

**San Juan County  
Tourism Tax Advisory Board Meeting  
Monday May 4, 2026  
San Juan County Administrative Building  
117 S Main St, Monticello, UT 84535**

**TTAB Board Members:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Term Expires</b>	<b>PM Training Completed</b>
Derryl Jack	Chair	At Large	1/31/2027	Y
Dallin Tait	Vice Chair	Bluff Dwellings, Lodging	1/31/2027	
Jennifer Davila	Board Member	La Posada Pintada, Lodging	1/31/2028	Y
Brian Ballard	Board Member	Wolf Springs Resort, Lodging	1/31/2026	
Bill Haven	Board Member	Abajo Haven	1/31/2028	
Harold Simpson	Board Member	Simpsons Trail Handler, Outfitter	1/31/2028	
Kaeden Kulow	Board Member	Appointment by Monticello City	By Appointment	Y
Ben Muhlestein	Board Member	Appointment by Blanding City	By Appointment	Y
Erin Nelson	Board Member	Appointment by Bluff Town	By Appointment	Y
Sylvia Stubbs	Board Member	San Juan County Commission	1/31/2026	

**Attendance:**

**Members Present:** Bill Haven, Derryl Jack, Jennifer Davila, Ben Muhlestein, Dallin Tait, Harold Simpson, Erin Nelson, Sylvia Stubbs

**Members Absent:** Kaeden Kulow, Brian Ballard

**Staff Present:** Allison Yamamoto-Sparks, Cortney Yazzie

**Staff Absent:** None

**Guests:** None

- Derryl called the meeting to order. Derryl made a motion to adopt the meeting agenda. Ben seconded. Erin Nelson to adopt minutes as presented with that correction of previous minutes. Ben Second that motion.

**Public Comment:** None

## **Presentations**

Allison provided updates on various tourism initiatives:

- **Co-Op Marketing Plan:** Allison Yamamoto-Sparks opened the agenda item for the co-op marketing plan, confirming that Brand Revolt would present their strategy for the 2026-2027 grant cycle, which would be allocated for the 2027 budget. Ryan Jones and Kari Hansen from Brand Revolt were welcomed to present the plan, and Ryan Jones was designated as the presenter. The core concept of the campaign is "More Utah," positioning San Juan County as one of the most expansive and culturally layered counties in Utah. This strategy prioritizes quality visits, aiming to generate more lodging tax revenue and direct economic impact through extended stays.
- Brand Revolt's marketing strategy is designed to engage travelers at every stage of their journey, from the initial awareness phase ("more Utah meaning to learn") through consideration (itinerary building) and in-destination actions. The advocacy phase will utilize user-generated content and organic campaigns to encourage sharing of positive experiences. The budget includes funds for the website and leads programs (Go Travel Sites), printing travel guides and "see and do" guides (Hudson Printing), and various print advertisements such as the Global Inspiration Guide and Grand Circle Travel Planner. Additionally, the budget allocates funds for Datafy software for visitor behavior tracking and IPW registration.
- Ben Muhlestein made a motion to approve the outlined marketing budget, Jennifer seconded the motion passed by unanimous vote, with Derryl Jack expressing his appreciation for the "More Utah" tagline and the creative potential it offers.
- **TRT Collections:** Allison Yamamoto-Sparks provided updates on the Transient Room Tax (TRT) collection for 2026, showing that year-to-date figures from January through April are up compared to the same period in 2025. A significant portion (41%) of bookings during this period were made through OTAs (Online Travel Agencies), which complicates the tracking of lodging property locations within specific communities.
- **Visa Spending:** Allison shared Visa spending data from January through March 2026 showed Salt Lake, Denver, and Phoenix as top domestic markets, with an overall increase of 9% year-to-date in domestic spending across all market segments. International spending was down 1% year-to-date, with Canada showing a concerning additional 16% decrease, though Italy and Japan continue to show increases.
- **Digital Report:**

