

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

May 9, 2017

Home Loan State Bank
205 N. 4th St.
Grand Junction, CO

PRESIDING: Julie Shafer, Chair

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

Members Absent: Jamie Lummis

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Phyllis Norris

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

GUESTS: Jamie Hamilton

The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m.

Minutes from the March 14, 2017 board meeting: Don Bramer moved to approve the minutes as written; Josh Niernberg seconded. Minutes approved.

JUCO Update

Jamie Hamilton, JUCO Tournament Chairman, provided a brief overview of the 2017 JUCO World Series Tournament. This year is the 60th anniversary of the tournament. SportsEvents Magazine, a national industry publication produced by the SportsEvents Media Group, recently recognized JUCO as “an Award-Winning Event to Watch”. Major League Baseball will be live streaming the last two games of the tournament on MLB.com. Local sports writer, Patty Arnold, along with a retired AP sports writer, are writing a book about the history of JUCO and it will be available for sale at the banquet and tournament. KREX is also producing a special report on the history of JUCO.

A new 16' x 27' video board has been installed directly to the right of the current scoreboard at the stadium. It will have the ability to show replays, video highlights, promotions and advertising, player information and more. All funds for the board were donations from the Grand Junction Rockies, Colorado Mesa University, JUCO as well as a large anonymous donation. Jamie thanked the GJVCB and the Board for their continuous support and sponsorship of JUCO.

Staff Reports

Marketing and Public Relations – Mistalynn Meyeraan shared the Dramatically Different 2.0 campaign ads and reported the following:

- Grand Junction was featured in the Colorado Tourism Office's (CTO) monthly newsletter for May which focused on warmer weather and outdoor adventure.
- Public Relations (PR) impressions have reached over 12 million YTD with an ad value of over \$112,000. *Correction: 12 million impressions is incorrect. Updated report reflects a total of 7.9 million impressions YTD.*
- Print ads for the American Airlines campaign will be featured in Aspen and Glenwood Springs over Memorial Day weekend and the online ads will be featured in the Los Angeles area.

- The GJVCB is a “Grand Day” sponsor with the Grand Junction Economic Partnership (GJEP) to produce another video focusing on 7 adventures to do in one day. Filming will take place at the end of this month.

Group Sales – Erin Chapman reported the following:

- 44 leads have been generated through the end of February, which is 38% to goal, and 8 leads have been generated by our Front Range Sales representative year-to-date.
- 93 groups are currently receiving convention and event servicing.
- Sales staff hosted the 2nd Quarter Coffee on April 13th. It was attended by 22 event organizers and 17 representatives from area lodging properties to discuss this year’s major events that may have an impact on the lodging properties.
- 4 FAMs were hosted in April that included German and Japanese tour operators. The Japanese FAM was sponsored by Brand USA, the marketing organization for the United States.
- Staff also hosted a German Tour Operator RV FAM that included 11 people from Canusa Touristik.

Don Bramer mentioned that he met with the GJVCB Sales Staff to understand the sales process for destination management organizations. After explaining what he learned, he recommended focusing on attracting meetings and groups verses large conventions. He further suggested that all of the board members should attend an education session separate from the regular board meetings to understand the functions of the GJVCB, such as group sales. This will ensure that the board meetings will not get off track from the agenda and enough time will be dedicated to more important discussion items. Staff will discuss this further and will bring 2 to 3 recommendations to the Board for consideration.

Visitor Services – Katharina Morrison reported the following:

- Visits to the Visitor Center are up 2.5%.
- The Visitor Center welcomed travelers from Thailand, Egypt and Slovenia during the month of April.
- The Tourism Open House was held on April 27th at the Visitor Center. Over 50 attendees visited with representatives from 23 attractions. Feedback of the event from both attendees and the attractions was positive.
- Katharina will represent the GJVCB at the Downtown Ambassador Program meetings and trainings to equip those volunteers with information to assist downtown visitors.
- Attended Beacon Fest on behalf of the Western Colorado Volunteer Management Association and received 3 volunteer leads for the Visitor Center.
- The Visitor Center has seen an increase in people requesting relocation information.

Executive Director Update

Debbie reported that the brand research is completed and has been reviewed by Staff. A meeting will be set up in June to share the executive summary with the Board. Staff will reach out to the board members to determine the best date/time. A request for proposal (RFP) will be issued at the end of May for advertising, website marketing and public relations services for the years of 2018 through 2020.

She further explained the City department name change from Visitor and Convention Bureau to Visit Grand Junction. Staff will be discussing the roll out plan for the name change and this will be communicated at a later date.

Board of Directors Retreat Next Steps

The action items resulting from the April 6th retreat were reviewed and the following items were identified as priorities:

- Lodging tax increase – Brad suggested that this topic be discussed in September or October after the RFP process for selecting the advertising, website marketing and public relations agencies is completed.
- Special Event Funding – A meeting will be scheduled to discuss the Board’s recommendation/input for special event funding to be considered during the 2018 budget review with City Staff.
- Joint meeting with the Greater Grand Junction Sports Commission (GGJSC) Board of Directors – Julie mentioned that she will reach out to the Board Chair to arrange a meeting date. Per the Board’s request, Staff will forward the agreement between the GJVCB and the GGJSC to them for review.

Other Items

Debbie gave an update on the Grand Junction Off-Road event. Currently there are over 600 riders and has already surpassed last year’s registrations. Planning for the event is going well so far. Board members suggested that part of the sponsorship agreement requires that Epic Rides’ share their database to the GJVCB. Another suggestion is to create an end-of-race survey with an incentive to all riders/registrants to gather relevant visitor data in order to determine the effectiveness of this event.

Barbara mentioned that she will be attending the Bike Expo in Denver on May 19th and 20th.

Julie thanked Councilmember Phyllis Norris for the proclamation for National Travel and Tourism Week, May 7th – 13th, that was read during the May 3rd City Council meeting.

There being no further business, Brad Taylor motioned to adjourn the meeting; Josh Niernberg seconded. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.