

## Minutes

### El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau Advisory Board Meeting Thursday, April 12, 2007, 4:00 P.M. The El Paso Room, El Paso Convention Center

#### Board Members Present

Marilyn Munden  
Cindy Foght  
Lidia Flynn  
Pat Valdez-Rios  
Jane Ratcliff  
Adeline Rogers  
Michael Shoffit  
Bernie Olivas

#### Board Members Absent

Fred Jackson

#### CVB Staff

Bill Blaziek  
Terrie Todd  
Carol McNeal  
Pifas Silva  
Pat Genera  
Dana Smith

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

- The meeting was called to order at 4:09 P.M.

#### II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

- Minutes were filed as presented

#### III. UPDATES

##### A. Financials: Pat Genera reviewed financials for January.

- Revenues and expenses are on course with budget.

##### B. Convention and Tourism Development: Terrie Todd reported for the month of February.

- 17 leads were generated.
- Seven leads were turned definite.
- Eight meetings & events were serviced by our Convention Services Department.
- The Visitor Information Centers assisted 3,282 total visitors. The Ft. Bliss center assisted the majority of the visitors.
- A total of 3300 visitor requests were fulfilled.
- The Sales team and partners from the Camino Real and Wyndham are scheduled to leave for Austin on a sales blitz to make 50 sales calls over 2 days and host meeting planners to the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Margaritas & Massages reception.
- Pat Garrett is scheduled to make a presentation to National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association in Dallas.
- Dana Smith, Sales Manager and Amanda Mora, Servicing Manager will attend the Texas Association of Health Underwriters annual convention in Galveston and will make sales calls in Galveston and Houston in May.
- The Tourism Department held the first Visitor Information Specialist Familiarization tour to educate the Visitor Information Specialists on the attractions that El Paso has to offer.
- Rebecca Diaz was elected secretary of the Texas Mountain Trail Board. The new brochure will be distributed to all Visitor Centers as well as State Visitor Centers.
- The deadline for requiring passports for land travel between the US and Mexico/Canada is currently set for January 2008, there is legislation in place trying to extend that deadline to January of 2009 or at least 3 months later to accommodate the applications that have been submitted.

- The tourism department is also partnering with MCAD in a pilot program for bi-national museum tours, as well as partnering with the Street Festival to market the Downtown St. Festival to the Travel 300 market.

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

- There were 12 performances in the theatres in March; there have been 88 performances Year to date in the theatres.
- Theatre attendance for the month of March was 13,595 and Year to date attendance is at 121,992 these numbers reflect attendance in the Plaza Theatre and the Abraham Chaves Theatre.
- 305 subscriptions for the 2007-2008 Broadway in El Paso series have already been sold.

**D. Operations and Food and Beverage: Carol McNeal**

- The Convention and Performing Arts Centers hosted 20 events in March, and booked 70 events. Year to date, 209 events have been hosted, compared to 142 last year.

**E. Communications: Pifas Silva**

- The website has received over 70,000 hits in March, a 48% increase over last year.
- The El Paso CVB continues to take the lead on notification of the media of significant events in the El Paso Area including the Spirit of Amigo Luncheon, the dedication of The Equestrian and the announcement of the Broadway in El Paso 2007-2008 season.
- The El Paso CVB, through an arrangement with El Paso Magazine, is producing a monthly 2 page article titled "CVB News" highlighting events in and around El Paso which equates to \$3000 in media value.
- Pifas Silva distributed an article, "Discover El Paso," that appeared in Hispanic Meetings and Travel Magazine that spawned from a FAM attendee's visit to El Paso a year ago.

**F. Film Commission: Terrie Todd for Susie Gaines**

- Susie Gaines is representing El Paso in Santa Monica, CA at the Association of Film Commissioners Annual trade show.
- For the Month of March, the Film Commission had 30 leads.
- The Border Patrol Training video is still filming in El Paso, and the PBS show, "History Detectives" wrapped up filming in El Paso.

**IV. GENERAL MANAGERS UPDATE**

- A National Tourism Week packet was handed out outlining the events scheduled in El Paso for the week of May 14 – 19, 2007. The highlight of the week is the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Spirit of Amigo Luncheon and Trade show on Thursday, May 17, where the Sun Bowl Association will be honored.
- There are many grand opening events scheduled for the Plaza Theatre Annex in May, including parties with the cast of the Producers on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, a Night of Stars hosted by the Scott Hulse Law Firm and the Community Foundation at the Philanthropy Theatre and Annex on the 9<sup>th</sup>, Jimmy Baldwin in the Philanthropy Theatre on the 12<sup>th</sup>, and a Mother's Day Oregon Concert in the Plaza Theatre.

**V. OPEN DISCUSSION**

- Bernie Olivas reported that the response from the Economic Impact study conducted by UTEP has been overwhelmingly positive. One team alone spent an estimated \$760,000 of a \$1.9 million budget in El Paso.
- There was discussion about the increase Hotel Occupancy numbers as occupancy in the El Paso hotels continues to rise. Michael Shoffit cautioned that the increase was

substantially affected by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade coming in town; and with the new hotels being built, occupancy rates may decrease in the near future.

- Jane Ratcliff asked for donations to the Andrew Barcena Scholarship Fund.
- Lidia Flynn extended the invitation to purchase tickets for the Burgess House tea on May 20, there is one seating at 1 PM, and tickets are \$12.

**VI. ADJOURN**

- Meeting was adjourned at 5:19PM.

**\*The next meeting will be on May 10, 2007 at 4 PM at the Plaza Theatre Annex.**