

# Minutes

## Moab Area Travel Council

### Advisory Board Meeting

July 15, 2009

5:30pm

### Moab Arts and Recreation Center

Art room

**Members Present:** Colin Fryer, Arlo Tejada, Bob Jones, Mark Stuenkel, Jason Taylor, Bob Greenberg, John Knowles

**Members Absent:** Steve, Wang, Fiona Raison, Rachel Paxman

**Staff:** Marian DeLay, Tina Snyder

**Guests:** None

1. **Meeting Called to Order:** 5:31pm
2. **Approval of Minutes:** Bob Greenberg asked that “and passed unanimously” be added after all motions that do pass unanimously. He also pointed out the need to use initials to separate the two Bobs on the board. Jason made a motion to pass the minutes with these corrections, John 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion and it passed unanimously.
3. **Public Q & A:** None
4. **Discussion and Action Item's:**
  - a. **Sunparks Budget:** Marian presented and explained the SunParks budget. She showed the board the ads that SunParks has placed and explained the administration of the organization. Bob J. asked that he be given a copy of the budget and ads. Marian invited him to come by the office to discuss it further and Bob J. agreed to do so.
  - b. **AAA request:** Marian presented the AAA ad renewal for approval, stating that since the ad resulted in more requests for information than any other source it was well worth the cost of \$8,296. John moved that the board renew the AAA ad, Jason 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion and it pass unanimously.
5. **Director's Report:**
  - a. **UTIC report:** Marian reported she had just attended a UTIC meeting (which she Chairs and Arlo sets on the board) that was hosted here in Moab on July 15<sup>th</sup>. She stated that there was concern about funding as it is not a given, but performance based and that they fail to include things such as property taxes and other taxes paid by businesses owners. Also there is concern that the Utah Office of Tourism Budget decreased from 11 million to 7 million. Another concern was the efforts by Melva Seine of the Utah Restaurant Association's to get legislation passed that will take 1/3 of each counties TRCC taxes for a state-wide advertising campaign. She explained that Grand County TRCC tax was used to fund for the Arena, Airport, Star hall, Thompson Fire Station and that 1/3 of the TRCC tax they could lose if this passes is \$83,000. Bob asked if the advertising

## Minutes

market is local and Marian stated it would be local, regional and national. Bob G. stated that UAC is against this legislation and is doing a study to the affects this would have on counties. Marian reported that our representative, Christine Watkins is against the proposal and while Senator Hinkins, said he was opposed to it, he would take it under consideration. Marian also reported that Lt Governor Gary Herbert is not as pro tourism as Governor Huntsman was, so there needed to be some relationship building, perhaps inviting him to Moab. Marian reported that the Travel Council will be sending swag to several upcoming GOP Golf & Bowling Tournaments and emphasized the need to let our legislature know how important tourism is to Grand County.

- b. Visitation report:** As of June 30<sup>th</sup>, Arches visitation is up 7.99% with a 6% increase in camping, Island in the Sky up 4.5% with a 7% decrease in camping, Dead Horse Point up 20.7% and Thompson Welcome Center is up 10%. The DOT reported only a .02% increase in traffic through June. Marian cautioned that while we are doing well, we can't take anything for granted.
- c. TRT report:** Monthly reporting properties are down 3% through May. Marian stated that in talking with property owners, she is seeing that the higher end properties are discounting their rooms to get sales, so while room nights are up, sales dollars are down. In the low to medium range properties sales are up or flat. Campgrounds are also doing extremely well. John asked how TRT looked if you compared it to 2007's figures. Marian stated she didn't have those figures with her, but would do the comparison. She stated that there was a 17% increase in Colorado Visitors at the Thompson Welcome Center and that the 3 properties that reported for the Co-op application show a 33% increase of Colorado visitors. TRT has shown a steady 3% decline throughout the year. Colin stated if we finish out the year at only 3% decrease we have been successful and that many other places in Utah were not doing nearly as well.
- d. Theatre Ad:** Marian told the board that she had a great opportunity to put our commercial at the 5 mega-plex theatres in northern Utah, including Thanksgiving Point, Sandy and Ogden and that it run during the Harry Potter Movie. All five of the Utah theatres are completely sold out for all showings of the movie and all five were in the top 20 of sales nationwide, including the number 1 and number 2 spots. The entire campaign was \$6,000 for the entire summer and also includes our commercial running in the concession area. The board agreed she made a good decision.
- e. Co-op application report:** Marian presented the Co-op Application on Tuesday and received 3 comments. 1) Love what you have done with your application, 2) What is the expected return (Marian stated that being conservative with the unknown economy that we expected a 3 to 1 return. and 3) Why were only 3 properties used this year vs. the 5 properties last year. She stated that everyone thought her application looked good. Marian stated that there was 2.2 million dollars in request and only 1.4

## Minutes

million dollars available and therefore we may only get a portion of our request. Marian said that she will know on August 13<sup>th</sup> if, and how much, funding we will receive.

