

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

June 9, 2015

Lincoln Park Hospitality Suite at Stocker Stadium/Suplizio Field
12th and North Avenue
Grand Junction, CO

PRESIDING: Brad Taylor, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susie Kiger, Sharon Woelfle, Billie Witham, Kate Graham, Kevin Reimer, Per Nilsson

ABSENT: Glen Gallegos, Don Bramer

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Barbara Bowman, Mistalynn Meyeraan, Kim Machado, Kristin Lynch, Erin Chapman, Katharina Morrison

Guests: Rick Taggart – Grand Junction City Councilmember, Ken Mabery – Interim Superintendent, Colorado National Monument

Visitors: Randy Rudd and Chase Johnston – Holiday Inn and Suites

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m.

Minutes from the May 12, 2015 board meeting: Per Nilsson moved to approve the minutes as written, Sharon Woelfle seconded; minutes approved.

Volunteer Recognition

Barbara Bowman introduced Grand Junction Visitor Center volunteers, Carol Tadvick and Teddy Jordan, to the board. Recently, Carol has reached 3,000 volunteer hours and Teddy has reached 1,000 volunteer hours. Both Teddy and Carol shared how much they have enjoyed helping visitors over the years. The board thanked both Carol and Teddy for their time and support of our visitor center.

Colorado National Monument

Barbara introduced Ken Mabery, Colorado National Monument Interim Superintendent, to the board. Ken provided an update on the activities occurring on the Colorado National Monument (CNM). Through the first quarter of this year, visitation is up 28%. They have had a challenge hiring interpretive employees, however, the interpretive programs should be in place by June 19th. Ken distributed copies of the Foundation Document Overview which explains the CNM's purpose, significance, history, resources and values. The National Park Service will be celebrating their Centennial in 2016 and Ken indicated that all partners may use the Centennial logo in their marketing pieces. The Official Grand Junction Visitor Guide is back at the CNM visitor center. Ken expects that a

permanent CNM superintendent will be in place in October of this year. Barbara thanked Ken for his partnership with the GJVCB and with the upcoming Ride the Rockies event.

Staff Reports

Marketing and Public Relations: Mistalynn Meyeraan recapped the Tourism Matters campaign and thanked the board for their participation in promoting tourism during National Tourism Week and as well as going forward. The data collected for Google Maps last year through the Google Trekker project is now live. 23 local trail segments covering 55 miles have been mapped. Mistalynn displayed the Colorado Riverfront Trail as an example. She thanked Kristin Lynch and Brad Taylor for their help with the project. Recently the GJVCB won an Internet Advertising Competition award for the 2014 E-Newsletter - Best Travel Online Newsletter campaign through our website marketing agency, Miles Media.

Mistalynn further shared the upcoming media and advertising plan which includes three billboards. Media FAMs (familiarization tours) are in full swing. Visitor research will start on July 1st. This will be a year-long project covering all four seasons and will identify who our customers are and what they are interested in. In addition, an economic impact study will be completed by Tucker Hart Adams. It was mentioned that other outdoor organizations are also doing similar studies.

Group Sales: Erin Chapman shared the new sales tracking report to help board members better understand and track the GJVCB's sales efforts. Group Sales Staff have been busy with FAMs as well, including a combined tour operator and media FAM with Outdoor Families Magazine/Adventure Tykes, a Netherlands Travel Trade FAM, and Conde Nast FAM. Our Front Range Sales Representative, Marci Kurronen, attended the Christian Meetings and Conventions Association trade show.

Convention and Event Servicing: Kristin Lynch reported that many events received our services during the month of May including, GMIT Soccer Tournament, Grand Junction Off-Road, HITS Triathlon, and the Downtown Art and Music Festival. Barbara mentioned that the Grand Junction Off-Road is looking at moving the 2016 event to a different date. GJVCB staff will be coordinating with the event organizers to ensure it does not conflict with other events already scheduled around the time they are suggesting. The next event coming up is Ride the Rockies. Kristin will send out details of the event to the board members.

Rick Taggart mentioned that Special Olympics would like to come back to Grand Junction and is potentially looking at the 1st weekend in June, 2016.

Visitor Center: Kristin gave a recap of the Tourism Open House held at the VCB on May 7th. There were 88 participants along with 20 attractions represented. Visitation to the Visitor Center is up 10% over 2014. International visitors are up 12%. Katharina Morrison, our new Visitor Services Specialist, was introduced to the board and she provided a brief background of her career.

Outreach Assignments

Brad reminded the board of the importance of the outreach assignments. He and Billie Witham met with Bennett Price and Rich Sales from Palisade. They are very supportive of the GJVCB's efforts and recognizes our value in marketing the area. Kate Graham mentioned that Don Bramer has met with City Councilmember Chris Kennedy and the outcome was positive. Brad emphasized that the outreach

to the rest of the City Councilmembers and members of the local tourism boards must continue to educate them on our marketing efforts in the Grand Valley.

Strategic Plan

The board discussed the latest suggested revisions to the Strategic Plan made by Susie Kiger. The visitor services section was revised to focus on where the visitors stay and play and how the GJVCB meets their needs, including the possibility of expanding our digital profile to make it easier for customers to get visitor information. Kim will incorporate the revisions and email the final copy to the board for a motion and vote.

Update: On 6/16/15, Kate Graham motioned to approve the Strategic Plan as written. Susie Kiger seconded; motion was approved by a majority (via email) on 6/17/15.

Other Business

Per Nilsson inquired on the status of the GJVCB visitor center building and offices, and the request for Debbie's assistance at the DDA/BID. Debbie mentioned that the DDA is currently interviewing candidates for the director position. The DDA board has not asked for Debbie's assistance yet but they will contact her when they need her. Right now their focus is hiring a director who will outreach to the downtown businesses. Brad and Don will meet with the DDA board chair, Les Miller, to further understand their need and Debbie's role in it. Kevin Reimer mentioned that it seems there is no longer an urgency and agrees to wait and see what assistance the DDA/BID will need.

Based on a discussion at the VCB board meeting in May, Brad suggested that the Special Events committee draft a formal policy that defines the GJVCB's role in Special Events. The policy should outline that the GJVCB does not manage, own, or permit events, but rather provide support assistance to event organizers, in addition to marketing assistance and special event marketing funding. The committee should revisit qualifying factors for special event funding as well, including the possibility of designing a rating system based on data received from an event. Mistalynn will schedule a meeting with the committee to first address the GJVCB's role in special events, then bring a draft of the policy to the July board of directors meeting for consideration.

There being no further business, Kevin Reimer motioned to end the meeting; Per Nilsson seconded, motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 5:07 p.m.