

## **Minutes**

**El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau**

**Advisory Board Meeting**

**Thursday, January 12, 2006, 4:00 P.M.**

**The Mount Franklin Room, El Paso Convention and Performing Arts Center (CPAC)**

### **Board Members Present**

Cindy Fought  
Bernie Olivas  
Lidia Flynn  
Pat Valdez-Rios  
Suzanne Azar  
Linda East  
Adeline Rogers  
Michael Shoffit  
Marilyn Munder

### **Board Members Absent**

### **CVB Staff**

Bill Blaziek  
Bryan Crowe  
Pat Genera  
Pat Garrett  
Wendy Garrett  
Pifas Silva  
Michael Patterson  
Susie Gaines  
Leesy Ramirez

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

- The meeting was called to order at 4:14 P.M.

## **II. REVIEW OF MINUTES**

- Minutes were filed as presented.

## **III. UPDATES**

### **A. Financials: Distributed and reviewed financials for October and November 2005.**

- Revenues improved in all areas during the months of October and November.
- CPAC increased expenses due to increased activity and purchase of kitchen and banquet equipment.

### **B. Convention and Tourism Development: Pat Garrett**

- Pat Garrett was introduced as the new director of Sales for the El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau. Pat is a twelve-year veteran of the travel industry, most recently was district sales manager for Advantage Car Rentals. Before joining Advantage, Pat was a travel counselor with Carlson Wagonlit Travel in El Paso.

### **C. Theater: Wendy Garrett**

- The El Paso symphony was held in October and the Nutcracker in December with plans to return.
- ShowTime El Paso took place in November. Plans to attract a younger audience for this series are in motion.
- Ricky Martin Concert plans underway at the Abraham Chavez. El Paso has been chosen to launch his 2006 concert tour (Jan 15) and is sold out.
- Willie Nelson Concert scheduled for February 12<sup>th</sup> is already sold out.
- Riverdance is scheduled to open the new Plaza Theater on March 17<sup>th</sup>, with a total of five performances.

### **D. Operations: Bryan Crowe**

- Completion of the Plaza Theater is in its final weeks. Theatrical equipment, stage floor, seating, lifts, and historical furniture are all currently being installed. Backstage and Greenroom improvements underway.
- IT Upgrades are part of future plans.
- A new ticketmaster agreement will improve technology for ticket sales and accountability.

- Paul Enger was announced as the new Production Coordinator.

**E. Food and Beverage: Michael Patterson**

- Kitchen is in its final stages. Non-slip floor has been completed and plans for new equipment are in the works.
- New menu will be finalized within the next two weeks.
- Concession carts are part of the next step for the Plaza Theater and McKelligan Canyon. This will occur during the months of January and February, and will optimize sales and improve the professional look of the locations.
- A record 1,575 were present for the Rotary Sunbowl Luncheon. Sunbowls first downtown Fan Fiesta attracted record crowds also.

**F. Communications: Pifas Silva**

- Vanessa Andrade is controlling all media clippings.
- Local coverage given to the city of El Paso and/or the El Paso CVB/CPAC for the months of November and December include: The El Paso Times, What's Up, Chamber of Commerce Newsletter, State Comptroller, and El Paso Inc.
- Coverage included the Thanksgiving meal served to the less fortunate initiated by mayor John Cook, the Ricky Martin concert, and the Wells Fargo Sunbowl Fan Fiest.
- Channel Seven conducted two interviews with Bill Blaziek. The first in reference to the P.R. value of Texas highways and the second interview dealt with the positive image Glory Road is bringing to El Paso.

**G. Film Commission: Susie Gaines**

- 30 leads for November and December
- New script written by Ethan Hawk called The Hottest State was released in November, with a scheduled filming for March.
- Four new features for the month of December.
- Room Nights year to date are 526, with an economic impact of \$828,800.
- Stanton Street has created a new document depository which will allow photos to be uploaded into a file for easier access.

**IV. AGENDA**

**A. Recent Tourism Initiatives**

- Bill Blaziek presented updates on the Mayor's Tourism Cabinet and the Empowerment Zone's tourism efforts.

**B. Tax Abatement/Exemption for Downtown Hotel Development (Pat Valdez-Rios)**

- Michael Shoffit, president of the El Paso Hotel Motel Association stated that the HMA supports and encourages private investment in the lodging development, but expressed opposition to public incentives, such as hotel occupancy tax revenue rebates for such development and asked advisory board members to share this concern with their respective city council representatives.

**V. OPEN DISCUSSION**

- Bernie Olivas addressed the success of the Sunbowl. The excellent weather and competitive spirit added to the success of the game. National attention, positive press, and a positive economic impact were all aspects of the Sunbowl.

**VI. ADJOURN:** Next Advisory Board meeting will be held on February 9, 2006 at 4:00 P.M.

