

**Minutes**  
**El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau**  
**Advisory Board Meeting**  
**Thursday, June 17, 2010, 4:00 p.m.**  
**Las Palmas Del Sol Room**

**Board Members Present**

Joe Frandina  
Bernie Sargent  
Laurie Paternoster  
Terry Guerra  
Betsy Behrenhausen  
Kay Mooy  
Yolanda Torres  
Elvia Hernandez

**Board Members Absent**

Joe Daubauch

**CVB Staff**

Bill Blaziek  
Carol McNeal  
Brooke Underwood  
Pifas Silva  
Bryan Crowe  
Leesy McCorgary

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. UPDATES**

**A. Financials: Bryan Crowe reviewed financials for April 2010**

- April revenues were strong with expenses in line.

**B. Convention Sales Development : Brooke Underwood**

- **May** - 9 leads were generated for the month representing 2,000 in total attendance, 2,215 Room Nights and an approximate Economic Impact of \$1.2 million.
- Notable business includes:
  - Texas National Guard-Yellow Ribbon Program
  - Texas Association of Vocational Adjustment Coordinators
  - Texas State Reading Association
- **May** - 4 pieces of business were confirmed for the month representing 2,140 in total attendance, 630 Room Nights and an approximate Economic Impact of \$1.5 million.
- Notable business includes
  - Texas Apartment Association
  - Mary Kay Cosmetics
  - United States Tennis Association
  - Amateur Softball Association
- Earlier this week we hosted representatives from CUSA's office. Representatives praised El Paso for our eagerness, and commitment to making the 2011 tournament a success.
- Representatives for LULAC will be in El Paso the evening of June 17<sup>th</sup> for site inspections. The group will tour 7 hotel properties as well as the Convention Center. Additionally, CVB representatives will travel to ABQ for the 2010 Annual Convention to bid for the 2010 Convention.
- Representatives will be attending the 2010 National Association of Hispanic Journalists Annual Conference next week to build excitement and attendance for the convention in El Paso in 2013.

**C. Tourism Development: Brooke Underwood**

- In the month of May 2010 we received 2,301 travel inquiries. The majority of inquiries were from See Texas First.
- In the month of May we assisted 3,161 tourists in the 3 Visitor Information Centers.

- Veronica is currently attending a Travel and Tourism College in San Marcos. This is an intensive week long course that focuses on all aspects of marketing, communications, promotions, etc. It is a three year commitment.
- We celebrated National Tourism Week May 10-16 with a Travel and Tourism Rally and two travel fairs. The Rally saw over 100 individuals associated with the travel and hospitality industry. Media did an excellent job in covering this event. Special guests included Mayor Cook, UTEP's Coach Mike Price, and Sunbowl's Executive Director, Bernie Olivas.
- Leesy McCorgary, Tourism Sales Manager attended International POW WOW, May 17-20 in Orlando as part of a co-op with the Texas State Tourism Department. She visited with close to 100 international tour operators and is currently conducting follow ups. This is the largest International Travel Fair held in the US. Over 1,000 US travel organizations were in attendance and over 1,500 international and domestic buyers from over 70 countries conducted business negotiations resulting in over \$3.5 billion in future travel to the US.
- Veronica Castro played an instrumental role in developing the 1<sup>st</sup> annual HOT Tax Symposium that was held on May 26 at the Museum of Art. The symposium was developed to educate and assist groups funded by the HOT tax on the development of marketing/advertising plans.
- We continue to survey the bowlers and have found that the average stay is 3 nights, 63% are utilizing rental vehicles, and the most visited attractions are the malls, the Outlet Shoppes and Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino. Overall the bowlers are positively rating El Paso and stating that they will certainly return.
- **Upcoming Events**
  - Big Daddy Car Show, June 20, 21-6 pm, Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino.
  - Concordia Cemetery Midnight Tour, June 19-20, 12-3 am, Concordia Cemetery.
  - Outlet Shoppes Summer Concert Series, every Thurs., 6-9 pm

#### **D. Facility Sales & Marketing – Carol McNeal**

During the month of May, 68,807 patrons attended events in all venues. 19,989 of these patrons attended events in the theatre venues and the remainder (48,818) attended events related to the United States Bowling Congress in the Convention Center. Total attendance for USBC has reached 99,450 as of June 15. There were 58 event days in May and 44 of the event days were attended by more than 1,000 patrons.

The Plaza and Abraham Chavez Theatres hosted 12,925 patrons in May and Year-to-Date have hosted 116,281 patrons which is slightly below pace with FY 09/10 performance. We expect June event attendance will put us back on pace for the year. Total year-to-date FY 09/10 attendance in all theatre venues is 146,674, a 10.32% increase from the previous fiscal year.

