

## Minutes

### El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau Advisory Board Meeting Thursday September 10, 2009, 4:00 p.m. Las Palmas Del Sol Room

#### Board Members Present

Betsy Behrenhausen  
Terry Guerra  
Kay Mooy  
Joe Daubach  
Bernie Sargent  
Terry Guerra

#### Board Members Absent

Joe Frandina  
Elvia Hernandez  
Pat Valdez-Rios

#### CVB Staff

Bill Blaziek  
Bryan Crowe  
Veronica Castro  
Valerie A. Garcia  
Pifas Silva  
Carol McNeal  
Susie Gaines

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

- The meeting was called to order at 4:09 p.m.

#### II. Review of Minutes

- A motion was made by Bernie Sargent to approve the minutes of the July meeting; Betsy Behrenhausen seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously approved.

#### III. UPDATES

##### A. Financials: Bryan Crowe reviewed financials for the fiscal year 2009

- Revenues were strong with expenses in line.

##### B. Convention Sales Development : Veronica Castro

**June** - 10 leads were generated for the month representing 3,575 in total attendance, 6,322 Room Nights and an approximate Economic Impact of \$ 2.2 Million.

- Notable business includes:
  - National Association of Hispanic Journalists – Annual Conference (2013)
  - Military Order of the World Wars, Annual Convention (2010)
  - County Judges and Commissioners Association of TX, Annual State Convention (2011)
  - Solid Waste Association of North America – TX Chapter Annual Conference (2011)
  - Texas Public Purchasing Association – Fall Workshop (2010)
- **June** – 4 pieces of business went definite for the month representing 345 in total attendance, 191 Room Nights and an estimated economic impact of \$220,000.  
**Notable business includes**
  - Raytheon Systems – Regional Project Review (09)
  - Texas National Guard – Yellow Ribbon Program (09)

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

- End of year inquiries were 26,211. 28% of the leads received came from AARP leads, 23% from See Texas First with 15% from website visits.
- We assisted 20,983 visitors in all 3 centers. The majority of inquires came from the Airport, Ft. Bliss and Downtown.

- A fall newspaper insert was distributed to the region featuring a Britney Spears Giveaway. Tickets, hotel, Transportation and a meal were included in the giveaway. This ran in El Diario de Chihuahua , Sunday, Aug. 30, 2009 with a circulation: 30,000 – Chihuahua city, Cuauhtémoc and Parral. It also ran in the Southern New Mexico publication on August 28-30, 2009 with a circulation of 64,198 which include Alamogordo, Carlsbad, Deming, Las Cruces, Ruidoso, Silver City and White Sands
- We participated in the Biggs Army Airfield Travel Fair held on August 14, 2009. We visited with over 600 new residents to the area.
- We hosted Douglass Rogers from Zimbabwe, who currently is writing an article on a new New York to LA Train Tour on Amtrack with El Paso being a one night stop on the tour. The article will be published in a UK Tourism Magazine “The Guardian” promoting the tour.
- We have partner with Texas Tech Medical School and will be providing three presentations a year and a tour for their incoming International Residents. International Residents reside in El Paso for 3 years.

Upcoming Events:

Southwestern Int’l PRCA Rodeo Sept. 15-20<sup>th</sup>  
 Chalk the Block Sept. 18-20<sup>th</sup>  
 Elephant Festival – Sept. 26 – 27<sup>th</sup>  
 Fiesta San Elciario – Sept. 11-13<sup>th</sup>  
 Viva Mexico – Sept. 18-20<sup>th</sup>  
 Whole Enchilada Fiesta – Sept. 25- 27<sup>th</sup>  
 Socorro Mission – Sept. 25 – 27<sup>th</sup>  
 Oktoberfest – Sept. 18 – 20<sup>th</sup>

**D. Performing Arts Venues: Carol McNeal**

- Total attendance in both theatres for the months of July/August was 41, 686.
- Plaza Classic Film Festival Total Attendance: 26,484
- Viva El Paso Total Attendance: 14,858
- Alfresco Friday Total Attendance: 16,742
- Broadway Series promotions continue
- James Taylor performs at the Plaza Theatre this evening at 8:00 p.m.
- Fabulous Thunderbirds perform at McKelligon Canyon on September 19, 7:00 p.m.
- Wizard of Oz promotion at the Chalk the Block event on September 18 & 19.
- Playhouse Disney Live is in the Abraham Chavez Theatre on September 18-20.

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

- There were 48 events presented in all venues in the months of July/August compared to 39 the year before.
- Attendance in all venues was at 40,449 in July/August as compared to the 31,733 patrons that attended the year before.
- Highlighted events for July/ August:
  - Texas Tech White Coat Ceremony
  - Viva El Paso
  - Blue October/Switchfoot Concert
  - Vikki Carr Concert
  - Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce State of the Military luncheon
  - US War on Drugs Conference
  - El Paso Street Festival
  - El Paso District Dental Conference
  - Border Aids Partnership Spotlight
  - Plaza Classic Film Festival
  - Showtime El Paso

**F. Communications: Pifas Silva**

- Unique visits to the website for the month of August reached 62,142, a 7.7% increase from last month. Website visits to visitelpaso.com have increased 26.96% for the fourth quarter of the fiscal year (June-August) from 130,302 to 165,432.
- The Communications Department hosted 33 travel writers from September 2008 to August 2009, well over our goal and a 65% increase over last fiscal year.
- Printed stories about El Paso were distributed for review to include articles in Spirit Magazine, Texas Parks & Wildlife Magazine and . The article in Texas Parks & Wildlife was a product of a Press Trip.
- The board was also updated on the bureau's social networking sites (Facebook and Twitter) and were shown screen shots of both websites. Increases on website traffic can partially be attributed to the new sites and the promotional giveaways/marketing efforts currently being undertaken.

**G. Film Commission: Susie Gaines**

- July/August brought us 14 new leads that we are actively working on, bringing the Year to Date total to 198.
- BBC America for British television show titled "AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS" filmed for 8 days. 102 Room Nights (Camino) and Direct Impact was \$145,000.00
- Room nights for the end of the fiscal year were a total of 2,125

**IV. General Manager's Update**

- General Manager Bill Blaziek gave a presentation on The Retirement Marketing Overview

**V. Open Discussion**

- There were no topics brought to the table.

**VI. ADJOURN**

- Meeting was adjourned at 4:55 PM.

**\*The next meeting will be on Thursday, October 8, 2009 at 4 p.m. in the Las Palmas Del Sol Room. \***