

Minutes
El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau
Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, January 8, 2009, 4:00 p.m.
Las Palmas Del Sol Room

Board Members Present

Betsy Behrenhausen
Elvia Hernandez
Kay Mooy
Jane Ratcliff
Bernie Sargent
Terry Guerra
Joe Daubach
Joe Frandina

Board Members Absent

Pat Valdez-Rios

CVB Staff

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. Review of Minutes

- A motion was made by Joe Frandina to approve the minutes from the previous meeting; Bernie Sargent seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously approved.

III. UPDATES

A. Financials: Bryan Crowe reviewed financials for November 2008

- November revenues were strong with expenses in line.

B. Convention Sales Development : Brooke Underwood

Five hotel leads were generated in the month of December representing a total of 1,520 room nights with an attendance of 5,554 patrons with an approximate economic impact of \$971,888 Million.

- Five pieces of business went definite for the month representing a total of 2,235 room nights with an estimated economic impact of \$1 Million. Notable business includes: Texas Public Works – Annual Spring Convention (2009), Texas Association of College & University Student Personnel Administrators (2009), Texas Association of Clinical Laboratory Science (2010), Texas Association of Mexican American Chambers of Commerce.
- We lost seven pieces of business with an approximate economic impact of \$856,796.
- The Convention Development Team has been hosting a Sales Blitz where City Departments are invited for a tour of the Meeting and Exhibit Space in the Convention Center as well as a small reception and presentation on the CVB's missions and goals. Six City Departments have already generated information for over 40 associations. City Departments that our sales team have already presented to include: Department of Health, Economic Development/RedCo, Environmental Services, Libraries, Aviation International, and the Zoo.

C. Tourism Development: Veronica Castro

- In the month of December we received 1,370 inquiries.
- We assisted 1656 visitors in our 3 Information Visitors Centers in the month of December.
- In the month of December we conducted a radio and newspaper promotion in Chihuahua City, which ran from December 1- 31st, 2008. The purpose of this promotion was to attract

Mexican Nationals to El Paso to shop for the holidays and potentially boost our hotel room night stays. We partnered with Simon Properties and the Holiday Inn Airport, holiday Inn Express, Red Roof Inn, Sleep Inn, Howard Johnson, and Hyatt Place. The malls issued approximately 200 gift bags.

- Our next Chihuahua promotion will be in the spring with a discount book attached to it.
- We are also looking at stay-vacation packages to promote within the 300 mile radius
- Upcoming Events: Texas vs. the Nation – January 31, 2009.

D. Performing Arts Venues: Wendy Garrett

- Total attendance in both theatres for the month of November was 10,363. The break down in attendance was: Plaza Theatre had 8,088 attendees and the Chavez Theatre had 2,275.
- Number of performances for the month of November was 9. The Plaza Theatre had 7 performances and the Chavez Theatre had 2 performances.
- The El Paso Convention and Performing Arts Centers will be working with the El Paso Jazz Connection to kick off Jazz in the Canyon, a series of outdoor concerts that will be held at McKelligan Canyon the second Thursday of the month beginning June 11-October 8, 2009.
- The 2nd annual Kidsapalooza will be held on March 28, 2009 from 11 am to 5 pm.

E. Operations and Food and Beverage: Bryan Crowe

- There were 19 events presented in all venues in the month of December compared to 22 the year before.
- Attendance in all venues was at 24,033 in December 2008 as compared to 21,284 patrons that attended all venues in December 2007.
- Future events booked in December 2008 totaled 33, compared to 18 booked in December 2007. Some of the events include: State of the City, State of the Military, and State of the District.
- Highlighted events during the month in our facilities were: El Paso Electric Christmas Party, Rotary Sun Bowl Luncheon, and Moscow Ballet.
- Revenue in Food & Beverage for the month of December was \$109,000, compared to \$147,000 last year. Year to Date Revenue was \$544,000, up from last year's total of \$485,000.
- Big contributors to catering revenue in October were: Christmas Party for F&M Distributing, El Paso Electric Employee Holiday Party, Partners in Education Thank You Luncheon, and the SunBowl Luncheon.
- Concessions Contributors include: Fan Fiesta, Dave Koz Concert, and Moscow Ballet.

F. Communications: Pifas Silva

- Unique visits to the website for the month of December reached 44,905.
- El Paso has received free media exposure in the December issue of Texas Highways with an 8-page spread on El Paso and the city's Holiday Lights.
- The Communications Department is working with travel writers from Texas Meetings & Events for a February article on convention business and with Texas Highways on an Amtrak train story for the summer.
- The Sun Bowl Media Blitz was the most successful one yet with media coverage from the following: 105.9 FM Pittsburg, 1250 AM (ESPN) Pittsburg, 970 AM (FOX Sports) Pittsburg, 1020 AM Pittsburgh, KPAN Portland and the Pittsburg Tribune-Review.

G. Film Commission: Susie Gaines

- There were eight leads in the month of December.
- Year-to-Date Direct Impact is \$568,000.00
- Film Commissioner Susie Gaines is working extensively with Extreme makeover Home Edition.

- A scout will be coming in January to visit El Paso for an Independent movie.

IV. General Manager's Update

- Bill Blaziek gave an update on the Convention Center Plaza project.

V. Presentation by Executive Director of the El Paso Symphony Orchestra Ruth Ellen Jacobson

- Ruth Ellen Jacobson spoke about the 2nd annual festival Kidspalooza which will be held downtown and involves all of the museums and the Plaza Theatre to help introduce children to the symphony and other cultural activities. They had a successful event last year with an attendance of about 10-15,000 people and are anticipating many more for this years event.

VI. Open Discussion

- Bernie Sargent discussed a new training program that that will certify people to become El Paso Tour Guides. He is also looking to develop motorcycle tours around the city, and he is working with the El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau Tourism Department, the City, and County on developing an Echo Tourism Guide. Bernie also found three articles on El Paso in the Medallion Newsletter, this is a Texas Historical publication.
- Joe Daubach shared the compliments and gratitude of the visitors who came from Pittsburgh and Portland.

VII. ADJOURN

- A motion was made by Joe Frandina to adjourn the meeting; Bernie Sargent seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 5:17 PM.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, February 12, 2009 at 4 p.m. in the Las Palmas Del Sol Room