#### **May Plaza and Abraham Chavez Theatre highlights:**

- Alfresco! Fridays, total YTD attendance of 15,619, as of June 16. FY 08/09 total attendance was 17,664.
- Mariachis for Mom, total attendance of 1,109
- British Ballet Academy, total attendance of 2,520
- WAR, total attendance of 1,740
- KEEP Dance Recital, total attendance of 3,013
- Cathedral H.S. Graduation, total attendance 1,622
- Loretto Academy Graduation, total attendance of 1,297
- Miss Teen El Paso, total attendance of 1,624

#### **Remaining June & Early July Highlights:**

- Eddie Griffin Comedy Show, June 19 at the Abraham Chavez Theatre, estimated attendance of 1,000
- Un Amante a la Medida, a Spanish comedy play, June 25 at the Plaza Theatre, estimated attendance of 1,000

- Viva El Paso, McKelligon Canyon Amphitheatre each Friday and Saturday through August 14
- Ft. Bliss Farewell Dinner for Major General and Mrs. Howard Bromberg
- Downtown Street Festival, weekend of July 2

**Entertainment on Arts Festival Plaza**

- Alfresco Fridays continue in June and include performances by Windy City on June 18 and Austin Jimmy Murphy & the Blues Alliance on June 25. This highly successful series will continue throughout the summer on Arts Festival Plaza.
- Entertainment, as an enhancement to the USBC bowlers' experience, also continues in the shopping mall located inside the Convention Center. This entertainment takes place at 5:30 pm. Viva El Paso Mondays, Variety Wednesdays and Jazz Thursdays will take place till the completion of the tournament. The local groups perform for approximately one hour each day.

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

- Revenue in Food & Beverage for the month of May was \$289,160. Year to Date Revenue was \$1,309,660
- Concessions Contributor included:
  - USBC Concession Sales
  - WAR Concert
  - Oasis Lounge and Bistro
- USBC move out is scheduled for July 5-16 with a new event scheduled in the Convention Center on July 18.
- Work on the Energy Improvement project continues. To date we have seen a dramatic increase in energy efficiency and expect to continue seeing a reduction in operating costs.

**F. Communications: Pifas Silva**

- Unique visits to the website for the month of May reached 77,230, compared to 41,122 in May 2009, a 87% increase. We stayed steady in unique visits from last month's 77,065. Impulse
- Impulse Development of El Paso continues to work on our new website design which we will launch later this month.
- El Paso has received free media exposure in the April issues of Ride Texas Travel Log, Meetings South, See Texas First, Texas Tour & Meeting Guide and Sports Travel Magazine
- Currently the Communications Dept. is working with the state's tourism office on travel writer/photographers for upcoming press trips. We continue on pace with last year's total and should surpass our goal again this year of 20 writers. So far we have hosted 12 journalists YTD.
- We are in the process of developing our 2010-2011 Marketing Plan as per our agreement with the City of El Paso. The plan will be delivered to our contact administrator and shared with key individuals in the city and the hospitality industry.

**G. Film Commission: Brooke Underwood**

- There were 12 inquiries for the month. Year to date total is 166.
- 2 different scouts were hosted this month for an independent film and commercial.
- Susie Gaines will travel to Los Angeles for the Annual Film Texas Brunch in late June. 250 producers/decision makers in film regularly attend the function.
- **May Filming/Wrapped:**

United States Organization (USO) wrapped their commercial shoot. They have another visit/shoot scheduled later this month. Utilized Hawthorne Suites and the Radisson. Room nights: 48 nights and direct impact was \$225,000.

Independent feature titled "Another Country" wrapped June 17 and utilized the Double Tree hotel, Room nights: 18 and direct impact was \$75,000.

**III. General Manager's Update**

- Bill Blaziek gave a brief re-cap of the CUSA trip. Team presented a 17 page PowerPoint, passed out handouts, uniforms, gifts, etc. CUSA is expected to generate \$4.5 million in economic impact.
- Factoids continue to be e-mailed and the board agreed that they are fun and informative.

**IV. Open Discussion**

- Bernie Sargent informed us that Economic the TX Downtown Association meeting being held this Nov. is expected to see an attendance of 350.
- Bernie Sargent in conjunction with Capstone Productions will be pitching the El Paso Gold Videos to TX PBS stations. The goal is to have a minimum of 22 stations on board.
- Per Bernie Sargent UTEP is working with Waco Tanks to produce a pod cast that will be used during the Mexican Revolution celebrations.
- Bernie Sargent explained that the Mayor's Lyceum is moving forward with the development of the paddling trails along the Rio.
- Laurie Paternoster informed the group that the BMA Scavenger Hunt will run through July 17 and prizes include cash, memberships, etc.
- Elvia Hernandez announced that she has been appointed TX LULAC Deputy Director for the Elderly.
- Bryan Crowe invited the board to the annual Street Festival. An email with additional details will be sent to all board members.

**V. ADJOURN**

- Meeting was adjourned at 5:04 PM.

**\*The next meeting will be on Thursday, July 8, 2010 at 4 p.m. in the Las Palmas Del Sol Room in the Convention Center\***