



**Myrtle Beach Area Convention Bureau
CVB Group Sales Committee Meeting Minutes
June 7, 2016**

Attendees: David Amend, Charlie Bradshaw, Kelly Cauble, Jessica Cutler, Jonathan Fussell, Heather Horner, Tim Huber, Pauline Levesque, Molly Mercer, Sharon Salyer, Heidi Vukov

Guest: Emma Hagg, Lisa Saguto

Staff: Mike Anderson, Kim DaRoja, Casey Dornhecker, Mary Mroz, Susan Phillips, Michelle Schollmeyer, Mikki Walls

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1. **Call to Order/Introductions:** Charlie Bradshaw
 2. **Approval of Minutes:** David Amend made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 5, 2016 meeting. Pauline Levesque seconded and motion was carried.
 3. **Marketing Update:** Susan Phillips reviewed the Groups & Meetings Website Activity report. RFPs have increased from 2015. She will ask Visibility & Conversion to research why traffic is down on the Convention Center, Student Groups, and Group Accommodations pages. Kim DaRoja contributes the decrease in traffic to the group accommodations pages, due to the ease in submitting an RFP so, planners are going directly to submit an RFP. The number of requests for meeting & group planner guides to be mailed has significantly decreased. The cause of this decrease is that the digital version of the guide is easy to navigate and much more prominent on the website.

Susan Phillips mentioned that PR is picking up a lot of group related publications; *Associations Now*, *Meetings Today*, *Successful Meetings Magazine*, *National Tour Association*, and *Meeting & Convention*.

Susan Phillips reported on the "60 More Days of Summer" campaign, which will have a culinary component this year and will also tie into those celebrating their 60th birthday. Marketing is also working on a lot of strategic partnerships with AARP and DAV.org (Disabled American Veterans).

Susan Phillips went over "Grand Strand 2020." The community goal is to grow our tourism base to 20 million visitors by 2020. As of 2015, there were 17.94 million visitors of which 33% are first time visitors. In 2014, there were 17.2 visitors to the Myrtle Beach area.

4. **Trade show/ Sales Mission Review**
 - a. **MPI Carolinas Chapter Annual Meeting (MPI-CC):** Mikki Walls attended May 8-10, 2016, in Hilton Head, SC. This is more of a networking meeting type of event. There were 15 planners at the event. We donated a Day-At-The-Beach silent auction item to help raise money.

March 2017 event will be held in Myrtle Beach at Springmaid Beach Resort/DoubleTree.

MPI Carolinas Chapter Annual Meeting was approved to attend in 2017.

- b. Meeting & Incentive Forums:** Mikki Walls attended May 21-24, 2016, in Scottsdale, AZ. Marina Inn at Grande Dunes was the partner who also attended. This is a four-day intensive hosted/buyer event in which we opted to only participate the first two days, which focuses on domestic based groups. This is a high-end organization. First time attending this show. We secured 25 pre-scheduled appointments with meeting planners, received two RFPs that have not yet been distributed. 2017 tradeshow will be held April 23-26, 2017, in Cancun, Mexico.

Table voting on attending Meeting & Incentive Forums for 2017 until October meeting to determine RFPs and ROI.

- c. SGMP-NEC:** Mikki Walls reported on behalf of Ursula Grant. Ursula Grant was schedule to attend May 17-19, 2016, in San Diego, CA. We did not attend this year because, it was on the west coast and the format of the show was changed to a networking lunch format. Exhibitors would be hosting planners at lunch tables and at that time would be able to discuss and showcase their destination to the planners that were selected to sit at the table. This show has been hit or miss for us because of government funding for meetings and meeting restrictions in certain areas such as resort destinations. Next year will be the final year for the national tradeshow as they will be going to a smaller regional chapter meeting/tradeshow.

SGMP-NEC was not approved to attend in 2017

- d. Destinations Southeast:** Mikki Walls reported on behalf of Ursula Grant. Ursula Grant attended May 19 - 21, 2016, in Columbia, SC. Partners also in attendance were: Kingston Resorts, Marina Inn, and Sheraton. Destination Southeast (formerly known as SMU and M&C Interact) is a three-day meeting and incentive conference created by Successful Meetings and Meetings & Conventions. This is a hosted buyer appointment based show. Ursula had 17 appointments with three RFPs given and two sent out with a couple of additional appointments requesting that we follow up in the fall.

