

VISIT GRAND JUNCTION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

February 13, 2018

Two Rivers Convention Center
159 Main Street
Grand Junction, CO

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, Holly Prickett, Erin Chapman, Kerry Graves, Kathy Plunk, Kim Machado

GUESTS: Karin Mast – Miles Partnership LLLP.

The meeting was called to order at 3:04 p.m.

Minutes of the January 9, 2018 meeting: Josh Niernberg motioned to approve the minutes as written; Paul Petersen seconded. Minutes approved.

Special Event Funding Recommendations

Debbie Kovalik reviewed the new process for submitting special event funding requests. For 2018 funding, a total of 24 applications for funding were received by the deadline of February 1st. The Special Events Committee reviewed the applications and recommended to fund 15 events for a total of \$33,950 which leaves a balance of \$6,050 in the special events line item for unexpected events that the committee can consider on a one-off basis. The recommendations from the committee are as follows:

- Desert RATS Trail Running Festival - \$1,500
- Greater GJ Sports Commission – 5 events for a total of \$5,000
- Fruita Fat Tire Festival - \$2,500
- Grand Valley Marathon - \$1,000
- Downtown Music Festival - \$2,000
- Palisade Bluegrass Festival - \$2,250
- Lavender Festival - \$3,750
- Colorado River Fest - \$2,500
- Scott Enduro Cup - \$2,000
- JJ Horse Celebration - \$450
- Desert's Edge Triathlon Festival - \$2,500
- Tour de Vineyards - \$4,000
- Downtown Car Show - \$1,500
- Canyon Edge Dance Classic - \$1,500
- Downtown Art Festival - \$1,500

Paul Petersen moved to approve the committee's recommendations for special event funding; Brad Taylor seconded. Motion passed.

The applications will be uploaded to Dropbox for the board members to review. In the future, the applications and the Special Event Committee's recommendations for funding will be forwarded to all board members in advance of a motion and vote on the recommendations.

Julie Shafer recommended that since the administration process for special event funding has changed, the process should be reviewed again at the annual retreat.

Miles Partnership Presentation

Karin Mast, from Miles Partnership, reviewed the rebranding process for Visit Grand Junction. She also recapped the results and the key takeaways of the focus group research to understand current perceptions of Grand Junction and determine whether the correct target markets have been identified. She further explained the recommendation for the 2018 creative which includes the tagline – "Live Grand" and the keyword/phrase – "Now That's Grand". The first-person narratives include what it is like to live in and experience Grand Junction. Examples of print and digital ads were shared along with activity-specific videos that support the creative.

The rebranding may take up to 18 months to develop and launch. Next steps include communicating the research and rationale of the brand via the annual meeting, introduce the tagline into the advertising campaign and determine if it aligns with other organizations, develop a logo and brand guidelines, and develop adoption goals and actions.

Discussion and Board Recommendation to City Council on Lodging Tax Rate Change

City Manager, Greg Caton, recapped a meeting the Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board had with City Council in the fall of 2016 regarding increasing the City's lodging tax rate. City Council provided feedback to the board and staff requesting specific details on how the additional revenue would be utilized before bringing the question to a ballot. The board eventually recommended to City Council to postpone placing this initiative on the ballot and Council eventually brought two other priorities/questions for the Spring 2017 election. Since then, representatives from the Grand Junction Chamber of Commerce, Greater Grand Junction Sports Commission (GGJSC), the Visit Grand Junction Advisory Board (VGJ) along with City representatives have been meeting to discuss how much to increase the lodging tax and the best use for allocating those revenues. The group has proposed a 3% increase which will bring the total lodging tax to 6%. Allocations for the additional 3% include, 0.75% support for the GGJSC, 1% for airline support through minimum revenue guarantees, and 1.25% additional support for VGJ's marketing efforts. Total checkout rate will be 14.02%.

Julie Shafer inquired about the future of the Vendor's Fee and the subsidy to Two Rivers Convention Center. Greg is recommending a gradual decrease in the Vendor's Fee amount that is given to VGJ each year instead of removing the revenue source completely. He also mentioned that the monetary support for Two Rivers Convention Center could be picked up by the general fund. Details will be worked out so that VGJ can benefit from the potential lodging tax increase.

The topic of the lodging tax rate change will be discussed at a City Council workshop on March 5th. A majority of the board members felt that more time is needed to discuss this further before making a recommendation to City Council about the proposed increase. A VGJ Advisory Board special session is scheduled for March 1, 2018 from 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

There being no further business, Kevin Reimer motioned to adjourn the meeting; Josh Niernberg seconded. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 5:44 p.m.