

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

January 10, 2017

Two Rivers Convention Center
159 Main Street
Grand Junction, CO

PRESIDING: Don Bramer, Vice Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brad Taylor, Kevin Reimer, Jamie Lummis, and Josh Niernberg

MEMBERS ABSENT: Julie Shafer, Susie Kiger, Billie Witham

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Phyllis Norris and Mayor Pro-Tem Marty Chazin

STAFF PRESENT: Greg Caton, Debbie Kovalik, Barbara Bowman, Erin Chapman, Katharina Morrison, and Kim Machado

GUESTS: Ken Mabery – Colorado National Monument Superintendent

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m.

Minutes from the December 13, 2016 board meeting: Brad Taylor moved to approve the minutes as written; Jamie Lummis seconded. Minutes approved.

Colorado National Monument Update

Ken Mabery, Colorado National Monument (CNM) Superintendent, provided the following updates on activities at the CNM:

- A recent visitor use survey reflected a 99% overall positive rating overall which is the first time ever this high of a rating has been achieved.
- Upgrades to the East Entrance will start in 2017 beginning with lane changes. Depending on the feedback from Glade Park residents, there may be an extra lane for residents only.
- The Colorado National Monument Association (CNMA) is raising funds to obtain additional displays at the Visitor Center. They are also looking at parking for school buses and motor coaches.
- As part of an outreach with outdoor education groups, environmental education will be a focus where by the next school year, an agency will be responsible for each grade level of education.
- Renovation work on Rimrock Drive will begin in either April or May to rebuild the underlay in some areas that are failing. This will occur during the visitor season because of weather.
- A matching grant application for funding under the National Park Centennial Act will be submitted in 2017. If funds are granted, they will be applied toward the upgrades for the plaza at the East Entrance.
- The CNM was recognized by the National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration for safety achievements in the areas of bike safety, signage, speed limits, and partnership with local law enforcement. More details will come.
- The CNM and CNMA has partnered with Colorado Mesa University to produce a new film for the Visitor Center.

Staff Reports

Marketing and Public Relations – Barbara Bowman reported the following:

- The redesigned 2017 Official Grand Junction Visitor Guide has gone to print and will be delivered in late January or early February.
- The 2016 Annual Report is being designed/written with delivery for the Annual Meeting on January 31st.

- Other projects in the works include: a new discount to replace golf packages, the Denver Golf Expo – February 10th – 12th, and Winter Wine Festival in Denver on February 9th.
- The Holiday Shopping campaign concluded on December 23rd. Total campaign spend was \$4,652.50 which resulted in over 530,000 impressions.
- A Facebook page dedicated to the business side of the GJVCB has been created to begin the local PR campaign. <https://www.facebook.com/GrandJunctionVCB/>

Group Sales – Erin Chapman reported the following:

- A total of 113 group leads were generated in 2016 resulting in a 16% increase over 2015
- 126 Groups received convention servicing 2016 which exceeded the goal of 125
- Possibly 50% of the leads generated in 2016 may be confirmed by the middle of 2017
- Worked with the Grand Junction Fire Department on a bid for the 2019 Missouri Valley Fire Chiefs Association annual conference. This conference was last held in Grand Junction in 1996.

Suggestions were made to modify the Group Sales report to include potential business with projected economic impact. Staff will work on adding those indicators to the report. Don suggested as a marketing strategy to look at ways to approach local executives and government officials to encourage the associations they are a member of to bring those meetings to Grand Junction. This may be a discussion item for the annual retreat.

Visitor Services – Katharina Morrison reported that visits to the Visitor Center have continued to increase from September through December since construction on Horizon Drive is finished. She expects visits to continue to increase into 2017. Three new volunteers will be starting at the Visitor Center soon and she continues to recruit for more volunteers.

Discussion Items

City Manager, Greg Caton, explained to the Board the events that led up to City Council's decision to select Pinnacle Venue Services (PVS) to take over the management of Two Rivers Convention Center, which will occur on March 1st. The maximum financial commitment from the City will be \$225,000 annually which will lower the subsidy. He also related City Council's decision to move forward with placing the Event Center project on the April 4th ballot where voters will consider a proposed quarter-percent city sales tax increase that would fund the construction, as well as improvements to Two Rivers Convention Center.

Kevin Reimer mentioned that he has heard from members of the community that they prefer other projects be funded instead of an Events Center. He then explained how his hotels supports the community through property, sales, and lodging taxes and feels that an Events Center would provide further support to the community through increased tax collections and jobs.

Other Business

Don encouraged the Board Members to review the 2015 – 2020 Strategic Plan to identify 3 – 5 priorities to accomplish for 2017. Jamie mentioned item #3 (Building and developing that are mutually beneficial through education, communication and outreach) can be a focus, in particular, to coordinate with Colorado Mesa University to have a VCB booth during their "Parents Weekend" event.

Barbara reminded the board about the GJVCB's Annual Meeting on January 31st at Two Rivers Convention Center and the annual retreat on April 6th at the DoubleTree Hotel.

There being no further business, Brad Taylor motioned to end the meeting; Kevin Reimer seconded. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.