

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

February 14, 2017

Mesa County Library – Central Branch  
443 N. 6<sup>th</sup> St.  
Grand Junction, CO

PRESIDING: Julie Shafer, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brad Taylor, Kevin Reimer, Jamie Lummis, Josh Niernberg, Tim Pollard, Don Bramer, Susie Kiger, Britt Mathwich

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Phyllis Norris

STAFF PRESENT: Greg Caton, Debbie Kovalik, Barbara Bowman, Mistalynn Meyeraan, Kim Machado, Derrick Jones (GJVCB Intern)

GUESTS: Landon Balding, Mike Anton, Jeff Franklin, Steve Reimer – Event Center Committee. Kevin Reimer is also a member of the Committee.

Several representatives from local lodging properties and GJVCB staff members were present for the Event Center presentation.

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

Minutes from the January 10, 2017 board meeting: Don Bramer moved to approve the minutes as written; Josh Niernberg seconded. Minutes approved. Tim Pollard abstained from voting since he was not present at the January meeting.

#### Event Center Presentation

Landon Balding, Marketing Campaign Manager for the Event Center Committee, shared an artist's rendering of the proposed multi-purpose event center which will include 5,200 seats for major sporting events such as indoor soccer, basketball, hockey, rodeo/equestrian events and motor sports. Events such as concerts and family shows can hold up to 7,000 seats. There will be enough space for larger tradeshow, banquets, meetings and conventions. The facility will also include suite/club seating, a renovation of the kitchen and 8,000 additional square feet of breakout space. According to a recent study, over 6,200 parking spaces exist within a seven-block radius of the convention center so the committee feels there is adequate parking to support all events.

He further shared the Committee's views on why a renovation of Two Rivers Convention Center and the addition of a new multi-purpose Event Center is needed. The Committee feels the Event Center will boost tourism and bring outside spending back to Grand Junction to spur additional economic growth and increase sales and property tax revenues to be used to better fund schools, road improvements, and many other community projects. The Committee projects that the Event Center will bring in an additional \$30 million in direct spending to the community. It is estimated that 443 new jobs will be created through construction of the project with 200 – 240 new jobs to support the combined venue operations. In addition, a new hotel is expected to be built adjacent to the facility that will also create additional new jobs. The Committee also estimates an additional 80,000 new visitors to the area annually who will attend events held at the Event Center. He also stated that combining Two Rivers Convention Center with the multi-purpose event center is estimated to net a positive operating position of more than \$500,000 annually.

This project will be placed on the April 4<sup>th</sup> ballot for voters to consider raising the city sales tax a quarter-percent from 2.75% to 3.0% to fund the construction and improvements. The increase will be dedicated to the project and will end in 30 years unless the debt is retired early. Compared to other surrounding communities, this increase will match the city sales tax rate of Fruita, Palisade and Delta. Montrose is currently at 3.3%.

A Town Hall meeting to discuss the proposed Events Center is scheduled for March 12<sup>th</sup> at the Avalon Theatre.

### Special Events Committee Update

The Special Events Committee met on January 9, 2017 to consider 6 applications for marketing assistance. Their recommendations are as follows:

- Colorado Lavender Festival – Requested \$5,235. Recommended award: \$3,600.
- Grand Valley Marathon – Requested \$1,000. Recommended award: \$1,000.
- GJ Enduro by MAD Racing – Requested \$3,300. Recommended award: \$2,500.
- Grand Junction Air Show – Requested \$5,000. Recommended award: \$5,000.
- Palisade Bluegrass & Roots Festival – Requested \$1,800. Recommended award: \$1,000.
- Tour de Vineyards – Requested \$4,000. Recommended award: \$1,000.

Brad Taylor motioned to approved the Committee's recommendations as stated above; Josh Niernberg seconded. Motion approved. Julie Shafer abstained from voting since she is a member of the Grand Junction Air Show committee.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the reduced budget for funding special events. As a result, some events that were funded last year may not receive funding this year. The Committee asked if \$10,000 from the \$20,000 capital request for the mobile visitor center be reallocated toward funding the additional special events requests and that a sponsor be garnered toward the purchase of the trailer for the mobile visitor center. Greg Caton mentioned that commitments have been made to City Council based on their adoption of the budget, however, Administration will take a look at the current budget and also begin considering the potential cost of the trailer project to determine any savings that may be considered for other areas.

Comments and suggestions relating to the appropriate amount for the special event budget and tracking visitors to funded special events were further discussed. Due various viewpoints as well as a lack of time, it was suggested that this topic be added to the agenda for the upcoming annual retreat.

### Board Discussion Items/Other Business

- Don Bramer reminded the board members to review the Strategic Plan and submit to the Staff one or two strategic priorities for 2017 to be considered at the annual retreat.
- Julie Shafer related suggestions for local public relations to get the message out to the community about the importance of tourism. Ideas included a weekly page in the Daily Sentinel and contacting other media outlets to relate stories of local tourism. Britt Mathwich mentioned that one of the classes at CMU is working on a public relations project and he will check on what that is. Julie encouraged the board members to come up with additional ideas and proposed a committee be formed to head the project. Susie Kiger volunteered to assist.
- Barbara Bowman thanked the board members for attending the GJVCB's Annual Meeting on January 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Barbara reported that the GJVCB Staff recently hosted a Japanese FAM and a snowmobiling FAM from Canada. Staff members will be attending the GO West Summit in Reno, NV on February 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> and has 47 appointments with top international tour operators. Staff will be attending the National Tour Association's Travel Exchange in St. Louis, MO on February 26<sup>th</sup> – March 2<sup>nd</sup> and have 39 appointments with tour operators. Staff and 2 GJVCB Board Members will be attending the Travel and Adventure Show in Denver on March 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>. Susie Kiger and Julie Schafer has volunteered to assist staff with this booth.
- Mistalynn released the 2017 Marketing Plan to the Board Members.

There being no further business, Josh Niernberg motioned to adjourn the meeting; Jamie Lummis seconded. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m.