- f. **Travel Trends report:** Business travel is down and that one tour company that comes to Moab actually went out of business. Jason reported that one company had removed all of its Moab tours for 2010. Marian added that there was some good news that the top leisure tours are to the National Parks, the Western desert states (although it did not include Utah) and Florida.
  - g. **New Television Series report:** Marian informed the board that Trail Nation TV has approached her about sponsoring a new television series for the Discovery Channel and would like to come make a presentation to the board. It would be for a 7 minute ATV segment that they would come and film in Moab. The cost is \$38,000 for two years and would reach a total of 2 Billion viewers. After a brief discussion, it was decided that Colin and Marian would get together and decide if it is worth having them come make a presentation to the board. Bob J. asked if there was a possibility that business could co-op and if they would consider expanding the topic past just ATVs.
  - h. **Upcoming Fam tours:** Marian passed around the list of completed fams and said there are 6 more Fams coming up that include: The Travel Channel who is filming only in the Arches, a German bike magazine, Marco Polo Planet One tour operator, Christian Radio in France who has 10 stations, Kathryn Sutton a journalist doing a story for Justluxe, a German Magazine. Fabio Negro with Hotel Planners is the product manager for North America. Fabio has been busy setting up FIT's and IT's and was here in April and is coming back. Marian reported that Mike Horne came in April and did a backcountry trip with the huts and it snowed 26 inches. We will be in the October issue of Back Country Magazine.
6. **Committee Reports:**
- a. **Marketing report:** Colin reported that the Marketing Committee decided not to meet until after we know whether or not we get the UOT funding. Colin did say that the MPI (Meeting Planners International) Convention had been held in SLC recently and that there were over 25,000 attendees. He added that if you make just one connection with the right person it was worth going. Marian reported that Michele attended the convention and she reported that the attendance of meeting planners was very low in relation to the suppliers and that the Utah booths were in the back with Hawaii and Las Vegas being the most visible. Bob J. asked if we knew how the SLCVB thinks it went and Marian said she had not talked with Scott yet, but would. Michele did say that a woman who had been a meeting planner for 30 years gave a presentation and gave Michele permission to use the power point presentation she gave. Marian stated that it could be awhile before we know if anything would result from Michele's attendance.
  - b. **California report:** None

## Minutes

- c. **Airport report:** John said that the Airport Board had changed the meeting to a date he could not attend so he had no report. Bob G. who is also on the airport board reported that the FAA inspection was done and the FAA now wants more money and additional airport management staff. He also said that Enterprise Car Rental Company would officially open on Monday.
  - d. **Chamber report:** Jason reported that the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration went well, that the parade was a little bigger and the whole celebration is getting bigger and better each year. He did state that the Chamber would be asking for an increase in the firework funding from the Travel Council next year. Bob G. said that people stated our fireworks display was longer than those in Grand Junction.
  - e. **Airline committee report:** Bob G. stated that the committee did a questionnaire to identify interest in flight destinations and Las Vegas came out on top by a large margin. He said they now are going through a list on what will make a successful approach to carriers and are two thirds through the list. Jason stated that his boss would show his support through a letter or whatever they needed. Bob G. said it was too soon, that now they need to make sure we can have something credible before trying to sell it. Marian reported that Kelly with the airport, Terry with TSA and Marcus Lafrance with Redtail aviation all said they would like to be on the committee. A brief discussion followed.
7. **Other:** Bob J. said he noticed that the first 2 weeks of July there were a lot of vacancies at the motels, but that now it seems he is again seeing the no vacancy signs so that is a positive sign. Bob J. also stated that he was impressed with the fact that we are still getting families. Marian reported that the Park Service is seeing more RV rentals and although the sizes of the RV's are smaller, they are still coming. Bob J. said the fact that gas prices are down considerably from last year also helps.
8. **Future Agenda Items:** None.
9. **Adjourn** – Jason moved that the meeting be adjourned at 6:40pm, John 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion and it passed unanimously.