

VISIT GRAND JUNCTION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

January 9, 2018

Holiday Inn and Suites  
2751 Crossroads Blvd.  
Grand Junction, CO 81506

PRESIDING: Julie Shafer

MEMBERS PRESENT: Elizabeth Hallgren, Susie Kiger, Brad Taylor, Paul Petersen, Josh Niernberg, Tammy Anderson, Kevin Reimer, Britt Mathwich

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Phyllis Norris

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

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

Minutes of the December 12, 2017 meeting: Brad Taylor motioned to approve the minutes as written; Josh Niernberg seconded. Minutes approved.

Official board meeting notice location for 2018: Josh Niernberg motioned to approve the official location of the Visit Grand Junction board notice outside of the City Clerk's office for 2018; Paul Petersen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Staff Reports

Group Sales – Erin Chapman shared the year-end stats for 2017 for the Group Sales department. A total of 115 leads were generated for 2017 and 185 groups/events received servicing. Staff attended the Front Range Tradeshow on December 6<sup>th</sup> in Denver and met with some of the over 250 meeting planners in attendance.

Barbara Bowman mentioned that she attended the National Tour Association's (NTA) Travel Exchange Conference on December 14<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup> in San Antonio, TX. She and Debbie Kovalik will be attending the GO West Summit in Salt Lake City, UT on January 13<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup>.

Erin explained the job tasks and duties of the Group Sales Assistant, Kerry Graves, who supports both Erin and Barbara. Some of the primary tasks include tracing, contacting and upselling the over 5,000 records in the Visit Grand Junction sales database, preparing sales staff for industry tradeshows and follow-up data entry from the tradeshow appointments. Based on Kerry's efforts, an estimated \$673,000 in economic impact was generated in 2016 and 2017.

Visitor Services – Katharina Morrison reported that visits to the Visitor Center in 2017 were up 5.6% over 2016 for a total of 12,798 visitors. The top countries that visited were Canada, Germany, England-UK, Australia and France. The top states that visited outside of Colorado were California, Texas, Utah and Illinois. There are currently 75 active volunteers at the Visitor Center. The annual volunteer appreciation banquet was held at the DoubleTree Hotel on December 6<sup>th</sup>.

Marketing and Public Relations – Mistalynn Meyeraan reported that total visits to our website for 2017 were up 8.5% over 2016. A record 1,610,138 page views was also reported which is 1.3% up over 2016. Public Relations impressions for 2017 reached 30,861,817. One major PR story includes Wine Enthusiast magazine naming Colorado’s Grand Valley as one of the 10 Best Wine Getaways of 2018. This was the result of a FAM that VGJ hosted.

Mistalynn further reported that she will be attending the Outdoor Retailers Show in Denver later in January and in July. In partnership with the Greater Grand Junction Sports Commission and the Grand Junction Economic Partnership, they will be promoting Grand Junction as the Outdoor Capital of Colorado at the shows. She also mentioned that the rebranding is moving forward with the testing several marketing campaigns with 3 different market focus groups. These segments along with a timeline for the logo presentation will be presented at the VGJ board meeting on February 13<sup>th</sup>.

#### Downtown Grand Junction Updates

Kevin Reimer explained the plan his company has for building a new Hilton hotel called Tru to begin construction in March 2018. The hotel will have 5 stories with 92 energy-efficient rooms and will be located on Colorado Avenue between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> streets. The hotel will not have meeting space. He further highlighted plans to work with the City to build another hotel attached to Two Rivers Convention Center that will have a junior ballroom. Construction on this project is scheduled to begin in late 2019. Kevin distributed an economic impact analysis relating to the projects to the board members and the hotel renderings and plans were on display for viewing.

Brandon Stam, Downtown Development Authority Executive Director, explained the residential projects planned for downtown, particularly with the former R-5 High School and White Hall. Mixed use development is planned for the former R-5 High School that includes townhomes on the vacant land of the property with lofts and retail shops in the existing school building. Apartments will be constructed on the former White Hall property that also includes a few retail spaces on the ground floor.

Other residential projects planned for downtown include the potential for townhomes on Main and 10<sup>th</sup> streets along with townhomes in the Las Colonias area.

#### Other Business

- The board members discussed possible meeting locations for 2018. The majority agreed that moving locations around the area will help with becoming acquainted with various tourism-related partners, besides the lodging properties. Suggestions include meeting in Fruita and Palisade with their respective tourism boards, the Grand Junction Regional Airport, Reynolds Polymer and Leitner Poma. Staff will work on scheduling the locations.
- The board members agreed that sometime in April will be ideal for the annual retreat. Possible agenda items will be considered during the February board meeting.

There being no further business, Paul Petersen motioned to adjourn the meeting; Susie Kiger seconded. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m.