



**MALC Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**October 19, 2023**

**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

Duncan Millar – West Mobile Representative

Hunter Omainsky – Restaurant Representative

**Voting Board Members Not in Attendance:**

Pinal Patel – Tillman’s Corner Representative

Ken Patel – Downtown Mobile Representative

Raj Desai – Tillman’s Corner Representative

**Non-Voting Board Members and Others in Attendance:**

David Clark – Visit Mobile Representative

Bobby Hall, CPA – Robert Hall & Associates, PC

Charlotte Keel – Visit Mobile

Patty Kieffer – Visit Mobile

Tom White – 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 September 14, 2023, meeting.

*Margo Gilbert motioned. Judi Gulledge seconded.*

*A unanimous vote of approval followed.*

**Financial Report** by Bobby Hall

Financials as of September 30, 2023

*Kent Blackinton motioned to approve Financials. Duncan Millar seconded.*

*A unanimous vote of approval followed.*

## **Budget 2024**

- Once approved, a simplified budget will be presented at the Annual Meeting.
- Discussion of carryover marketing funds being used throughout the next two fiscal years, before TID renewal.
- The simplified document will be updated to reflect detailed budget.

*Kent Blackinton motioned to approve 2024 budget as presented on the detailed budget document, Margo Gilbert seconded.*

*A unanimous vote of approval followed.*

## **Marketing & Promotions – Oliver Dorgan**

- Digital Campaign Results
  - Expedia – complete campaign results.
  - Epsilon – Next NEI report will be received in November.
- Recommendations for FY2024
  - The marketing team recommends evaluating the importance of the NEI report from Epsilon and considering moving campaigns to a local vendor, DSB&P. DSB&P claims to have more specific ad targeting capabilities, yielding higher results at lower cost.
  - The marketing team recommends lowering spend with Expedia based on FY23 campaign results, making room for spend in other OTA options.
  - Recommendation to possibly increase spend on Cruise campaigns, with the arrival of the new Carnival Spirit ship.
  - The Marketing Committee will meet in November to discuss specifics of new campaigns.

## **Update On Line Presence – Tillman’s Corner – Tara Lawson**

- According to the tracking sheet that Travel Media Group has provided, they have held onboarding meetings with six (6) out of fifteen (15) properties.
- Keeping an eye on the contract end date in December.

## **Night Hawk Discussion – end of three-month trial period**

- Tillman’s Corner and Beltline properties are very pleased with the added security and have said guests are pleased when they are told that is part of what the assessment pays for.
- The Board discussed extending the contract with Night Hawk through the holiday season.

*Kent Blackinton motioned to extend the contract for four (4) additional months.*

*Margo Gilbert seconded the motion.*

*A unanimous vote of approval followed.*

## **Annual Meeting**

- Review Agenda for Public Hearing, Board of Directors vote, and Annual Meeting presentation.

## **Capital Update**

- Continued discussion of Kiosk placement at either welcome center or Mobile International Airport. Oliver Dorgan suggested using moveable kiosk on wheels for third location so that it can be moved based on interaction.
- Discussion of various ways carryover Capital funds could be used:
  - Possibility of allocating towards internet connection for conventions at Convention Center.
  - Welcome build-out at the Mobile International Airport, or a comprehensive signage package with the city.
  - A gateway arch on Dauphin St.
- Designated discussion on Capitol should be held at next meeting.

## **Future Meeting Dates**

Thursday, November 2 – Annual Meeting

Thursday, November 9 – Marketing Committee Meeting, 3 pm

Tuesday, December 5 - Board Meeting to include Capital Discussion, 4pm

## **Open Discussion**

- Post cards are going in the mail Friday, October 20 to remind properties to vote in Board of Directors elections. Properties were initially sent ballots on October 3, via e-voting, and Bobby has sent weekly email reminders.

**Meeting Adjourned** at 5:32 PM by Kent Blackinton.