

**Minutes**  
**El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau**  
**Advisory Board Meeting**  
**Thursday, June 11, 2009, 4:00 p.m.**  
**Rio Grande Hall A**

**Board Members Present**

Betsy Behrenhausen  
Jane Ratchiff  
Terry Guerra

**Board Members Absent**

Pat Valdez-Rio  
Joe Frandina  
Joe Daubach  
Bernie Sargent  
Kay Mooy  
Elvia Hernandez

**CVB Staff**

Bill Blaziek  
Bryan Crowe  
Veronica Castro  
Brooke Underwood  
Wendy Garrett  
Pifas Silva  
Valerie A. Garcia

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

- The meeting was called to order at 4:15.m.

**II. Review of Minutes**

- A motion was made by Bill Blaziek to begin the meeting.

**III. UPDATES**

**A. Financials: Bryan Crowe reviewed financials for April 2009**

- April revenues were strong with expenses in line.

**B. Convention Sales Development : Brooke Underwood**

**May** - 6 leads were generated for the month representing 2,580 in total attendance, 4,892 Room Nights and an approximate Economic Impact of \$ 1.6 Million.

Notable business includes

- United Methodist Association – National Convention (11)
- Commission of Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, CALEA (12)
- Texas National Guard (09)
- **May** – 4 pieces of business went definite for the month representing 900 in total attendance, 425 Room Nights and an estimated economic impact of \$575,000.

Notable business includes

- Raytheon Systems – Regional Project Review (09)
- Texas National Guard – Yellow Ribbon Program (09)
- **Successful Sales Calls in Austin, TX**  
Cathy Countiss, Sr. Sales Manager met with the following associations:  
American Legion  
Texas State Teachers Association  
Texas Municipal League  
Texas Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development  
National Guard of Texas – Exe Dir. very interested in EP for both 2013 & 2014

**Current Events**

- Texas Public Works Association is currently in EP for their Annual Spring Convention. They have exceeded their original anticipated attendance of 360 by close to 100 delegates. Will be here until tomorrow (Friday).

### **Upcoming City Wide - Tourism Marketing Meeting**

The CVB hosts a bi-monthly meeting with the goal to market El Paso as a destination to business and leisure travelers. We work closely with strategic partners & take a leadership role in developing targeted & effective marketing programs that in turn will increase tourism to El Paso. We meet next Thursday @ 8:30.

#### **C. Tourism Development: Veronica Castro**

- In the month of May we filled 4783 inquiries.
- We assisted 1,985 visitors in our 3 Information Visitors Centers in the month of June. National Tourism Week was very successful. 600 individuals attended the Spirit of Amigo luncheon and Travel Fair. During the luncheon the Junior League of El Paso was presented with the "Spirit of Amigo" award for all their contributions to the El Paso community. Over 3000 soldiers visited with us at the Armed Forces Day Travel Fair.
- Leesy McCorgary, Tourism Manager will be participating with the State of Texas in the West Coast Sales Mission. They will visit with 25 Interceptive Companies and Tour Operators.
- We unveiled the "Passport to Savings" promotion on May 1<sup>st</sup>. This promotion will run from May through Dec 09. The book offers over 60 coupons to different attractions, hotels, restaurants and more. Passports can be found at the Visitor Information Centers in El Paso, Anthony, Las Cruces and in Chihuahua City. Coupons can also be printed through the [www.visitelpaso.com](http://www.visitelpaso.com) website.

Upcoming Attractions:

Lynx – Dinosaur Exhibit

UTEP – Disappeared Exhibit

#### **D. Performing Arts Venues: Wendy Garrett**

- Total attendance in both theatres for the month of April was 27,349. The break down in attendance was: Plaza Theatre had 14,153 attendees and the Chavez Theatre had 13,196.
- Number of performances for the month of April was 21. The Plaza Theatre had 11 hosted performances and the Chavez Theatre had 10 hosted performances.
- The 2009-2010 Broadway Series is now on sale.
- Upcoming Summer Events:
  - Alfresco Fridays
  - Music Under the Stars
  - Viva at McKelligan Canyon
  - Dora the Explora in July

#### **E. Operations and Food and Beverage: Bryan Crowe**

- There were 33 events presented in all venues in the month of May compared to 25 the year before.
- Attendance in all venues was at 25,992 in May as compared to the 25,416 patrons that attended the year before.
- Highlighted events during the month in our facilities were: 2009 Mayor's Prayer luncheon, Mariachi's for Mom, Alfresco Friday, Cheech & Chong.
- Revenue in Food & Beverage for the month of May was \$182,689 compared to \$135,000 last year. Year to Date Revenue was \$1,206,451 to plan of \$1,079,500.
- Big contributors to catering revenue in May were: 5<sup>th</sup> Armored, Mayor luncheon, Hispanic luncheon, YISD teacher of the year, Heart Association, Spirit of Amigo lunch..
- Concessions Contributors include: Cheech & Chong.

#### **F. Communications: Pifas Silva**

- Unique visits to the website for the month of May reached 41,122, a slight decrease from last month. Website visits to [visiteelpaso.com](http://visiteelpaso.com) have increased, especially during promotion times.

- The Communications Department hosted seven travel writers from France on June 9-10, 2009 and a travel writer and a photographer from Japan back on Memorial Day Weekend. Both were in partnership with the State Tourism Office.
- Printed stories about El Paso were distributed for review to include articles in Texas Highways Magazine, LIFE and Texas Monthly. El Paso was also featured in Saveur Magazine's Texas issue which was a product of a Press Trip.
- We are in the process of completing the rough draft of the 2009-2010 Marketing Plan. Final draft will be submitted to City Manager and Contract Administrator on August 1.

**G. Film Commission: Susie Gaines**

- May brought us 5 new leads, bringing the year to date total to 178.
- Filmed a trailer for a feature film "Central City Traffic" brining in 20 room nights for an economic impact of \$15,000 at the Travelodge.
- Filmed and wrapped "The Dry Land" film starring America Ferrera and Jason Ritter with 20 room nights brining in an economic impact of \$175,000.00 at the Hawthorn.

**Fiscal Year to date:**

- Room Nights 1,413
- Direct Impact: \$1,873,700.00

**IV. General Manager's Update**

- General Manager Bill Blaziek informed our Advisory Board that Wendy Garrett, Director of Theatres has resigned as she and her husband are relocating to Los Angeles.

**V. Open Discussion**

**VI. ADJOURN**

- Bill Blaziek adjourned the meeting at 5:15PM.

**\*The next meeting will be on Thursday, July 9, 2009 at 4 p.m. in the Las Palmas Del Sol Room\***