



**Myrtle Beach Area Convention and Visitors Bureau  
CVB Group Sales Committee Meeting Minutes  
February 7, 2017**

**Attendees:** David Amend, Christy Cochran, Anna Lillemoen Conley, Alexia Edge, Sabena Dayton, Heather Horner, Tim Huber, Cindy Hull, Brian Monroe, Donna Rebello, Lynette Savidge, Bobbie Stanley, Heidi Vukov, Margaret Wallace, Giedre Watkins, Patti Williams

**Guest:** Jessica Vanco (The Myrtle Beach Sports Center).

**Staff:** Mike Anderson, Kim DaRoja, Casey Dornhecker, Sandy Haines, Keith Pierce, Josh Williams (Visibility and Conversions).

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1. **Call to Order/Introductions:** Respectively Sabena Dayton and Cindy Hull introduced themselves as new Chair and Vice Chair followed by committee and staff introductions.
  2. **Approval of Minutes:** Heidi Vukov made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 6, 2016, meeting. Cindy Hull seconded and motion was carried.
  3. **New Committee Member Orientation:** Kim DaRoja welcomed committee members and reviewed the new member orientation binder for the 2017 new committee members.
  4. **The Myrtle Beach Sports Center:** Jessica Vanco with the Myrtle Beach Sports Center presented their 2017 Marketing Plan outlining how funding provided by the CVB is being allocated. (See attached presentation)
  5. **Marketing Update:**
    - a. **Digital Update:** Josh Williams with Visibility and Conversions reviewed the January 1 – January 31, 2017, Group & Meetings Website Activity Year-Over-Year Report. The report shows that request for proposals (RFPs) and visitor guide requests improved in January over the previous year. The page views to the groups and meetings sections of the website are soft YTD due to less spend allocated in January. There is still a discussion on 2017 advertising plans and chose to remain conservative in spend until plans are final. They are now tracking a sample of in-market arrivals to help measure media effectiveness. They will soon have full year-over-year arrival data as well as leisure media performance to compare.
  6. **Tradeshow/Sponsorship Update:**
    - a. **Association Executives of North Carolina (AENC)** – Mikki Walls attended on December 7-9, 2016, in Raleigh, NC with 12 partners. 90 planners stopped by and provided their business

cards. The booth has won “Best Overall Booth” two years in a row. Mikki Walls opinion is while the show is not a big lead generator due to several associations required to host meetings within the state of NC, the show is valuable from a public relations standpoint.

- b. Connect DC for Association Meetings** – Ursula Grant attended on December 14, 2016 in Washington D.C. This is a 1 day hosted buyer (pre-scheduled appointments only) reverse-style trade show for the meetings industry with the intention of connecting CVBs and hoteliers to D.C.-based planners in the national association market. In December, it was announced that 80% of their shared capital was bought out by the UK Based Group, Tarsus. The company also acquired INTEX in China. These mergers should bring a larger database of potential convention business for future appointments.
- c. Association Forum Holiday Showcase** – Mikki Walls attended on December 14-16, 2016, in Chicago, IL with the Convention Center. There were approximately 1,400 buyers in attendance. There are lots of changes but no tangible business and suggests that Denise Cmiel, our in-market representative, attend the show to represent us. Next year, this show will be in question on whether we attend or not when we vote.
- d. American Bus Association** – Sandy Haines attended on January 14-17, 2017, in Cleveland, OH. This is always a great show and we host a yearly breakfast sponsorship where this year, cast from the Alabama Theatre entertained. Pauline Levesque, while unable to attend the meeting, requested that share that she has already booked 4 groups from the show.

## 7. Update

- a. Sports Update** – Mike Anderson discussed most recent Myrtle Beach Regional Sports Alliance meeting held at the North Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce on December 21, 2016, and Amanda Player with World Fastpitch Connection was the meeting speaker. She spoke on the success her tournaments have had at the beach and spoke to how great the attractions and restaurants have been for the tournament and their teams. Mike Anderson had a site visit with Team Handball that ended up booking at the Myrtle Beach Sports Center. The ACC Women’s Basketball Tournament will be held at Coastal Carolina from March 1-5, 2017. They have moved their tournament from Greensboro, NC because of the HB2 Bill and are going from 20,000 seats to around 3,300 seats but we would like to try and get them back year after year and bring other ACC Tournaments in the future. We submitted 31 bids for NCAA tournaments and final decisions have been tabled until Spring to see what North Carolina is going to do about the HB2 Bill. Mike Anderson will be attending NASC Symposium in Sacramento, CA March 27-31, 2017. A new sponsorship that will have longevity is an avatar of Mike that was created and he has done voiceovers for the character that will be presented during the show. This will be a 3-year deal that will also include website coverage as well. We have recently engaged a 3rd party to conduct a facility/financial audit of the area to determine what we need and what can be sustainable. The audit will be in April for facility potential.
- b. 2016 Year-End Goal Production Results** -1,066 leads were generated on a year-end goal of 1,025 leads; exceeding goal by 104%. Definite room night production of 264,752 exceeded the year-end goal of 230,606 room nights by 115%.
- c. 2017 YTD Results** - Through January 2017, 128 leads were generated which is at a pace of 11% and has generated 25,427 definite rooms nights which is at a pace of 9%.

**d. 2017 Group Sales Goals for Committee Approval**

- i. Discussion** – Kim reviewed the recommendation for 2017 production goals of 1,120 leads and 277,990 definite room nights which reflects a flat 5% increase across all market segments.
- ii. Vote** – Christy Cochran made a motion to approve goals. Bobbie Stanley seconded and goals were approved by Committee and will move on to Marketing Council for approval.
- e. YTD Prospects** – Out of 140 prospects for 2016, the sales manager’s efforts have resulted in 20 converted to a lead status for a 14% conversion rate.
- f. YTD site Visits** – 72 site visits and FAMS in 2016 resulted in 48 definite bookings for a conversion rate of 65% on a goal of 60%.

**8. Unfinished Business:**

- a.** Sabena Dayton would like to move the meetings to 3:30 PM from 2:30 PM. Cindy Hull made a motion to move and Alexia Edge seconded it. This motion was passed.
- b.** Global Meetings Industry Day will be held at the Marriott Grande Dunes on April 6, 2017, from 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM in conjunction with MPI and US Travel. Everyone around the world will be participating at the same time. We invite all committee members and their group sales staff to join in our celebration.
- c.** Gary Loftus with CCU is updating analysis on the Group Sales Market, specifically Meetings & Conventions, and will be reaching out to partners for information. We hope to present this information at the Global Meetings Industry Day reception.

***The next meeting is scheduled for 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 4, 2017, in the Chamber Boardroom.***