

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS JOINT WORKSHOP WITH PALISADE TOURISM ADVISORY BOARD
SUMMARY

September 8, 2015

Palisade Community Center
120 W. 8th St. (Main Street and US Hwy 6)
Palisade, CO

Grand Junction Visitor and Convention Bureau Board Members Present: Brad Taylor, Susie Kiger, Kevin Reimer, Billie Witham, and Kate Graham

GJVCB Board Members absent: Don Bramer, Glen Gallegos, Sharon Woelfle

GJVCB Staff Present: Debbie Kovalik, Barbara Bowman, and Kim Machado

Palisade Tourism Board Members Present: Cassidee Shull, Juliann Adams, Jean Tally, Stan Stephens, Brant Harrison, Felix Iovanni, and Rondo Buecheler.

Town of Palisade Staff Members Present: Mayor Roger Granat, Rich Sales – Town Administrator, Ron Quarles – Community Development Director.

Guests: Rick Taggert - Grand Junction City Councilmember, Betsy McLaughlin and Bill Hoffman – Peach Town News; Teri Cavanagh and Paul Aietta – Cobb and Associates

The meeting convened at 3:08 p.m.

Brad Taylor welcomed all in attendance and everyone introduced themselves. Brad proposed that both boards meet at least annually to discuss collaboration efforts in marketing the Grand Valley.

Barbara Bowman explained the current marketing efforts of the GJVCB, which includes attracting meeting planners to bring their groups/meetings to our area. In addition to the Front Range market, the staff has also been focusing on the Salt Lake City market. Earlier this year, the GJVCB staff met with the CBS affiliate KUTV out of Salt Lake City and as a result, KUTV's "Road Trippin" segments featured the Grand Valley and aired not only in Salt Lake City but most of Utah. This was paid for jointly between the GJVCB and the Palisade Chamber of Commerce. Jean Tally mentioned that the Wine Country Inn has been advertising in the Salt Lake magazine and Devour Utah magazine and as a result has seen an increase in stays at the Wine Country Inn. They have also advertised in Texas Monthly. Barb added that the GJVCB has also marketed in Texas the past few years because of the direct flights from Dallas to Grand Junction.

Rich Sales inquired about the status of the Small Community Air Service Grant. Debbie Kovalik said that award recipients could hear back as soon as September 17th. Rick Taggert added that

this is a two stage process. If the grant is awarded to our community, the next step is addressing the issues of negotiating with an airline. Right now the focus is on obtaining the grant.

Brad shared a document that outlined the breakdown of special event funding awarded by the GJVCB for events held in Grand Junction, Fruita, and Palisade for the years of 2011 – 2015 YTD. Out of the \$165,740 total amount, \$46,465 (38%) has been awarded to events held in Palisade. Debbie explained the history of special event funding from the GJVCB. The GJVCB was instrumental in starting WineFest and since its beginning, has been one of the major sponsors of the event. This sponsorship is separate from the special event funding budget, which now is made up of marketing grants. Barbara added that the GJVCB has partnered with Powderhorn Mountain Resort for additional marketing and packaging opportunities. Teri Cavanagh asked Barbara to notify Cassidee if there are additional marketing opportunities with Powderhorn that Palisade can coop with.

Rich expressed appreciation for the GJVCB's support of the Palisade Bluegrass Festival each year. It is in its 7th year now and has been a good event for the community.

Rich provided an update on the Cameo Sport Shooting Complex. Contracts have been sent out to Xcel Energy and Snowcap Coal. The Town of Palisade has a grant to purchase the land and once it is finalized, the design process will begin. Palisade will own the land and lease it to Colorado Parks and Wildlife. They envision this facility will be part of economic development and tourism by bringing in major competitions from out of state. Colorado Mesa University is interested in using the complex for their archery and shooting teams.

Jean suggested that the GJVCB look into promoting the entire Grand Valley and not just Grand Junction. Barbara replied that the GJVCB promotes the entire valley on a daily basis but concerning hotels, there are political aspects because of how the lodging tax ordinance is stated and who collects it. The GJVCB's website and visitor guide does include attractions, businesses, and activities that span across the entire Grand Valley. In addition, lodging properties outside of the Grand Junction city limits can elect to participate in the GJVCB's Marketing Services program for a fee similar to the lodging tax, where they would receive all of the services that Grand Junction lodging properties receive. Jean proposed allowing advertising in the Grand Junction Official Visitor Guide. Barbara indicated that the GJVCB board of directors and the Grand Junction City Council would need to discuss and consider that suggestion before implementing it.

Felix Iovanni inquired about the City of Grand Junction's current stance on short-term vacation rentals. Barbara replied that the City has a process of identifying the properties within the city limits that are not currently collecting sales and lodging tax. The majority of these properties are collecting the taxes and the City is seeing an increase in listings on VRBO and HomeAway each month. City Council is taking a "wait and see" approach to how this growing lodging product will evolve before considering and passing any ordinances.

Challenges with attracting groups during the weekdays were mentioned by Rondo and the discussion continued around transportation for events. It was suggested to look at options for transportation to Powderhorn.

Rich mentioned that the grant for the Fruit and Wine Scenic Byway is due in 2016. The GJVCB will provide a letter of support when it is needed.

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.