

Minutes

El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau

Advisory Board Meeting

Thursday, May 11, 2006, 4:00 P.M.

The Las Palmas Del Sol Room, El Paso Convention and Performing Arts Center (CPAC)

Board Members Present

Bernie Olivas
Cindy Foght
Lidia Flynn
Jane Ratchiff
Suzanne Azar
Pat Valdez-Rios
Adeline Rogers

Board Members Absent

Marilyn Munden
Michael Shoffit

CVB Staff

Bill Blaziek
Bryan Crowe
Pat Genera
Wendy Garrett
Susie Gaines
Pifas Siva
Terrie Todd
Leesy Ramirez

I. CALL TO ORDER

- The meeting was called to order at 4:11 P.M.

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

- Minutes were filed as presented.

III. UPDATES

A. Financial: Pat Genera distributed and reviewed financials for March

- Peachtree conversion is complete and in full use.
- Year to date revenue exceeds forecast.
- CPAC expenses up due to Plaza Theater activity.

B. Convention and Tourism Development: Terrie Todd

- Eight leads were submitted with six of them short term.
- Currently there are 27 outstanding leads.
- Veronica Castro returned from POW WOW this week, a cooperative marketing effort with Texas Tourism aimed at international tour operators.
- The fourth annual Spirit of Amigo Luncheon is scheduled for May 18th with an expected attendance of 600. Key speaker will be Julie Chase, Texas Director of Tourism.
- The Republican Women's Conference has been secured for 2007.

C. Performing Arts Venues: Wendy Garrett

- Michael Buble is scheduled to perform July 19. Tickets on sale May 12th at 10:00 A.M.
- VIVA will begin performing at McKelligon Canyon June 23rd with a total of 16 performances. A calendar will be released within the next two weeks and a press conference will be held in McKelligon Canyon.
- Currently working on bringing Shakespeare on the Rocks to the Canyon.
- Broadway Series in the Plaza Theater will include Cats, Jesus Christ Superstar, The Producers, Forever Tango, Cirque Dreams and Mama Mia. This is a national tour with union performers.

D. Operations and Food and Beverage: Bryan Crowe

- Communications system is currently in transition.
- In process of reviewing policies and procedures for all venues.

- Working on flow of communication in all departments and improving consistency of contracts.
- Several contracts for the Pavilion underway.
- City Hall Café is now operating as a full service café with daily specials. Most recent project includes a decorating package.

E. Communications: Pifas Silva

- Local coverage given to the city of El Paso and/or the El Paso CVB/CPAC for the month of May included: Leisure Group Travel, Budget Travel, TX Monthly, and El Paso Inside & Out.
- Two high caliber travel writers will be participating in the Familiarization Tour.
- Recent ad in TTIA dramatically increased the number of responses.

F. Susie Gaines: Film Commissioner

- 36 strong leads for the month of April.
- One commercial and one documentary were filmed in April.
- Currently working on projects in the Big Bend and Carlsbad areas.
- Room nights year to date are 814 with an economic impact of \$1.2 million.

IV. GENERAL MANAGERS UPDATE

- Imersion studies were held the week of May 1st. Studies dealt with the image of El Paso.
- Mystery shoppers were also present and visited Visitor Information Centers, attractions, restaurants, etc.
- Focus studies are wide spread and are being held in a variety of cities.
- Freedom Fiesta and Armed Services Day will be held to honor the military.
- Bill Blaziek will make a public statement concerning PDN's downtown plan during the Tourism Cabinet meeting.

V. OPEN DISCUSSION

- Jane Ratcliff addressed the importance of diversified ads. Suggested ads include various aspects of El Paso.
- Bernie Olivas announced that the northeast side of El Paso will host a soccer tournament with 150 teams on June 2, 3, and 4. The tournament will be held in various parks around the northeast.
- Susie Azar explained that UTEP has headed a grant to save the Rio Grande. The university hosted six leaders from the Middle East who have been adeptly working on saving the deteriorating Jordan River.
- Pat Valdez-Rios presented a rendition of the Amigo Man. Scheduled completion of the Amigo Man campaign is this Fall.

***Next Meeting will be held on June 8, 2006.**