

Minutes
El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau
Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, October 7, 2010, 4:00 p.m.
El Paso Room

Board Members Present

Joe Daubach
Bernie Sargent
Laurie Paternoster
Yolanda Torres
Betsy Behrenhausen
Kay Mooy
Bernie Olivas

Board Members Absent

Getsemani Yanez
Elvia Hernandez
Joe Frandina
Marilyn Munden, Emeritus

CVB Staff

Bill Blaziek
Carol McNeal
Verónica Castro
Bryan Crowe
Leesy McCorgary

I. CALL TO ORDER

- The meeting was called to order at 4:19 p.m.

II. General Manager's Update

- Bill Blaziek discussed the new meeting location and setup. He explained that each month we will "shake it up" by describing a new form of reporting the month's highlights.
- Bill Blaziek introduced the board's new chairman, Bernie Sargent.
- Bill Blaziek introduced our guest speaker, Sean McGlynn, Director, Museums and Cultural Affairs Department.

III. Department Updates

A. Financials: Bryan Crowe reviewed financials for August 2010

- August revenues were strong with expenses in line. Fiscal 10 revenues reached a new high.
- Retained earnings will be re-invested in the form of capital improvement projects, specifically the renovations to the Abraham Chavez Theatre.

B. Convention Sales Development : Brooke Underwood

- Three Conference USA representatives from Irving, TX are currently in El Paso and are meeting with UTEP and the CVB regarding hotel contracts, ticket prices, transportation options and marketing of the CUSA 2011 basketball championships.
- Ashley Petry successfully secured our bid to host the Texas Association of Vehicle Theft Investigators for 2012.

C. Tourism Development: Veronica Castro

- The Tourism Departments is working very closely with Fort Bliss regarding the welcoming of soldiers and their families. The department will be providing regular presentations during the new soldier briefing. In addition, the department is planning a family outing in conjunction with the Zoo for the 4-1A Brigade.

D. Facility Sales & Marketing – Carol McNeal

- The Wicked sneak peak was a success. Group sales reservations are now being taken and ticket prices should be released within the next 60 days. In addition, subscription sales are being marketing as a sure way to secure tickets to the 2012 performances of Wicked.
- September was a monumental month with a record 45 events and a 96.9% increase over FY 09/10 in venue attendance.

E. Operations and Food and Beverage: Bryan Crowe

- A new online preventative maintenance system is currently being installed and monitored by the operations staff. Every asset will be filtered through the system that will regularly track all scheduled maintenance.
- A drainage improvement project at McKelligon Canyon is currently under way. The project will address the mountain drainage and other safety improvements.
- Revenue in Food & Beverage for the month of August was \$168,664. Over budget by \$8,664.
- Concession Contributors included
 - Movies in the Canyon
 - Oasis Lounge and Bistro

IV. Open Discussion

- Bernie Sargent introduced the new Railroad and Transportation brochure.
- Bernie Sargent discussed the development and current status of the Franklin Mountains State Park Visitors Center.
- Bernie Sargent introduced the idea of plaques with e-tags that will be placed in Sun Metro buses.
- Bill Blaziek addressed Yolanda Torres's question regarding the current status of the Mission Trail. The Mass Transit Terminal will house a new Visitor Information Center. The CVB will assist with materials and staff training.
- Veronica Castro addressed Laurie Paternoster's question regarding the success of the Las Cruces Whole Enchilada Fiesta. The event was a success and the plan is to participate again next year. The booth received a number of visitors and information was well received.

V. ADJOURN

- Meeting was adjourned at 5:23 PM.

***The next meeting will be on Thursday, November 11, 2010 at 4 p.m. in the El Paso Convention Center.**

Department Reports: September 2010

Financials

- Total Revenue generated for the year was \$4,183,406. Revenue generated exceeded budget by \$183,406
- Total Operating Expenses for the year were \$8,421,689. Operating expenses were under budget by \$45,100
- Year end adjusted net income was \$228,515.
- Overall the fiscal year ended with event operations exceeding revenue projections while staying within the approved operating budget.

Facility Sales & Marketing

- During the month of September 44,982 patrons attended events in all venues. 32,679 of these patrons attended events in the theatre venues and the remainder (12,303) attended events related to the Convention Center and McKelligon Pavillion.
- There were 45 event days in September, 18 of the event days were attended by more than 1,000 patrons.
- The first month of the new fiscal year proved to be a banner month for the theatre venues. The Plaza and Abraham Chavez Theatres hosted 16,745 patrons in September which exceeds the pace of FY09/10 performance by 52.23%. September 2010 attendance in all theatre venues increased by 96.9% over FY09/10, from 16,507 to 32,679.

