



**Myrtle Beach Area Convention Bureau  
CVB Group Sales Committee Meeting Minutes  
April 5, 2016**

**Attendees:** David Amend, Rachel Beckerman, Charlie Bradshaw, Ellen Calhoun, Kelly Cauble, Jessica Cutler, Sabena Dayton, Alexia Edge, Dawn Formo, Diane Garcia, Jonathan Fussell, Robin Harvey, Heather Horner, Pauline Levesque, Anna Lillemoen, Molly Mercer, Pam Reis, Corrie Sanchez, Marianne Smith, Heidi Vukov, Giedre Watkins

**Staff:** Kim DaRoja, Casey Dornhecker, Melanie Doty, Ursula Grant, Sandy Haines, Kimberly Hartley, Mary Mroz, Susan Phillips, Michelle Schollmeyer, Mikki Walls

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1. **Call to Order/Introductions:** Charlie Bradshaw
2. **Approval of Minutes:** Pauline Levesque made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 2, 2016 meeting. Heidi Vukov seconded and motion was carried.
3. **Marketing Update:** Susan Phillips discussed: 1) water quality issue and how MBACC is combating the erroneous information that had been distributed, 2) elevate group business opportunity within group publications, 3) press trips to Chicago and Washington, DC and mentioned that will also be going to Atlanta, 4) in the past we didn't have a whole lot on the PR side for Canada. Last May did first media trip for the year followed by another in September. Have approximately 20 requests from Canadian journalists to come to Myrtle Beach to write stories. 5) 60 More Days of Summer campaign will be 60 ways you can enjoy a culinary experience and subset will be focused on people turning 60. Funding is dependent on funds used to address water quality issue, 6) Bike Fest – will be sending out talking points and videos.
  - a. **Media Plan:** Mary Mroz reviewed MBACVB Insertions handout which itemizes the group media plan for 2016.
4. **Canadian/International Update:** Kimberly Hartley provided this update. MBACVB has had representation in Eastern Canada since the end of 2009. For 2009 through 2014 Canada is the number one international market for the United States and number one for travel spend. Last year was the first year saw a decrease of 10% and this was due primarily to the low Canadian dollar value. The UK market is our number 1 overseas international market and Germany is our number 2 overseas international market focus through WTM and ITB. Recently attended the Brand USA China sales mission. China is the largest growing international market for the United States. We are second tier area.

## 5. Trade show/ Sales Mission Review

- a. **Travel South & Travel South Post FAM:** Sandy Haines attended March 3-9, 2016 in Winston-Salem, NC. Had 50 appointments and secured a lunch sponsorship at no additional cost for all the attendees. Held post fam in Myrtle Beach following the trade show with 21 attendees.

Travel South is approved to attend in 2017.

- b. **Independent Planner Educational Conference (IPEC):** Mikki Walls attended March 20-23, 2016 in Austin, TX. IPEC is an independent planner and also hosted/buyer trade show so, DMOs and hotels foot the bill for these planners to come and attend and fill their appointments. Had 18 appointments. Quite a bit of interest in Myrtle Beach. 60 planners and approximately 70 suppliers. This is the third year for this show. Savvy and well educated planners who typically don't use CVBs. No RFPs in 2015 and 2016 1 RFP for 3 smaller meetings. Registration fees cover attendee's hotel and meals. The criteria for meeting planners is that all must have open RFPs to book within the next two years and must book over 1,000 room nights annually and that could be combined with other programs.

Table voting on attending IPEC until 2017 location is announced.

- c. **International Tourism Bourse (ITB):** Kim DaRoja reported on behalf of Scott Schult, Executive Vice President of Marketing who attended March 9-13, 2016 in Berlin, Germany along with SCPRT. Has attended on an annual basis from more on a PR/marketing stand point. ITB is the largest international trade show for the German market and the German market is the second largest for SC.
- d. **Alpha Kappa Alpha (AKA) Sorority Sponsorship:** Ursula Grant we hosted their 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual South Atlantic Regional Conference March 23-27, 2016. 3,500 registered and approximately 4,725 total room nights. Working with this group for two years. CVB sponsored the transportation for this group to the overflow hotels. This was a city-wide conference with Sheraton as the headquarter and 10 additional hotels. Utilized the Convention Center as well as the Sports Center. The group was here in 2009 and only utilized four overflow hotel properties.

## 6. UPDATE

- a. **YTD Goal Report:** Kim DaRoja reported on the first quarter 2016 group sales goals report.
- i. Total number of leads generated is 343 with total potential room nights of 121,124. Currently at 35% of the 1025 lead goal for 2016. Six leads were generated in first quarter 2016 for Myrtle Beach Sports Center.
  - ii. Total number of booked room nights booked is 102,259. Currently at 44% of the 230,606 room night goal. Thirteen booked leads generated for generated in first quarter 2016 for Myrtle Beach Sports Center. The number of assist leads is 44.
- b. **YTD Prospects:** Mikki Walls, Sandy Haines and Ursula Grant reviewed Prospecting Report January 1 – March 31, 2016.
- c. **YTD Site Visit:**
- i. Melanie Doty reported for first quarter 2016: 9 site visits with three definite and 33% conversion rate.
  - ii. Mikki Walls reported: 4 site visits with 7 definite and conversion rate of 175%. A couple of the site visits resulted in multiple leads.

- iii. Ursula Grant reported: 2 site visits with one definite and 50% conversion rate.
- iv. Sandy Haines reported: 4 FAMs for first quarter.
  
- d. **MAMFAM:** Ursula Grant reviewed the Monday After the Masters Familization trip. This is the 6<sup>th</sup> MAMFAM being held April 9-12, 2016 with Kingston Plantation hosting this year. 15 planners and 3 have active leads. This FAM focuses on the meetings and conventions market.
  
- e. **DMAI Results:** Kim DaRoja discussed the key takeaways from the DMAI Destination Assessment conducted recently.
  
- f. **Updates to VMB website:** Kim DaRoja reviewed the changes that we have implemented. Media ads reference the [www.myrtlebeachmeetings.com](http://www.myrtlebeachmeetings.com) link which lands on the meetings and conventions page on the Visit Myrtle Beach website. The RFP has been streamlined because about 80% of users are filling out these RFPs on mobile devices. We added staff photos, bios and then a quote about why Myrtle Beach is such a great destination for groups. DaRoja also reviewed the Groups & Meetings Website Activity handout.

## 7. **Unfinished Business:**

Heidi Vukov in response to the DMAI assessment results, posed the question of what are we doing to encourage people to come to the Myrtle Beach area to work? Phillips responded that we could aggregate the jobs onto the chamber website but, because the jobs page is getting so much traffic now without that that we are looking to set up a separate website.

Kimberly Hartley asked that if any hotels or attractions are tracking FIT numbers for Canada, UK and Germany to report quarterly to her.

Kim DaRoja mentioned that along with MPI – Carolinas Chapter, we are hosting a drop-in, “Meetings Mean Business” for Global Meetings Industry Day on April 14<sup>th</sup> from 5pm to 8pm at Hilton Myrtle Beach Resort.

***The next meeting is at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> in the chamber boardroom.***