

Minutes
El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau
Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, February 11, 2010, 4:00 p.m.
Lynx Exhibit Hall

Board Members Present

Joe Frandina
Bernie Sargent
Terry Guerra
Laurie Paternoster
Joe Daubach
Betsy Behrenhausen
Yolanda Acosta

Board Members Absent

Kay Mooy
Elvia Hernandez

CVB Staff

Bill Blaziek
Bryan Crowe
Veronica Castro
Brooke Underwood
Carol McNeal
Pifas Silva
Valerie A. Garcia

I. CALL TO ORDER

- The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m.

II. UPDATES

A. Financials: Bryan Crowe reviewed financials for December 2009

- December revenues were strong with expenses in line.

B. Convention Sales Development : Brooke Underwood

- **January - 7 leads** were generated for the month representing 2,667 in total attendance, 2,873 Room Nights and an approximate Economic Impact of \$1.7 Million.
- Notable business includes:
 - I'm Big on Sports – Shootout at the Border
 - Association of Government Accountants
 - New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission
- **January - 5 pieces of business** were confirmed for the month representing 925 in total attendance, 1,155 Room Nights and an approximate Economic Impact of \$ 591,445.
- Notable business includes
 - Code Enforcement Association of Texas (February 2011)
 - Texas Downtown Association (November 2011)
- **Attendance Booster**
Sales staff will be participating in an attendance booster for the Code Enforcement Association of Texas, Annual Convention February 17-18, 2010.
- **Upcoming Projects**
LULAC National Convention for 2013, 1500 in attendance and over 4,200 RN over the 9 day span.
Conference USA Men's & Women's Basketball tournament – 2011, 24 teams, 12 bands.

C. Tourism Development: Veronica Castro

- We received 2,476 inquiries in the month of January. The majority of the inquiries were from the See Texas First ad and our website.
- In the month of January, we assisted 1,374 tourists in all 3 Visitors Information Centers.
- Sun Bowl Report
 - We are delighted to report the total room nights for 09 Sun Bowl were 4981 – up almost 1500 rooms nights from last year. 3200 last year
- Texas vs The Nation was held Feb 6th – total room pick up was 1,634, up 157 room nights from 2009.

- Texas vs The Nation Chili Cook Off – was held on January 31st. Over 20 Chili Cooks came from the Region to compete. Over \$2,000 was raised for the Boys & Girls Club of El Paso
- **Upcoming Events**
 - February 12-13th – Love Letters Play – Adobe Horseshoe/at San Elizario
 - Feb 13th – Casa Ford West Texas Shootout – Championship Riding
 - March 7th – Michelob Ultra Marathon

D. Facility Sales & Marketing – Carol McNeal

During the month of January, 17,617 patrons attended 16 events in all venues. 10,540 of this number attended theatre events while 7,077 attended Convention Center events. 50% of the events were attended by more than 500 patrons.

Convention Center highlights:

- Elegant Penguin Bridal Show, attendance of 2,439
 - Generation 2000 Children’s Event, attendance of 4,124
- Generation 2000 was the last Convention Center activity prior to the United States Bowling Congress move-in. At present, USBC is in-house and Convention Center activity reports will focus on our only tenant, USBC, until July.
- The Plaza and Abraham Chavez Theatres hosted 10,169 patrons and Year-to-Date have hosted 55,534 patrons. The El Paso Symphony Orchestra’s outreach program for schools was moved from January to February resulting in a slightly off-pace month-end performance. However, February numbers will reflect the addition of approximately 12,000 student attendees and will put us back on pace toward the annual target of 155,000 attendees in the two theatres.

