

Minutes

El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau Advisory Board Meeting Thursday, July 8, 2010, 4:00 p.m. Las Palmas Del Sol Room

Board Members Present

Joe Daubach
Elvia Hernandez
Laurie Paternoster
Terry Guerra
Betsy Behrenhausen
Yolanda Torres
Getsemani Yanez
Bernie Olivas
Marilyn Munden, Emeritus

Board Members Absent

Joe Frandina, HMA Chairman Emeritus
Bernie Sargent
Kay Mooy

CVB Staff

Bill Blaziek
Carol McNeal
Verónica Castro
Pifas Silva
Bryan Crowe
Leesy McCorgary

I. CALL TO ORDER

- The meeting was called to order at 4:08 p.m.

II. UPDATES

A. Financials: Bryan Crowe reviewed financials for May 2010

- May revenues strong with expenses in line. YTD revenue has exceeded budget.

B. Convention Sales Development : Veronica Castro

- **June** - 4 leads were generated for the month representing 1,410 in total attendance, 1,639 Room Nights and an approximate Economic Impact of \$900,000 million.
- Notable business includes:
 - US Special Operations Command
 - National High School Baseball Coaches-Annual Convention
- **June** - 6 pieces of business were confirmed for the month representing 2,545 in total attendance, 682 Room Nights and an approximate Economic Impact of \$1.6 million.
- Notable business includes
 - Mary Kay Cosmetics (2012) Reported 2011 last month
 - Texas National Guard-Yellow Ribbon Program
- Brooke Underwood and Jason Quintana will travel to Albuquerque to exhibit and bid on LULAC's 2013 National Convention. Organizers for the 2013 Convention are projecting 1,500 in attendance, utilization of 4,255 room nights and will bring an approximate economic impact of roughly \$960,000.

C. Tourism Development: Veronica Castro

- In the month of June 2010 we received 1,956 travel inquiries. The majority of inquiries were from See Texas First.
- In the month of June we assisted 4,321 tourists in the 3 Visitor Information Centers.
- Leesy McCorgary participated in the El Paso Community College DACUM program where the panel recreated the curriculum for the 2011 Travel and Tourism College.
- Veronica Castro was part of the MCAD Project Support Program where applicants were interviewed for possible allocation of monies granted by the MCAD group.
- The Tourism Department hosted the Texas Tech Medical School for a tourism FAM. The attendees were international resident doctors that will reside in El Paso for 3 years.
- **Upcoming Events**
 - El Maida Shrine Circus, August 1, El Paso County Coliseum
 - El Paso Downtown Ghost Tours, July 10, Main Library
 - 50 Years of Fashion, July 15, El Paso History Museum

- Frogfest, July 17, El Paso Zoo
- Romeo & Juliet, July 23-August 1, UTEP

D. Facility Sales & Marketing – Carol McNeal

During the month of June, 69,796 patrons attended events in all venues. 23,113 of these patrons attended events in the theatre venues and the remainder (46,683) attended events related to the United States Bowling Congress in the Convention Center.

The Plaza and Abraham Chavez Theatres hosted 9,028 patrons in June and Year-to-Date have hosted 125,309 patrons. Total year-to-date FY 09/10 attendance in all theatre venues is 169,787, a 12.18% increase over the previous fiscal year.

June Highlights:

- VIVA El Paso, total average attendance of 610
- The Wizard of Oz, total attendance of 2,960
- Goo Goo Dolls, total attendance of 1,720
- Un Amante a la Medida, total attendance of 1,751

Remaining July & Early August Highlights:

- Street Festival, estimated attendance of 21,000
- Region 19 Conference, Plaza Theatre, estimated attendance of 2,000
- Nuestra Belleza Beauty Pageant, Plaza Theatre, estimated attendance of 2,000
- Viva El Paso, McKelligon Canyon Amphitheatre each Friday and Saturday through August 14
- Plaza Classic Film Festival, estimated attendance of 25,000
- Tejano Legends, Convention Center, estimated attendance of 2,000

Entertainment on Arts Festival Plaza

- Alfresco Fridays continue in July to include performances by Exito on July 9, El Paso Blues Band on July 16 and La Imperial Sonora on July 30. Average attendance for these events is 1,547. The series will continue all summer on Arts Festival Plaza.

