

GRAND JUNCTION VISITOR & CONVENTION BUREAU  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING

December 11, 2012

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel  
743 Horizon Dr., Grand Junction

PRESIDING: Per Nilsson, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Bell, Lon Carpenter, Lynne Sorlye, Jessica Stimmel, Ron Beach, and John Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT: Glen Gallegos and Paul Peterson

STAFF PRESENT: Barbara Bowman, Debbie Kovalik, Erin Chapman, Layne Whyman, Mistalynn Meyeraan, Melanie Wiseman, and Kim Machado

GUESTS: Brad Taylor and Kate Graham

The meeting was called to order at 3:14 p.m.

Minutes of NOVEMBER 11, 2012: Lon Carpenter moved to approve the minutes as written, Lynne Sorlye seconded, motion approved.

HOST REMARKS: Per Nilsson, General Manager of the DoubleTree by Hilton hotel, gave a brief welcome and indicated this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row as being host.

BOARD RECOGNITION: The Chair reported that three board members will be departing: Lynne Sorlye, Paul Peterson, and Jessica Stimmel, who were each presented with an award and appreciation for their service on the Board. Debbie Kovalik presented a plaque and appreciation to Per Nilsson for his service and commitment as Board Chair.

2013 OFFICERS ELECTION: Debbie Kovalik provided a brief recap of the bylaws, including that board members must meet at least eleven times per year and the Chair cannot serve for more than two consecutive terms.

Per Nilsson noted that he and Glen Gallegos were re-approved by City Council for a three-year term on the Board.

An election by ballot was held for the Board Chair and Vice Chair. Lon Carpenter and John Williams noted their interest for the position of Board Chair and Mike Bell noted his interest for Vice Chair. Board members voted and Lon Carpenter was elected as Board Chair for 2013. Mike Bell was elected Vice Chair for 2013.

**NEW BOARD MEMBERS:** The Chair noted that Brad Taylor, Daren Cole, and Kate Graham were approved by City Council. Brad Taylor is a retired Park Manager of the James M. Robb – Colorado River State Park and will serve a three-year term. Kate Graham is a Public Lands Organizer for Conservation Colorado and will serve a three-year term. Daren Cole is the General Manager for Powderhorn Mountain Resort and will serve a one-year term.

**EXPAND THE TENT UPDATE:** Barbara Bowman explained the Expand the Tent marketing program for new board members who were present. Staff is waiting on a final decision from RV Ranch (deadline is next week). Bella Sonata will hold off joining the program until next year.

**UPDATE ON TOUR OF THE MOON & NEW MOUNTAIN BIKE EVENT:** Barbara Bowman reported that Mike Heaston, the event coordinator, has submitted the required permit to the National Park Service for use of the Colorado National Monument for the event. Mike is waiting on a decision about the permit. He has been informed that there may be a delay for all permit reviews since the Monument will be undergoing a Tourism Activity Review. Mike Heaston indicated to the VCB that in order to make the event successful he would need a decision that the permit is approved or not by March 1, 2013.

A suggestion was made to send a letter from the Board to Lisa Eckert, Park Superintendent, explaining the economic impact to the community. A letter will be drafted and submitted to the Chair for signature.

**New Mountain Bike Event:** Scheduled for Labor Day or the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend in September, 2013 and includes a pro bike race and criterion. Todd Sadow, event coordinator, became interested in Grand Junction as the location for this event as a result of an e-mail from Dave Grossman, encouraging him to consider the area. Todd met with Barbara Bowman and Layne Whyman and is very pleased with the VCB's assistance with the event. The BLM event costs, which were originally quoted at \$14,000, have now been reduced to \$6,000 after a discussion between Todd and the BLM. The letter of intent is currently being amended by the City Attorney. Economic impact is worth \$500,000.

2013 MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS: Barbara Bowman encouraged board members to give suggestions as to possible meeting locations for next year's board meetings. January's meeting will be held at the Springhill Suites. Depending upon when Spring Break is scheduled, the March board meeting may have to be moved to the third Tuesday in March.

#### STAFF REPORTS:

- Erin Chapman reported that we are 77% to goal with leads pending. The Year-end Wrap-Up in November was well attended and many expressed a positive outlook for 2013. The Hershey Track and Field event will be held the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in June, 2013 and will not conflict with the Special Olympics, a new event in early June. Top points include:
  - Leads may be down due to the fact that business is going directly to the hotels without including the VCB.
  - According to the Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) international product inventory, 136 international tour companies now feature Grand Junction, 53 of which are new.
  - We continue to see success with FAMs. As a result of FAM tours that have visited, Grand Junction is now featured as a new destination in the catalogs of 16 international tour companies.
  - The Grand Vista has reported that they have booked 185 tours for 2013; 70 of them are Chinese.
- Layne Whyman reported that as of the end of November we currently have 125 events that are in the works which is 100% of goal. Rocky Mountain AAA has requested 3 Wine Train dates for 2013 and we have seen a boom in writer groups.

There are changes in the administration staff of major arts and culture commissions in the valley with whom the VCB works. A discussion of the artwork in front of the Visitor Center and how it is acquired lead to an explanation of the program in the City that requires 1% of the cost of any major capital improvements to buildings to be used in purchasing art for that building. In addition, rotating art displays now exist at Two Rivers Convention Center, Tiara Rado, and City Hall.

- Melanie Wiseman reported that the Visitor Center has 90 active volunteers, some of which work either weekly, as a substitute, or for outside events. Highlights include:
  - Volunteers received computer training on the new visitgrandjunction.com website in November.
  - New name badges have been ordered which will include the new title "Tourism Ambassador".
  - We have hosted school tours in the Visitor Center.
  - New lettering has been ordered for above the entrance of the Visitor Center.
  - The number of visitors to the Visitor Center is lower than the previous year, which was 18,000 visitors.
- Mistalynn Meyeraan reported the following:
  - Beginning to work on 2013 marketing plan; feedback from the staff is due in January.
  - The 2013 Visitor Guide is in the editing stage.
  - Future recaps of Special Events will be provided in a dashboard style. Still waiting on a few more events to submit final reports.
  - Mistalynn is participating in a test project related to an Apple product related app for the Colorado National Monument. The app will expand to other formats at a later time.

Barb and Mistalynn shared a Top 10 list of VCB highlights for 2012 (attached). A high-level overview of the board reports was given.

#### OTHER BUSINESS:

Debbie Kovalik recognized and presented a gift to Kathy Dirks, who is retiring, for her partnership with the VCB over the past years.

The next VCB Board Meeting will be at the Springhill Suites on Tuesday, January 8, 2013 3:00 pm.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:37 p.m.

Chair

VC

(5) Loui ~~###~~

(6) Duke ~~###~~ |

John |

Alan |

Per |