



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

**March 12, 2026**

**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  
Rachel Davis – West Mobile Representative  
Aaron Watz – West Mobile Representative  
Raj Desai – Tillman’s Corner Representative

**Voting Board Members Not in Attendance:**

Hunter Omainsky – Restaurant 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  
Oliver Dorgan – Visit Mobile  
Tara Lawson – Visit Mobile

**Meeting Called to Order** by Kent Blackinton at 4:04 PM.

**Approval of Minutes** from the January 13 meeting.

*Margo Gilbert motioned to approve. Judi Gulledge seconded.  
A unanimous vote of approval followed.*

**Financial Report** by Bobby Hall

*Kent Blackinton motioned to approve Financials as of February 28, 2026. Judi Gulledge seconded.  
A unanimous vote of approval followed.*

## **TID Performance Audit Report** by Bobby Hall

- 2024 and 2025 audit report presented that MALC is operating in full financial compliance. There are no necessary adjustments to any accounts.
- Margo Gilbert noted an inconsistency in the Capital Improvements expenditures. \$107,500 is listed as paid to the National Maritime Museum Exhibit while it should be \$100,000. The additional \$7,500 was paid to the downtown mural project and should be separated out.

*Kent Blackinton motioned to approve the 2024 Performance Audit and the 2025 Performance Audit with the stipulation that a change is made to the Capital Improvements expenditures. Aaron Watz seconded.  
A unanimous vote of approval followed.*

## **Officer Elections**

- Every two years, the Board of Directors shall elect officers. The nominations were as follows:

*Chair of the Board – Kent Blackinton*

*Vice Chair of the Board – Margo Gilbert*

*Secretary – Rachel Davis*

*Treasurer – Raj Desai*

*All nominated members accepted their nominations. Judi Gulledge moved to accept the nominated slate as presented. Margo Gilbert seconded the motion.  
A unanimous vote of approval followed.*

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

- OTAs
  - Expedia - ROAS for February was 31.7 which were significantly higher than January at 23.8. CTR for February was 0.19% which was higher than January at 0.13%. Ad spend MoM was almost half – results even more impressive (ad spend intentionally decreased during Mardi Gras due to already high demand).
  - Booking.com – New campaign for this FY; performing very well. ROAS is \$10.72, keeping in mind ADR on Booking's platform is typically lower than our other OTAs. Economy and midscale TID properties are seeing great results from this campaign, individual property results are provided.
  - Amadeus – An error was made with the Amadeus campaign. The marketing team asked for a full-year contract in September but were given a six-month contract at full-year cost. With the unintentional increase in spend, there was no noticeable increase in results. Return on ad spend dropped significantly. Moving forward, the marketing team will request a

new contract with a significant reduction in spend as a test to see if the campaign yields any meaningful impact.

- Digital Campaigns
  - MALC Search campaign costs were up slightly from December. We saw 25,529 impressions and 3,615 clicks for a CTR of 14.16%.
  - Google Performance Max continues to be one of the most consistent high performing campaigns -- saw 733,742 impressions and 69,082 clicks for a CTR of 9.42%. We had a very low CPC of \$.09. The Mardi Gras campaign was a top performer.
  - Facebook costs were up slightly and had an increase in impressions to 1,184,552 and 61,727 clicks for a CTR of 3.82%, well above industry average for tourism.
- Print Ads
  - Currently running or recently submitted in print:
    - Garden & Gun, Feb/Mar issue
    - New Orleans Magazine Feb issue
    - Alabama Magazine, Jan/Feb issue
    - Atlanta Braves home game program ads.
  - Digital Sponsored Media:
    - New Orleans Magazine website and e-newsletter
    - Bama Buzz: Black History Month and Mardi Gras
  - Radio/Podcasting
    - Sponsor, Beyond the Beads podcast from New Orleans Magazine

## Capital Update

- **Wayfinding Signage**
  - City finance reached out to Margo, they would like for MALC to tell the city how much they plan to commit and how the corporation would like the contributed funds to be spent (i.e. whether funds should be used towards the gateway arch, funds should be used in a specific area, etc.)
  - The city is working with a major company that handles wayfinding signage in big cities; the work is expected to be high quality and well done.
  - Signage goes throughout the entire city. Every park and public space.
  - The city will complete the project in phases.
  - Judi Gulledge suggested we make multiple payments to the city spread over two years, due to the ongoing nature of the project.

*Kent made a motion to commit \$100,000 split between FY 2026 and FY 2027 to the city's plans. Margo Gilbert seconded the motion.*

*A unanimous vote of approval followed.*

- **Xavier de Richmond Light Installation**

- Fred Rendfrey, with support of Mayor Spiro, is asking for funds towards light show installation on History Museum of Mobile. Funds are being requested from Smith Trust, DT Parks Conservancy, Main Street Mobile, Poarch Creek, City of Mobile.
- Examples of de Richmond's previous work were shown, as well as the mockup plan for Mobile.
- Projectors would be installed in Mardi Gras Park and project various light art installations onto the façade of the History Museum of Mobile. The equipment would be property of the City of Mobile.
- Project total cost is \$1,200,000

*Judi Gullede made a motion to contribute \$100,000 to the project. Aaron Watz seconded.*

*A unanimous vote of approval followed.*

### **Future Meeting Dates**

May 7, 2026

### **Open Discussion**

**Meeting Adjourned** at 5:16 PM by Kent Blackinton.