



MALC Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2024

In Person and Zoom

4:00 PM

Visit Mobile Boardroom | Mobile Convention Center - 4th Floor

Voting Board Members in Attendance:

Kent Blackinton – President of the MALA Representative

Margo Gilbert – Downtown Mobile Representative

Aaron Watz – West Mobile Representative

Duncan Millar – West Mobile Representative

Raj Desai – Tillman’s Corner Representative

Pinal Patel – Tillman’s Corner Representative

Judi Gullede – Attractions Representative

Ken Patel – Downtown Mobile Representative

Voting Board Members Not in Attendance:

Hunter Omainsky – Restaurant Representative

Non-Voting Board Members and Others in Attendance:

David Clark – Visit Mobile Representative

Bobby Hall, CPA – Robert Hall & Associates, PC

Patty Kieffer – Visit Mobile

Oliver Dorgan – Visit Mobile

Tara Lawson – Visit Mobile

Meeting Called to Order by Kent Blackinton at 4:02 PM.

Approval of Minutes from the January 11, 2024 meeting.

Margo Gilbert motioned. Aaron Watz seconded.

A unanimous vote of approval followed.

Financial Report by Bobby Hall

Financials as of January 31, 2024 and February 29, 2024.

Kent Blackinton motioned to approve Financials. Margo Gilbert seconded.

A unanimous vote of approval followed.

Travel Media Group – Campaign Review

- 6-month program for Tillman’s Corner Hotels September 2023 – February 2024

- Reputation Management Post-Stay Email Campaign to improve online ratings, mitigate negative feedback and strengthen competitive advantage.
- 9 of 15 hotels participated, many interested in signing up with their own funds to continue the program due to successful trial.

Marketing & Promotions – Tara Lawson

- Digital Campaign Results Overview
 - OTA's – Expedia campaign performing well, should see increased results in coming months as we head into our higher inventory buy. Inventory buys were staggered to decrease spend during Mardi Gras and seasons where we are already performing well.
 - Digital Display – DSBP February ads for Cultural History and Valentines. Impressions, clicks, and CTR are all up this month compared to last. Cruise is performing as expected and will continue promoting through the "Wave Season" even though the Carnival Spirit will be out of port.
 - Introduced idea of a new campaign with a company that can provide an NEI report and potentially more refined audience
 - SEM – Compass campaign has seen 29% increase year over year and is performing 22% higher than industry average.
 - Second bi-monthly MALC newsletter will go out next Tuesday.
- Recommendations
 - Billboard Contract Renewal – Contract is up in April and all rates have increased slightly. The Visit Mobile marketing team recommends renewing the Tillman's Corner and Uptown Shopping District boards, but not the Downtown board. Team also recommends refreshing the vinyl.
 - Kent Blackinton made a motion to not renew the contract for the three current billboards. Duncan Millar seconded. Tara will get a quote from Lamar for a new contract for available digital boards.
- FAM Planning – Patty Keiffer
 - Sales team is planning a familiarization trip (FAM) using approved marketing carryover spend.
 - FAM will take place in September 2024, dependent on local event dates, and 15-20 travel planners from all markets will be invited.
 - Itinerary has been created.

Capital Update

- Wayfinding Signage - Margo met with the city to discuss signage. There are a lot of options in the air dependent on pricing, has not been solidified yet. Signage will start in downtown area and move outwards.
 - Judi Gulledge suggested adding funding to a GPS cell phone ping when crossing into city limits.
- Kiosk – Oliver Dorgan has passed the specs for placement on to Matt Anderson to make sure that the kiosks are ADA compliant in the prospective area.
- Sporting – Kent Blackinton suggested purchasing clocks for Sports Authority so that they do not have to rent them anymore. This would assist with the cost of tournaments. He has asked Danny Corte with Mobile Sports Authority to look into the cost.

Renewal / District Management Plan Discussion

- Assessment methodology and amount has not been decided on.
- Raj Desai recommends having consistent roundtable-style meetings to keep all the owners and managers involved before making any solidified decisions.

Future Meeting Dates

April – 18th, board only meeting at 3:00, all owners & representatives at 4:00

Open Discussion

- Raj Desai inquired about Night Hawk Security updates; Board decided to invite Lamont Williams from Night Hawk to the all-stakeholders meeting in April.
- Judy Gulledge brought up the idea of an attractions-focused marketing campaign. Other board members agreed this campaign could come out of contingency funds.
 - Marketing team will bring campaign proposal for next meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:29 PM by Kent Blackinton.