

VISIT GRAND JUNCTION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

October 10, 2017

The Avalon Theatre  
645 Main St.  
Grand Junction, CO

PRESIDING: Julie Shafer, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Don Bramer, Susie Kiger, Brad Taylor, Josh Niernberg, Britt Mathwich

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kevin Reimer, Jamie Lummis

COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT: Phyllis Norris

STAFF PRESENT: Greg Caton, Jodi Romero, Linda Longenecker, Gregory LeBlanc, Susan Hyatt, Barbara Bowman, Mistalynn Meyeraan, Erin Chapman, Holly Prickett, Kerry Graves, Katharina Morrison, Kim Machado

GUESTS: Marci Kurronen

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m.

Minutes from the September 12, 2017 board meeting: Josh Niernberg, moved to approve the minutes as written; Susie Kiger seconded. Minutes approved.

Barbara Bowman reported that the Tour of the Moon event had a record number of riders with 2,400. WineFest sold out with a record attendance as well. She recognized and commended Julie Shafer and her team for their coordination and hard work at the Grand Junction Air Show despite the weather.

Advertising, Website Marketing and Public Relations RFP Update

Susan Hyatt, Purchasing Agent for the City of Grand Junction, provided a brief overview of the request for proposal (RFP) process. The recent RFP for advertising, website marketing and public relations was posted publicly on May 23<sup>rd</sup> and three finalists in each category provided oral presentations on September 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. The evaluation committee consisted of the Board Chair – Julie Shafer, Vice-Chair – Don Bramer, City Manager – Greg Caton, City Communications Manager – Sam Ranguet, and staff from Visit Grand Junction including Debbie Kovalik, Barbara Bowman and Mistalynn Meyeraan. The committee selected Miles Media for the advertising and website marketing services, and Ore Communications for public relations services.

City of Grand Junction and Visit Grand Junction 2018 Recommended Budget

City Manager Greg Caton presented the 2018 City Manager's recommended budget to the Board. The total recommended budget is \$158,336,372 which is a \$17.9 million, 12.7% increase from adopted 2017. The increase is due to a \$12.9 million increase in major capital projects and re-establishment of deferred replacement of specialty operating equipment, fleet and computers. The projected ending fund balance of \$21,592,048 is \$3.4 million above the 2017 adopted budget and a 19% increase in the fund balance.

In August of this year, City Council unanimously adopted the 2017 City of Grand Junction Strategic Plan. The principles and directives of the plan provided direction during the development of the budget. The Strategic

Plan has two guiding principles, Partnership and Intergovernmental Relationships and Fiscal Responsibility along with four strategic directives, which are high-level priorities for the City. These directives helped to frame the components in the budget: Public Safety, Planning & Infrastructure, Diversification of our Economic Base, and Communication, Outreach & Engagement.

The recommended budget was presented to City Council at a workshop on October 2<sup>nd</sup> and will continue at another workshop on October 16<sup>th</sup>. A public hearing has been scheduled for November 15<sup>th</sup> with another public hearing and adoption of the final budget scheduled for December 6<sup>th</sup>.

Barbara Bowman next presented the 2018 Visit Grand Junction recommended budget. We are projecting a 3.1% increase in lodging tax collections for 2018 which will put us at over \$1.5 million for the first time in the organization's history. Total revenue is projected at \$2.22 million. The overall operating budget amount will be similar to the 2017 adopted amount at \$1.99 million. Program expenses include a \$50,000 increase in paid advertising, a \$17,000 increase in special event funding and a 50% increase in personnel training. Outdoor Recreation will be at the center of a new marketing campaign and rebranding.

Visit Grand Junction has aligned its' 2018 budget and activities with the City's Strategic Plan as follows:

- Public Safety – in partnership with the Downtown Development Authority and Parks and Recreation Department will continue with the Downtown Ambassadors Program by providing training and resources.
- Diversification of Economic Base:
  - Create promotions and continue partnership with GJEP surrounding the Outdoor Retailers Market to support business recruitment
  - Support business retention through our website and the Visitor Center
  - Support new business growth through promoting marketing and selling lodging properties, attractions, transportation and tour companies to meet the needs of visitors
  - Recruit and hire a tourism intern from a local higher education institution to promote talent development
- Communication, Outreach and Engagement – through increased social media and online engagement, meetings/outreach in the community, and engagement with boards and commissions including GJEP, Greater Grand Junction Sports Commission, CMU and Grand Junction Chamber of Commerce. We will also increase the frequency of gatherings in community spaces with our mobile Visitor Center.

Brad Taylor recommended the Board continue to meet with tourism and elected officials from Palisade and Fruita, and maintain partnerships with them since outdoor recreation is a mutual focus.

Brad Taylor motioned to approve the 2018 Visit Grand Junction recommended budget as presented; Susie Kiger seconded. Motion passed.

#### Front Range Sales Update

Marci Kurronen, Front Range Sales Representative for Visit Grand Junction, provided an update on group sales activities in the Front Range area year-to-date. In August, Marci and Erin Chapman hosted the annual event for meeting planners at the DU Hospitality School with approximately 50 – 60 in attendance. She also hosted a reception at the Colorado Society of Association Executives annual conference in June. She continues to participate and attend local area industry organization meetings such as Colorado Society of Association Executives, Society of Government Meeting Planners, Rocky Mountain Meeting Planners

International, Christian Meetings and Conventions Associations, Meetings Industry Council and Destination Colorado.

Developing new and creative methods to reach clients along with pursuing new markets will be a focus for 2018. New markets include administration professionals and Christian meetings and events. She continues to research and prospect to non-meeting groups such as hiking/biking clubs, fairs, rodeos and car clubs. She also will continue to assist and support the Sales Staff with shows and events in the Front Range that will bring more leisure business to Grand Junction such as the Golf Show, AAA Member Show, Travel Adventure Show and Bike Colorado Show. She mentioned that Grand Junction has a solid reputation or "brand" in the Front Range. Meeting planners often mention and express appreciation for our long-standing support of the organizations we are a member of.

#### Other Business

Barbara reported that registrations for the upcoming 2017 Governor's Conference on Tourism is currently at 440 and is expected to reach 500 within a few days.

Brad Taylor mentioned that the GJVCB logo is on this year's Tour of the Moon jerseys. This year ridership reached 2,400 with many of them riding for the first time. Despite the inclement weather, most riders commented that they will return again to ride in the 2018 event.

There being no further business, Josh Niernberg motioned to adjourn the meeting; Brad Taylor seconded. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.