

VISIT GRAND JUNCTION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

September 11, 2018

The Factory  
750 Main St.  
Grand Junction, CO

**Presiding:** Julie Shafer, Chair

**Board Members Present:** Brad Taylor, Susie Kiger, Kevin Reimer, Tammy Anderson, Elizabeth Hallgren, Josh Niernberg, Britt Mathwich, Paul Petersen

**Board Members Absent:** None

**Guests:** Todd Sadow – Mountain Bike America/Epic Rides

**Staff Present:** Elizabeth Fogarty, Kim Machado

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 pm.

Minutes from the August 21, 2018 meeting: Paul Petersen motioned to approve the minutes as written; Britt Mathwich seconded. Motion approved.

**2018 Grand Junction Off-Road Report**

Todd Sadow, President of Mountain Bike America/Epic Rides, presented a summary of the 2018 Grand Junction Off-Road event. He shared the history of the event from 2012 – 2018. Grand Junction was the first expansion market for the Epic Rides series which has grown to 4 events per year. A new event has been added in Arkansas called the Oz Trails Off-Road. Additional off-road events are being planned and will be added to the series.

The Grand Junction Off-Road target audience is male, average age of 36 years. Most are married with children. According to Epic Rides' statistics, there were 752 registered riders which was an 8% increase over 2017. Total mountain bike event attendees (riders and their party) were 1,996.

Objectives for the 2019 event include a 20% increase in riders to 900 and increased media coverage. With support of the BLM & the Colorado Plateau Mountain Bike Trail Association (COPMOBA), they would like to enhance the rider experience through safe and more enjoyable trail selection while decreasing infrastructure costs. The 2019 event is scheduled for May 17 – 19, 2019.

Todd thanked the board and Visit Grand Junction for their sponsorship and support of this year's event.

**Lodging Tax Ballot Update**

Julie Shafer provided a lodging tax ballot update. The campaign committee recently met with local hotel representatives to update them on the ballot. Some hoteliers expressed concerns about not receiving updated information on the status of the ballot and campaign. Because of this, the hotels have been invited to attend future campaign meetings as well as Visit Grand Junction board meetings to hear updates and address their questions.

Julie asked the hotel representatives in attendance for their comments. Shana Martin from the DoubleTree Hotel encouraged the board to continue their support to the lodging properties, restaurants and others in the industry. She suggested including a message for the campaign relating to having more affordable flights for retirees with grandchildren.

Josh Niernberg asked if the lodging tax ballot passes if the Grand Junction Off-Road will be funded by the Greater Grand Junction Sports Commission (GGJSC). Elizabeth responded that is the intent and VGJ will provide value in other ways through our marketing expertise and services, such as data analysis. Overall, the goal of VGJ's event support is to increase attendance at each event and help events improve over time to support the community brand. Once an event nears capacity and has time to build up their own marketing budget, usually within 3 years, then VGJ's assistance will shift to other new events. Kevin Reimer commented that that he would like VGJ's support for the Grand Junction Off-Road to continue and feels the event is important to our branding to compete with Moab. Julie added that the MOU with the GGJSC will assist with the concerns around funding the Grand Junction Off-Road to ensure VGJ is not left to fund everything.

### **Visit Grand Junction Board Business**

- Future Board Member Prospects – Julie asked the board members if they have visited with prospective board candidates. Tammy Anderson mentioned that one of the Short-term Rental Committee members would be a good fit and she will reach out to them. Several additional suggestions were made, including contacting former applicants. Kim will gather those names and will share those with the board at the next meeting.
- 2018 Governor's Tourism Conference – VGJ is sponsoring 5 – 10 local community members to attend the 2018 Governor's Tourism Conference on Oct. 29-31 in Vail, CO. The sponsorship will cover the conference registration and hotel room. The goal is to help community members see a broader perspective of tourism and how the Colorado Tourism Office is involved.
- Visit Grand Junction Reorganization Update – A formal offer for the Data Analytics and Research Analyst position will be made soon. Three individuals have been selected for interviews scheduled for September 13 for the Administrative/Financial Analyst position.

### **Other Business**

Brad inquired if an agreement has been made between the BLM and Epic Rides relating to the use of trails for the Grand Junction Off-Road race. Elizabeth replied that based on Todd Sadow's comments, they are in discussion and Todd seems pleased with the direction.

There being no further business, Britt Mathwich motioned to adjourn the meeting; Paul Petersen, seconded. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.