

Membership Committee Meeting Minutes May 21, 2015

Committee members present: Blake Arp, Matt Carson, Kimberly Causey-Gomez, Brian Ferguson, Eric Hunt, O'Neil McCoy, Jackie Neal, Collier Schettig, Robert Stinnett.

Committee members not present: Charlie Belissary, Radha Herring, Bobbei Ruswinckel, Brigitte Wilson, Jennifer Dellinger.

Staff present: Diana Greene, Cindy Gettig, Kori Hippe, Shannon Furtick, Kema Faulk, Amanda Blomquist.

O'Neil McCoy called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

I. Welcome & Introductions

The March 17, 2015 minutes were approved.

II. Membership Overview

Cindy Getting thanked Amanda Blomquist for the work on cleaning up the membership database and producing the membership comparison report presented in council packet. She pointed out the top three categories which are retail, restaurants and services. Services includes anything from a plumbing company to a day spa. She also pointed out the West of the Waterway area which has seen growth that resulted in the creation of the West of the Waterway Council in 2013. Cindy said we've seen growth in home-based businesses and might look to consider a dues structure change. Additionally, Cindy said new member sales are about \$5,000 ahead of goal and said we are seeing several members who dropped due to financial hardship rejoin.

III. Renewals

Shannon Furtick said renewals were sent out May 15 and we have special incentives this year to encourage members to rejoin. The incentives are new for 2015. As of the meeting, there are 137 members renewed and said we are doing really well.

Diana Greene asked about the use of the pay online option. Shannon said that started in 2014 but said more people are starting to use it in 2015.

Cindy mentioned the 2014 90 percent retention rate and said this year we want 95 percent.

Diana Greene told the council how important new member sales and renewals. She said it's vital to the organization for keeping the lights on and opening the doors every day.

IV. Membership Survey

Diana gave the council the raw results of the 2015 membership survey. There were 569 responses, most came from businesses with less than 5 employees, were located in central Myrtle Beach and had been members for more than 10 years. The survey asked about the effectiveness of the functions of the chamber and included open-ended questions seeking suggestions for improving programs and services and asked about the biggest challenge to the businesses.

V. Networking Events through December

Kema Faulk presented the council with a list of networking events confirmed as of the meeting through the end of December and encouraged council members to host an event if their business hasn't already.

VI. Employment Issues/Services

Diana asked the committee about workforce issues following discussions with the Small Business Council. Kori showed work she's completed so far on the website and improvements to

the Job Connections page. The council was asked for input on issues they face in hiring and ideas to help employers meet good employees – education classes, Grand Strander articles, etc.

VII. **Emergency Management Business Information**

Diana discussed emergency planning and resiliency. Kori Hippe showed new webpage that previously only housed hurricane planning but now is fit for any and all emergencies. She said it has templates to help businesses draft their emergency plans that vary in detail. The site includes other planning resources. She asked the council for input on changing the wording from disaster planning to business interruption planning. The council agreed the change might get businesses attention more.

The meeting adjourned at 10 a.m.