

Minutes

El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau Advisory Board Meeting Thursday, July 14, 2011 4:00 p.m. Las Palmas Del Sol Room

Board Members Present

Bernie Sargent
Yolanda Torres
Bernie Olivas
Getsemani Yanez
Laurie Paternoster
Betsy Behrenhausen
Elvia Hernandez
Terry Guerra, Emeritus
Joe Frandina, Emeritus

Board Members Absent

Kay Mooy
Joe Daubach
Marilyn Munden, Emeritus

CVB Staff

Bill Blaziek
Carol McNeal
Verónica Castro
Brooke Underwood
Leesy McCorgary

I. CALL TO ORDER

- The meeting was called to order at 4:09 p.m.

II. General Manager's Update

- Bill Blaziek introduced the new executive assistant, Norma Barrera. Norma will assist both Bill and Bryan.
- The CVB/CPAC is currently in the budget process and will soon meet with council. A rate increase petition will also be addressed during this time.
- State cuts to the Texas Parks and Wildlife department have recently been made and a total of 8 El Paso employees have lost their positions. This cut in staff has greatly impacted the Franklin Mountains State Park and the Wyler Aerial Tramway. The CVB is working to compose a letter of appeal that will be sent to El Paso's representatives in Austin.
- A Visioning Summit has been created and will be part of the CVB marketing plan. This strategic committee will work to face the negative media El Paso receives regarding the recent violence in Juarez.

III. Department Updates

A. Financials: Bill Blaziek

- Total revenue year to date is \$3,352,369 compared to \$3,011,685 in 2010
- Total operating expenses year to date are \$6,073,694 compared to \$6,072,851 in 2010.

B. Facility Sales & Marketing: Carol McNeal

- Cool Canyon Nights is doing well and will continue to run for a total of 10 weeks. Attendance is steadily growing.
- Viva El Paso will continue to run through mid August.
- El Paso Federal Credit Union is the sponsor for Movies in the Canyon which will begin August 19th and run each Saturday and Sunday free of charge.
- BB King will perform October 4th.
- Benise will perform October 14th.
- Kathy Griffin will perform September 29th.
- Wicked group ticket sales will begin Monday, July 18th and single tickets will be announced in the Fall.

C. Operations and Food and Beverage: Bill Blaziek

- Mauro Monsisvais, Operations Director has been working closely with Kern area/Cincinnati District business owners to increase traffic in the Glory Road Parking Garage. So far business owners have not been receptive to the idea of validating parking however, other ideas and options are being reviewed.
- Year to date revenue in Food & Beverage for 2011 is \$1,573,934 compared to \$1,614,281 in 2010.
- June 2011 highlights included the Antiques Road Show generating \$19,000 in revenue and Alfresco Fridays generating \$21,182 in revenue.

D. Convention Development : Brooke Underwood

- Ashley Petry will travel to San Antonio for The International Council of Shopping Centers 2012 or 2013 bid. Approximate attendance is 400-500.
- We are currently on the short list for the 2013 Texas Association of CVB's annual conference. Attendance is forecasted to be 250-300.
- The USBC Team 2015 continues to bring local awareness to the tournament via a social media campaign. A 7ft. bowling pin piñata has been photographed at various area attractions and local events.
- USBC will be in El Paso for a site visit July 28th and a tentative visit to Arlington is scheduled for August.
- A conference call with Conference USA is scheduled for this week. The subject is the 2013 and 2014 conference and the possibility of El Paso hosting again.

E. Tourism Development: Veronica Castro

- The Summer New Mexico Insert, over 100,000 copies, dropped in Southern NM and Albuquerque. Included in the insert was a chance to win 2 summer getaway packages to El Paso for the Downtown Street Festival or the Film Festival. Over 200 online entries were received.
- Veronica Castro and Kimberly Foster attended the Texas Tourism Industry Association College. After attending 3 consecutive years attendees will become registered Tourism Executive Professionals.

IV. Open Discussion

- Laurie Paternoster discussed the importance of the CVB's printed calendar of events. She stated that not all El Pasoans and visitors have access to the internet and printed copies are still necessary. Veronica explained that there are discussions regarding the printing of an annual calendar or perhaps a quarterly calendar.
- Betsy Behrenhausen shared information regarding PDN's interest in a retirement community. The group is currently looking for developers for the retirement community.
- Yolanda stated that the Candlewood Suites in the north east is almost up and looks very close to completion.
- Terry Guerra is working with Big Brothers Big Sisters Dance for Kids Sake and is looking for dancers willing to participate in this fundraising event.
- Elvia Hernandez discussed the 7 page spread in Sports Illustrated featuring Bowie High School.
- Bernie Sargent
 - Globe Trekker, a television show that takes viewers on journeys around the globe, recently filmed at Hueco Tanks.
 - They continue to work on/decorate the Southwest Airlines gate B4 with an Old West theme.
 - The new El Camino Real brochure has been printed and is now available at the CVB and the 2 other information centers. A passport certification program will compliment the brochure.
 - The History Museum's Wall of Giants is scheduled to feature the Mission Trail.

- True West Magazine featured Concordia Cememtery this month.
- Suggested that the CVB/CPAC generate a thank you note or plaque for the Cool Canyon Nights Sponsors.

V. ADJOURN

- Meeting was adjourned at 5:04 PM.

***The next meeting will be on Thursday, September 8, 2011 at 4 p.m. at the El Paso Zoo.**