- **Newsletters:** Allison shared that the Visitor Services Office continues to issue a visitor newsletter every other month and a quarterly industry newsletter geared toward the travel trade. The industry newsletter provides specific details on assets that assist international travelers, such as businesses offering menus and information in multiple languages.
- **Milky Way Highway Initiative:** A preliminary meeting for the Milky Way Highway project included Grand County, the office, and Brand Revolt, aiming to create a marketing route to promote tourism during the dip in visitation in July and August. The project, which is not a designated highway, seeks to encourage early-day activity, afternoon breaks, and evening night-sky viewing, coinciding with the best time to see the Milky Way. Brand Revolt, Grand County, and San Juan County are currently developing the logo and assets, with the goal of creating a distinguishable feature that shows both the Moab and Bluff areas.
- **International Opt-ins:** International Opt-Ins with the Utah Office of Tourism are international marketing projects done in partnership with the Utah Office of Tourism, focusing on countries where the state already has in-country marketing representation. Running these types of campaigns independently would be much more expensive and less effective. Instead, participation happens alongside the Utah Office of Tourism and other counties that choose to opt in. By working as a group, participants receive discounted rates and are included in a larger, more impactful campaign. Because the Utah Office of Tourism contributes a significant portion of the funding, the overall effort becomes a larger media buy with greater reach.
- **FAM Tour Report:** The Visitor Services office has had a busy FAM tour schedule, hosting four tours already this year and planning nine or ten more in the coming months. One of the most significant recent tours involved American Trails magazine, which generated a highly positive response from the editor and secured a commitment for two 15-to-20-page feature articles to run across two quarterly issues, with the first scheduled for publication in June. Additional hosted tours included an India media FAM tour, a German FAM tour with Penta Riezen, and a tour with Birdley, a platform that enables travel influencers to market and sell their travel experiences.
- **Brochure Request Data and Tourism Trends:** Cortney Yazzie presented the overall monthly brochure reports, showing requests across digital, physical, and unspecified formats. The top ten states for brochure request were led by Wisconsin, Texas, and Arizona while Canada remains the number one country requesting brochures.

#### Member Updates:

- Derryl Jack commented that on Friday, May 15, 2026, Rob Sweden will present a program on the Historic Old Spanish Trail at 7:00 PM at the library. The evening will include a tutorial and discussion about the Old Spanish Trail. Then, on Saturday, May 16, there will be a family-friendly hike for those interested in exploring the trail experience further.
- Dallin Tait reported that Bluff Dwellings continues to perform well, with strong numbers and the installation of solar panels underway. He shared his enthusiasm for the new RV

park and hopes it will be open by the next meeting. He also noted that Wild Expeditions remains on the market, and he is currently operating tours for the company.

- Jennifer Davila reflected on the Tourism Business Development Workshop, noting the value of collaboration among local tourism partners. She also reported that Bluff business owners are working on a "Break for Bluff" video campaign aimed at encouraging travelers to stop and explore the community. In addition, she shared that a new playground has recently been installed at the Bluff Community Center.
- Erin Nelson says The Town of Bluff conducted a mini-survey showing that domestic visitation is similar to or slightly busier than last year, but international tourism is slower, mirroring the county's report. They received feedback suggesting a need to focus marketing efforts on younger generations and proposed a "one tank trip to San Juan County" push to encourage regional visitors from areas like the Wasatch Front, Grand Junction, Flagstaff, and Albuquerque
- Ben Muhlestein reported that Blanding is currently building a new walking trail expected to be finished soon, and they are preparing for Fourth of July activities, which are expected to draw good visitation due to the holiday falling on a Saturday.
- Sylvia Stubbs says Community Development and Planning reported receiving a grant from the foundation for work on the Main Street area, which includes the completion of a mural in Blanding Park that depicts the history of Grayson.

The meeting concluded with Allison's final updates.

The next quarterly TTAB meeting is scheduled for August 10 , 2026