

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

July 14, 2015

Grand Vista Hotel  
2790 Crossroads Blvd  
Grand Junction, CO

PRESIDING: Brad Taylor, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susie Kiger, Sharon Woelfle, Billie Witham, Kate Graham, Kevin Reimer, Glen Gallegos, Don Bramer

ABSENT: None

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

Guests: Rick Taggart – Grand Junction City Councilmember, Marty Chazin – Grand Junction City Councilmember, Darshann Ruckman – Clarion Inn, Amy Jordan and Ben Johnson – Grand Junction Regional Airport, Dave Grossman – Grand Junction Off-Road

The meeting was called to order at 3:08 p.m.

Minutes from the June 9, 2015 board meeting: Kate Graham moved to approve the minutes as written, Don Bramer seconded; minutes approved.

Host Remarks

Debbie Revis, General Manager of the Grand Vista Hotel, welcomed everyone to the Grand Vista. The hotel is having a great year thanks in part to the partnership they have with the GJVCB.

Horizon Drive Project Update

Darshann Ruckman, Horizon Drive Business District (HDD) board member, provided a brief update on the Horizon Drive construction project. The bids for the project came in 10% over what the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) had budgeted. The difference will have to be paid and the HDD board hopes the City of Grand Junction will split the difference with them. If not, the project may be postponed until next year. There is nothing else to report at this time.

Small Community Air Service Grant

Amy Jordan, Business and Administration Manager of the Grand Junction Regional Airport, explained the Small Community Air Service Grant program that is administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation. The grant is for small communities to improve commercial air service to and from their area. Personnel from the Grand Junction Chamber of Commerce, Grand Junction Economic

Partnership, Grand Junction Regional Airport, and the GJVCB have been working together to assemble the grant package which includes reaching out to various organizations, public and private, to secure commitments of cash and in-kind services. The grant request is \$750,000 in federal funds with a 35% local match. If awarded, the grant will be used to secure a daily, round-trip, direct flight from Los Angeles, CA to Grand Junction. This will greatly help with business travel as well as international travel. Several agencies and organizations have pledged cash contributions and in-kind services towards the grant so far. The GJVCB staff recommends contributing \$10,000 in cash and \$15,000 in-kind marketing services. The funds will come from the 2016 operating budget. The grant application is due on July 22, 2015 and the award recipients will be notified in September or shortly after.

A discussion among the board members later ensued during the meeting. Don Bramer feels this is a great economic development opportunity and agrees with staff to contribute the recommended funds and in-kind services. Other board members agreed. Kate Graham motioned to contribute \$10,000 toward the grant; Sharon Woelfle seconded. Motion passed.

### Epic Rides 2015 Recap

Dave Grossman, Event Director for the Grand Junction Off-Road, provided a recap of the 2015 event. He shared a video that highlighted aerial footage of the event. Traditional advertising outreach was 300,000 with approximately 528,000 impressions. Online advertising and social media total impressions were over 2 million. A total of 477 riders participated; 414 amateurs and 63 pros. According to their post-event survey research based on a similar study conducted by Arizona State University, Dave provided the following statistics:

- 243 responded to the post-event survey
- Estimated overall attendance was 10,000
- 52% of the riders were first time participants
- 54% visited Grand Junction prior to the event to pre-ride the course
- 68% were ages 30 – 49
- 55% have income over \$100,000; 15% have income over \$200,000
- Riders came from 20 states and 5 countries. Most of the riders were from Colorado and Arizona
- 15% stayed in Grand Junction 4+ nights; 23% stayed 3 nights; 49% stayed 2 nights; 13% stayed 1 night.
- Room nights estimated to be 70
- Economic impact – estimated to be \$1.07 million with \$628,000 in taxable revenue during the 3 day weekend
- 85% plan to attend the 2016 event

In a five-year time frame, the event organizers hope to reach 1,500 – 2,000 riders. Future objectives include expanding the 3-day event attendance, further develop international attendance, and increase media exposure for the event and the community. For the 2016 event, they are looking at the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in May, which is a concern for the GJVCB since that weekend tends to be the busiest event weekend of the year. The first year of the event was held over Labor Day and the 2<sup>nd</sup> year was held during July. Event attendance during those times were low and were the reasons why the event was moved to the spring of this year.

Dave thanked the board for their past support of the event and hopes the board will continue funding future Grand Junction Off-Road events.

Barbara Bowman mentioned that Epic Rides is requesting \$40,000 total cash for the event. For 2015, the GJVCB had to contribute \$20,000 to cover what other agencies were not able to contribute. Originally, the GJVCB agreed to contribute \$10,000 each year from 2013 – 2105. Staff recommends staying at the \$10,000 level for 2016 and not be responsible for obtaining other resources. Sharon Woelfle said that we may need to take another look at long-term event funding and consider adding other events that support bringing visitors to the area. Rick Taggert suggested that the Epic Rides contract have an escalating clause that focuses on increasing attendance and event registrations, and that total funding will be based on the set escalation.

Due to lack of time, the board agreed to continue this discussion along with the Special Event Committee update at a board workshop scheduled for Tuesday, July 28<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 – 4:30. Location to be determined.

#### Board Discussion Items

- Board Member Recruitment - With the resignation of Per Nilsson, there is a vacancy on the board. Because it is mid-year, there will not be enough time to fill his seat since City Council interviews and appoints this position. The terms for Brad Taylor, Kate Graham, and Glen Gallegos will expire at the end of this year. Applications to fill these seats are currently being accepted by the City Clerk's office through November 6, 2015.
- OHV Tourism Workshop – Barbara mentioned that the GJVCB has been invited to attend this workshop on July 16<sup>th</sup> in Meeker, CO. Don Bramer volunteered to attend.

#### Other Business

- The Reputation Management Seminar presented by TripAdvisor is scheduled for July 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- The August board meeting has been moved from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> due to Debbie and Barbara being out of town. The meeting will begin at 2:00 p.m. with the 2016 budget workshop after which the regular board meeting will begin at 3:00 p.m.

There being no further business, Don Bramer motioned to end the meeting; Glen Gallegos seconded, motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 5:13 p.m.