



**MALC Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**September 4, 2025**

**In Person and Zoom**

**4:00 PM**

**Visit Mobile Boardroom | Mobile Convention Center - 4<sup>th</sup> Floor**

**Voting Board Members in Attendance:**

Kent Blackinton – President of the MALA Representative

Judi Gulledge – Attractions Representative

Margo Gilbert – Downtown Mobile Representative

Aaron Watz – West Mobile Representative

Rachel Davis – West Mobile Representative

**Voting Board Members Not in Attendance:**

Hunter Omainsky – Restaurant Representative

Raj Desai – Tillman's Corner Representative

Pinal Patel – Tillman's Corner Representative

Ken Patel – Downtown Mobile 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

Sarah Paige Moore – Visit Mobile

**Meeting Called to Order** by Kent Blackinton at 4:03 PM.

**Approval of Minutes** from the August 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

*Kent Blackinton motioned the minutes be approved with a change to the attendance to reflect Cory Penn's absence. Judi Gulledge seconded.*

*A unanimous vote of approval followed.*

**Financial Report** by Bobby Hall

Financials as of August 31, 2025. Margo Gilbert noted distribution of funds needs to shift from June 1 on to reflect 75% of the budget to Marketing and 10% of the

budget to Capital Improvements. This change took effect when the District Plan was approved. Bobby Hall will rerun the financial report with the updated percentages.

*Kent motioned to approve Financials Margo seconded.*

*A unanimous vote of approval followed.*

## **Marketing & Promotions – Tara Lawson**

- OTA's
  - Expedia- ROAS month over month increased slightly. CTR also increased slightly month over month with a small increase in spend. Overall consistent month to month. Going to outperform last year's totals – Expecting to see gross booking revenue above \$2.1 million for the year.
  - Amadeus- Contract has been renewed for next year, over 12,000 room nights tracked from this campaign over the last 12 months.
- Digital Campaigns
  - Significant rise in Microsoft Search spend (up 77.2% from last month, \$1,500) after seeing success last month, resulting in substantial rise in Microsoft Search metrics.
  - 6% increase in META spend but still saw substantial increase in metrics, which means the content is performing well.
  - Azira (Digital Display) Ad Attribution tracked 330k exposed visitors into the Mobile lodging market. *\*Azira is a combined campaign with Visit Mobile and MALC funds. Any ads for MALC lead directly to pages with TID specific lodging links.*
- Print Advertisements this month:
  - Garden & Gun Restaurant Week Feature
  - The Local Palate
  - New Orleans Magazine
  - Good Grit

## **Capital Update**

- Amtrak Transportation
- Tillmans Corner
- NEW – proposals are going out for lighting around downtown, similar to the string lights over lower Dauphin. Discussion was had about the four corners of Royal Street and Dauphin (gateway entrance). Margo Gilbert suggests using the approved Gateway Project (\$15k) towards this lighting project.

## **Special Projects**

- Security discussion – Tara Lawson to contact Lamont with Commercial District Patrol about passing off cost to individual hotel properties. The hotels who currently have security must decide if they'd like to continue security on an individual basis.

- October 1 deadline for security if not continued on individual basis.

*\*Note: After this meeting, the Board of Directors voted via email to push this deadline back to November 1 to give hotels more time to sign individual security contracts with Commercial District Patrol.*

### **Annual Meeting Outline**

- A representative from the city administration has offered to make opening remarks.
- Keep the presentation more visual with high level metrics from each campaign and provide metrics in booklets/handouts.

### **Future Meeting Dates**

Annual Meeting – September 17

October – No meeting

November – November 20

### **Open Discussion**

Plans for Amtrak station

Nominating Committee for West Mobile Representative – Kent Blackinton

**Meeting Adjourned at 5:10 PM by Kent Blackinton.**