E. Operations and Food and Beverage: Bryan Crowe

- Revenue in Food & Beverage for the month of June was \$239,714. Year to Date Revenue was \$1,632,200
- Concessions Contributor included:
 - USBC Concession Sales
 - Alfresco Fridays
 - Oasis Lounge and Bistro
 - Record Al Fresco Fridays Sales at \$27,216 with 4 shows for the month and an average of \$6,800 in sales per show.
- USBC move out began on July 4 and is scheduled to be complete by 16 with a new event scheduled in the Convention Center on July 18.
- Currently we are moving 160 cubic yards of trash a day and that is expected to reach 300 cubic yards July 9.
- Habitat for Humanity arrived on July 6 and will begin storing donated materials for future projects.

F. Communications: Pifas Silva

- Unique visits to the website for the month of May reached 49,124, compared to 45,591 in June 2009, an 8% increase.
- Impulse Development of El Paso continues to work on our new website design and will re-launch visitelpaso.com June 9. We hope to see more increases with the newer designed site.
- El Paso has received free media exposure in the June issues New Mexico journey, American Cowboy and Texas Parks & Wildlife Magazine.

- On June 9th the Communications department was contacted by Meetings & Conventions Urban Texas Guide and Meetings South to do an article on the Convention Center's new canopy for the trade publications upcoming Texas meetings issue.
- Currently the Communications Dept. is being assisted by the Tourism Dept. who is working with the state's tourism office on bringing a travel writer/photographer for an upcoming press trip in August (Rita Cook with Texas Highways). We continue on pace with last year's total and should meet our goal again this year of 20 writers. So far we have hosted 15 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 18 inquiries for the month.
- Susie Gaines attended the annual Film Texas Brunch. The annual event began 5 years ago and started with only 50 invitees but has since grown to roughly 300 producers, executive directors, production designers and location managers. The event allows for face to face time with decision makers that are normally difficult to get on the phone or in email.

June Filming/Wrapped:

- Small Independent films: Last Days & Red Sands with a direct impact of \$58,000.
- CNN Inside Business Report with Fred Thompson-filming at EP International Airport, interior and exterior, Butterfield Trail, and Ft. Bliss with a direct impact of \$5,000 (will be up to the television networks when this will air, networks will receive the final cut at the end of July).
- Permitted city locations for an El Paso Electric commercial to be shot in July.
- Working with the Discover Channel on a shoot happening in July for their television show, "Mystery Diagnosis."
- Recently received a script for a feature film slated for late this year. The department is currently breaking down the location needs and determining what areas in El Paso could match. A location file folder of pictures is being compiled for the production company.

III. General Manager's Update

- Bill Blaziek reviewed expiration dates of 4 (Elvia, Kay, Bernie S., and Betsy) board members and stressed the importance of open communication between the members and the City representatives. Letters reminding the representatives of expiring terms were hand delivered on July 7th.
- Bill Blaziek informed the board that a writer for the El Paso Inc., David Crowder has been working on an exploratory story regarding the CVB/CPAC.
- A new committee of about 12 lodging industry general managers is currently being formed. These meetings are intended to broaden the communication lines between the lodging industry and the CVB.

IV. Open Discussion

- Bernie Olivas informed the group that Hyundai is the new title sponsor of the Sun Bowl. Hyundai is the one of the fastest growing car companies. CBS has contracted another 4 years and to date the Sun Bowl has run 43 consecutive years on CBS.
- Joe Daubach proposed that the CVB/CPAC build of a float for the Sun Bowl parade. Explained that the estimated cost of a float is \$10,000.
- Elvia Hernandez invited the group to attend the Kermezaar annual festival in September.

V. ADJOURN

- Meeting was adjourned at 5:26 PM.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, September 9, 2010 at 4 p.m. in the Las Palmas Del Sol Room in the Convention Center