September Highlights:

- Alfresco Friday, average attendance of 1,408
- Movies in the Canyon, five Sold Out shows
- Smart Club Electronic Sale, attendance of 3,755
- El Paso Opera Company, total attendance of 1,687
- Feria De La Familia, total attendance of 5,487
- Disney Live, total attendance of 7,001
- EPSO, total attendance of 1,972
- Dental Conference, total attendance of 1,200
- Jack Hanna Visits El Paso, total attendance of 1,608
- Bryan Adams, Sold Out
- Wicked Sneak Peek Event

October Highlights:

- Celebrity Chef Gala, attendance of 730
- Fashion Show/Luncheon TTUHSC, estimated attendance of 1,000
- Benise Concert
- Conference for Our Lady of Guadalupe, estimated attendance of 2,000
- Biz Tech, estimated attendance of 300
- State of the Military, estimated attendance of 700

Operations and Food and Beverage

- A new online preventative maintenance system is currently being installed and monitored by the operations staff. Every asset will be filtered through the system that will regularly track all scheduled maintenance.
- A drainage improvement project at McKelligon Canyon is currently under way. The project will address the mountain drainage and other safety improvements.
- Revenue in Food & Beverage for the month of August was \$168,664. Year to date Revenue was \$140,003.
- Concession Contributors included Movies in the Canyon and Oasis Lounge and Bistro.

Convention Sales Development

- **September** - 7 leads were generated for the month representing 2,550 in total attendance, 5,735 Room Nights and an approximate Economic Impact of \$1.6 million.
- Notable business includes:
 - Texas Amateur Softball Association (Oct. 2011)
 - Combined Law Enforcement Association Texas (Oct 2011)
 - Association of Moving Image Archivists (Nov 2012, 2013, 2014)
- **September** - 3 pieces of business were confirmed for the year representing 400 in total attendance, 546 Room Nights and an approximate Economic Impact of \$265,990.
- Notable business includes
 - US Special Operations Command (Nov 2010)
- The Convention Development Department “Blitzed” City Hall on Sept 23 in an effort to identify city employees with information or influence on conventions and future meetings. The department was split into three teams, paired with hotels and successfully met with 17 different departments gathering important information and data on more than 30 meetings. Participating hotels included the Camino Real, Hilton Garden Inn, Hyatt Place, Springhill and Fairfield Suites.
- Ashley Petry attended the Texas Association of Vehicle Theft Investigators Annual Conference in Amarillo, TX and successfully won our bid to host the group in 2012.
- Three representatives from Conference USA are currently in EL Paso (Thurs and Fri) and are meeting with UTEP and the CVB staff regarding hotel contracts, ticket pricing and marketing. The tournament is just 5 months away.

Communications

- Total hits to the website have increased by 26% from 65,995 in September 09 to 83,277 in September 10.
- The month of September yielded some great coverage via television and print media here in the city, the nation, and internationally as well. The combined total of media coverage for the CVB/CPAC was **31**, which includes all print and television coverage.
- Most recently the Communications Dept. hosted two international travel writers, who write for the German publication “Spotlight.” Their story began here in El Paso and the two men were treated to a historical lesson with El Pasoan Bernie Sargent. The writers were also given a tour of the El Paso Archeology Museum, the Franklin Mts, Tom Mays State Park, and a private tour of Wyler aerial tramway.
- Last month we kicked off “Friday’s Fun Things to Do,” with KDBC Four News. The mini segment informs regional viewers of weekend events. The segment has been well received by viewers, but we encourage everyone to tune in for yourself every Friday at 5:30. We will continue that and welcome input and suggestions

Film Commission

- There were 12 inquiries for the month.
- Inquiries included requests for location pictures of a specific area, local crew, how to film on or at International locations, and when they would need a city permit.

August Filming/Wrapped

- Go Daddy Commercial/EPK Productions: \$38,000 in direct impact
- History Channel’s “Modern Marvels” show: \$87,500 direct impact and 15 room nights
- CVB Tourism Video was permitted to shoot at the Zoo
- 3 EPIC scouts and numerous meetings held in regard to feature filming in Nov.

Recent/Upcoming Travel

- Annual Film Texas Reception, New York

Tourism Development

- In the month of September 2010 we received 637 travel inquiries.

- In the month of September we assisted 1,973 tourists in the 3 Visitor Information Centers.
- The Tourism Department participated in the annual Marfa Lights Festival in Marfa, TX. The CVB booth visited with over 3,000 regional individuals.
- “Team El Paso” is a new group made up of El Paso attractions that will assist in the promotion of the city and its assets. :”Team El Paso” will participate in local travel/trade shows. The first endeavor was the Las Cruces Whole Enchilada Fiesta with an attendance of over 40,000 over a 3 day span.
- The new Eco-Tourism site created in conjunction with County Commissioner Veronica Escobar’s office will launch in late 2010. The site will include an interactive map and detailed information on all eco-tourism related sites.
- Leesy McCorgary is working with the El Paso Marathon Association in the creation of a blog that will track the training and experiences of first time runners. Bloggers will regularly log their daily training runs, injuries, experiences with new gear, etc.
- The new e-tag for the EPCVB has been created and is in the process of being placed in CVB advertisements. The Microsoft Tag is a mobile tagging system that instantly connects a smart phone to a website.

Upcoming Events

- Keystone Fall Fest, Oct 8 @ Keystone Heritage Park
- Chalk the Block, Oct 8-10, Arts Festival Plaza
- Amigo Airsho, Oct 16-17, Biggs Army Airfield
- Concordia Cemetery Walk Through History, Oct 16, Concordia Cemetery
- Native American Festival and Camp Out, Oct 16-17, Cougar Park Socorro, TX
- Spooktacular, Oct 23-24, County Coliseum
- Boo at the Zoo, Oct 23-24, EP Zoo