January Plaza and Abraham Chavez Theatre highlights:

- Willie Nelson, attendance of 1,778
- Laser Spectaculars, attendance of 1,964
- El Paso Independent School District “True Women”, attendance of 1,200
- El Paso Symphony Orchestra, attendance of 2,463
- New Shanghai Circus, attendance of 2,776

Remaining February events in the theatres:

- Riverdance, Plaza Theatre (this weekend, 5 shows)
- El Paso Symphony Orchestra Young Peoples Concerts, Abraham Chavez Theatre (all week, next week)
- El Paso Symphony Orchestra, “The Planets” using digital movie equipment, Plaza Theatre, February 26 and 27

Future Event Highlights:

- Daniel Rodriguez/Showtime El Paso, March 2, Abraham Chavez Theatre
- Insights Museum, “Night at the Oscars,” March 7, Plaza Theatre
- Porgy and Bess/El Paso Opera, March 12 and 13, Abraham Chavez Theatre
- Cabaret/Broadway, March 15, Plaza Theatre
- Kids Palooza/El Paso Symphony Orchestra, March 27, Arts Festival Plaza
- El Paso Symphony Youth Orchestra, March 28, Plaza Theatre
- Sesame Street, 8 shows, first week of April, Abraham Chavez Theatre
- Political satirist Bill Maher, April 3, Plaza Theatre
- Chicago, the band, April 6, Plaza Theatre

E. Operations and Food and Beverage: Bryan Crowe.

- Revenue in Food & Beverage for the month of January was \$74,518. Year to Date Revenue was \$639,734, up from last year’s total of \$606,981
- Big contributors to catering revenue in January were:
 - Hanson McClain Retirement Meeting
- Concessions Contributors include:
 - Generation 2000 \$7,261
 - Willie Nelson \$6,013

F. Communications: Pifas Silva

- Unique visits to the website for the month of December reached 59,560, compared to 44,326 in January 2009, a 47% increase. We are also in the process of bringing on a new web development company: Impulse Development of El Paso. We will re-launch visitelpaso.com in May and hope to see more increases with the newer designed site.
- El Paso Times has launched their USBC page on their homepage (elpasotimes.com). The site: elpasotimes.com/usbcwc features a library of articles about USBC, photos of the construction and facts and information about El Paso. It's free exposure and a great source for El Pasoans to find out about USBC.
- El Paso has received media exposure in the January issues of Style Magazine, True West and Texas Monthly.
- The Communications Department has developed a schedule with the State's Tourism office to bring four travel writers in the next couple of months. Currently we are on pace with last year's total and should surpass our goal again this year of 20 writers. So far we have hosted five.
- We continue our schedule of USBC presentations to community organizations such as Paso Del Norte Group, Central Business Association, Downtown Rotary and others. Presentations will run through the middle of March with a final presentation to the Hotel Motel Association on March 18. El Paso 15 (the government channel) taped the CBA presentation and began airing it this week on cable channel 15 and will do so until March 26.

G. Film Commission: Susie Gaines

- There were 7 leads in the month of January, bringing the year-to-date total to 63
- **Jan. Filming/Wrapped:**
 - Local Video Company hired to shoot film for an ESPN Commercial of a Martial Arts Boxer – shot at Nations Tobin Park – Film Commission permitted location. We were permitted an additional 8 city locations for Autumn Leaves' Productions, titled "Rebels," which will be wrapping up the first week in February.
- Gearing up for a 2nd scout for project in late March – scouted with Producer and Location Manager a few weeks back – they are returning for a 2nd look-see with their Director, Asst. Director, Production Designer, Director of Photography, Stunt Coordinator, Producer, Location Manager, Art Director, Stunt Coordinator. Initial scout was for one location and could now be 5.
- Year-to-date Room Nights: 164
- Direct Impact: \$484,800.00

III. General Manager's Update

- Bill Blaziek gave us positive reports on the final phases of The Plaza construction, Texas vs. The Nation event, bid for bringing the Conference USA to El Paso, The Oasis Lounge, and the El Paso Marathon.

IV. Open Discussion

- Laurie Patternoster asked where the Visitor Information will be during the United States Bowling Congress Tournament. Veronica Castro informed us that it will be moved temporarily to the lobby of the Convention Center for better access for our out of town bowlers.

V. ADJOURN

- Meeting was adjourned at 4:59 PM.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, March 11, 2010 at 4 p.m. at the History Museum