

VISIT GRAND JUNCTION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

October 9, 2018

Palisade Community Center  
120 W. 8<sup>th</sup> St.  
Palisade, CO 81526

**Presiding:** Julie Shafer, Chair

**Visit Grand Junction Board Members Present:** Tammy Anderson, Susie Kiger, Elizabeth Hallgren, Josh Niernberg, Britt Mathwich, Paul Petersen

**Board Members Absent:** Brad Taylor and Kevin Reimer

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

**City of Palisade Representatives and Palisade Tourism Advisory Board Members Present:** Michelle Gossage, Juliann Adams, Jean Tally, John Sabal, Keith Ehlers, Cassidee Shull, Felix Iovanni, Bridgett Gutierrez (Cranium 360)

The meeting was called to order at 3:06 pm.

**Palisade Chamber of Commerce Update**

Palisade Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, Juliann Adams, presented Visit Grand Junction with a framed artwork of this year's Peach Festival in appreciation for our \$2,000 sponsorship. She provided updates on Palisade's restaurants (new and renovated), orchards, wineries, and upcoming events. The Cameo Shooting and Education Complex is partially open to the public while development of the shooting and training facilities continues. The Mesa View Hotel has been sold and the new owners intend to keep the hotel open year-round. The Chamber is considering creating a new event in July 2019 to generate visitation.

**Palisade Tourism Advisory Board Update**

Michelle Gossage, City of Palisade representative for the Palisade Tourism Advisory Board (TAB), mentioned that the TAB is participating in the coop with Visit Grand Junction for the Colorado Official State Vacation Guide. Bridgett Gutierrez summarized the marketing campaigns to highlight tourism in Palisade which includes mountain biking, wine tours and agritourism. A Ski and Stay package is planned for the winter as part of a coop with Wine Country Inn and Powderhorn. Lodging tax revenue for Palisade is projected to increase 15% over 2017.

The Colorado Plateau Mountain Bike Trail Association (COPMOBA) has applied for a grant with the Colorado Division of Wildlife to help fund the construction of the Palisade Plunge trail. Award notification is expected in November. Construction of the trail will begin in the Spring of 2019 with completion in the Fall of 2020. The plunge is a 32-mile backcountry single-track trail connecting the top of Grand Mesa to the town of Palisade, a 6,000-foot descension. Historical and educational markers will be installed along the trail.

Keith Ehlers inquired about using the Summer Outdoor Retailer (OR) campaign messaging and logos for their marketing. Elizabeth Fogarty explained that the campaign was designed to create awareness of

Palisade, Grand Junction and Fruita, but it is not the brand for the valley. Visit Grand Junction (VGJ) has budgeted a branding initiative for 2019 that will encompass the entire valley and will take 4-6 months to complete. As the Destination Marketing Organization representing the valley, VGJ will deploy the brand message once it is developed. We will then educate the community and empower businesses on how to support the brand through their own brand voice to assist their business marketing initiatives.

Jean Talley commended Visit Grand Junction for including the entire valley in their upcoming marketing and branding efforts.

### **Visit Grand Junction Update**

Elizabeth Fogarty provided an overview of the activities and initiatives VGJ has participated in since September. These include, the National Parks Loop grant award, partnerships with CMU, sponsorships for the 2018 Governor's Conference on Tourism, community outreach, and support for events such as WineFest. She explained the reorganization and future strategies of VGJ and announced that the Data Analytics/Research Analyst and the Administrative/Financial Analyst positions have been filled. Interviews for the remaining open positions will take place within the next few weeks. The Official Grand Junction Visitor Guide will go through a complete redesign and will include short content highlighting locals and unique offerings of the Grand Junction area. VGJ has generated a winery survey to ensure we have up-to-date information for the wine tour brochure and to pitch PR and earned media. She encouraged all wineries to complete the survey.

Visit Grand Junction's 2019 requested budget will be presented at the November 13 VGJ board meeting.

### **Lodging Tax Ballot Update**

Julie Shafer provided a brief update on the campaign for the lodging tax increase ballot. Jean Talley expressed concern about how the additional 3% increase will affect smaller lodging properties and whether this has been discussed with them. Julie added that several campaign meetings have been held and have been well attended by hotel owners and representatives where concerns and questions were addressed. Feedback has been positive, and hotels have been supportive.

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

Minutes from the September 11, 2018 meeting: Josh Niernberg motioned to approve the minutes as written; Paul Petersen seconded. Motion approved.

There being no further business, Susie Kiger motioned to adjourn the meeting; Elizabeth Hallgren, seconded. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 4:57 pm.