



**MALC Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
In Person and Zoom
4:00 PM**

May 7, 2026

Visit Mobile Boardroom | Mobile Convention Center - 4th Floor

Voting Board Members in Attendance:

Kent Blackinton – President of the MALA Representative
Judi Gulledge – Attractions Representative
Margo Gilbert – Downtown Mobile Representative
Rachel Davis – West Mobile Representative
Hunter Omainsky – Restaurant Representative
Aaron Watz – West Mobile Representative

Voting Board Members Not in Attendance:

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
Cory Penn – City Council Representative
Bobby Hall, CPA – Robert Hall & Associates, PC
Patty Kieffer – Visit Mobile
Susan Zimmerman – Visit Mobile
Tara Lawson – Visit Mobile

Meeting Called to Order by Kent Blackinton at 4:01 PM.

Approval of Minutes from the March 12 meeting.

*Margo Gilbert motioned to approve. Kent Blackinton seconded.
A unanimous vote of approval followed.*

Financial Report by Bobby Hall

*Kent Blackinton motioned to approve Financials as of March 31 and April 30 as presented. Hunter Omainsky seconded.
A unanimous vote of approval followed.*

Marketing & Promotions – Tara Lawson

- OTAs
 - Expedia campaign has generated \$1.5M in booking revenue at the halfway point, putting us on track to out-perform last year's campaign.
 - Booking.com had a successful 6-month campaign. This low-spend campaign still generated \$280,000 in booking revenue, leading the marketing team to extend through the end of the fiscal year with some additional placements on the mobile app.
 - Amadeus contract was not renewed. After seeing no valuable increase in results after a major increase in spend during the first half of the fiscal year, the marketing team requested a low-spend campaign which Amadeus was unable to provide. We will not move further with this campaign in the future.
- Digital Campaigns
 - Search campaigns have maintained strong performance
 - Google Pmax campaign delivered significant reach, a very low cost-per-click and an impressive CTR.
 - Facebook/META Campaigns saw expanded reach.
 - Shared industry averages for tourism campaigns, all digital campaigns are well above these averages.
- Print Ads & Sponsored Media
 - New Orleans Magazine – Print, Digital & Newsletter Sponsor
 - Alabama Magazine – Print
 - Braves Program – Full Page Print at all home games, distributed to all coaches, sponsors, etc.

Capital Update

- Outdoor Kiosk – we have been told by the Traffic Engineering office that we should expect to be issued the permit very soon.
- Tillmans Corner Landscaping Project – Invoices have been paid and hoteliers have expressed their happiness with the landscaping.

Special Projects

- Budget Variance Discussion – Board discussed possible projects that may be completed with increased funding over the next fiscal year, including, but not limited to:
 - Transportation options
 - Meeting incentives
 - Ads and activations with larger publications
 - Heritage Tourism Weekend
 - Childcare Coalition

- Influencers
- Limited series podcast
- TID Summit
- Additional Familiarization Trips
- Hiring a consulting company to audit spend and effectiveness of marketing efforts so far, make recommendations on future efforts.
- Tara Lawson will send the Civitas Survey Results, which contain some creative ways that other Tourism Improvement Districts are utilizing their resources.
- Everyone will gather more ideals for how to spend increased funding and bring them to the next meeting.
- Tara Lawson will get a quote from a consulting agency.

Future Meeting Dates

June – No Meeting

July – 16th, Community Meeting. **Representatives from all TID properties are encouraged to attend this meeting** for insights on current TID projects, campaigns, and strategies along with the opportunity to share their own thoughts and ideas. The Board of Directors will make a quarterly effort to encourage property representatives to attend similar meetings.

Open Discussion

Meeting Adjourned at 4:55 PM by Kent Blackinton.