Kleinschnitz requested he be included also.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Revenues are holding and we expect to meet revised projections. We hosted fams for staff from both the Denver and Colorado Springs CVBs during the Winefest weekend. They were very complimentary of the Visitor Center, its visibility, accessibility and graphic appeal. They commented that neither organization has the volunteer base that Grand Junction has.

OTHER BUSINESS: The "Expand the Tent" committee (Dan Sharp, Brad Higginbotham, Tom Kleinschnitz) will meet at the VCB Thursday, October 19 at 3:00 pm.

Karen Berryman and Lon Carpenter both volunteered to host upcoming Board meetings. Please check the agenda for the location of each meeting.

Karen Berryman moved the meeting adjourn; Barney Barnett seconded. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.