This is the second year Ursula has attended this show and she continues to be impressed with the quality and variety of the planners.

Destination Southeast has been approved for 2017.

- e. MAMFAM Sponsorship:** Mikki Walls reported on the 6th Annual Monday after the Masters FAM held April 9-12, 2016, in Myrtle Beach. This is our signature VIP hosted client event. There were 15 prestigious and well qualified meeting planners. We were thrilled with the caliber of clients. The host hotel was Embassy Suites. Additional partners included: Brookgreen Gardens, The Carolina Opry, Hilton Myrtle Beach Resort, Marina Inn, Marriott, MB Convention Center, Sheraton, and Wicked Tuna. Three leads were part of the MAM FAM event. We lost one event for a very large fraternity association due to insufficient space at the convention center to accommodate the number of breakouts needed. There are two tentative leads. Feedback was favorable. They loved the host hotel and the gifts. The dates for next year are April 8-11, 2017.

5. UPDATE:

- a. **Sports Update:** Mike Anderson provided an update on the Myrtle Beach Regional Sports Alliance. The most pressing for the past two months and the next two months is the NCAA Championships. 90 championships are up for bid from NCAA. The bids are due at the end of August. We are looking at which championships we can logistically go after. Coastal Carolina University is the member institution and they have to be the official host. We have narrowed it down to 38 possible championship events such as golf, rifle, and gymnastics. It is mostly Division 2 and 3 with some Division 1. The alliance will narrow it down further so that we can realistically go after the championships that make sense for the destination.
 - i. **National Association of Sports Commissions (NASC) Symposium:** Mike Anderson attended April 3-7, 2016, in Grand Rapids, MI. The City of Myrtle Beach and North Myrtle Beach also attended. This is an educational conference to learn about the trends in sports, to find out what other areas are doing and to find out what is on the cutting edge. There is a separate appointment element to the conference. Mike Anderson secured 16 appointments which included; 4 existing customers, 5 weak opportunities which don't fit ROI. Another 7 who want to be here in the summer and Mike is looking at trying to push those events out to fall/spring.
- b. **YTD Goal Report:** Kim DaRoja reported on the 2016 group sales goals report as of May 31, 2016.
 - i. Total number of leads generated is 488 with total potential room nights of 198,734. Currently at 48% of the 1,025 lead goal for 2016. Six leads were generated year-to-date for Myrtle Beach Sports Center.
 - ii. Total number of room nights booked is 146,532. Currently at 64% of the 230,606 room night goal. 18 booked leads for the Myrtle Beach Sports Center. The number of assist leads is 54.
- c. **YTD Prospects:** Kim DaRoja reviewed the January 1 – May 31, 2016, Prospect Report. Year-to-date we have received 50 prospects. The report shows those prospects that have converted to lead status.
- d. **YTD Site Visit:** Kim DaRoja reviewed the January 1 – May 31, 2016, Site Visit Report. This report is broken down by sales manager. The majority for Sandy Haines will be FAMs versus site visits. The main difference is that with a site visit, typically there is already a lead out there and with the motorcoach market the leads typically come post FAM.
- e. **2017 CVB Membership Renewals:** Kim DaRoja announced the 2017 CVB membership sales have begun. The ad sales will close on August 5, 2016. The content due date for the Meeting & Group Planner Guide is September 9, 2016. Michelle Schollmeyer will be reaching out to the CVB members towards the end of July to obtain their grid information for this publication.

- f. **Chicago Based Independent Contractor:** Kim DaRoja announced that Denise Cmiel with Spinnaker DME has become one of our independent contractor partners. Denise is based in Chicago, IL. Chicago is a terrific market for us but, very hard to penetrate unless you have someone positioned in-market that know the key players in the Chicago area industry.
- g. **Grand Strander Newsletter:** To sign up to receive the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber eNews go to this link: http://www.myrtlebeachareachamber.com/member/enews_signup.html. All digital Grand Strander editions are available on the Chamber website here: www.myrtlebeachareachamber.com/member/grand_strander/
- h. **Group Travel Leader:** Kim DaRoja reviewed the editor's comments on the importance of CVBs in the tourism industry that was in the January 2016 edition of this publication.

6. Unfinished Business:

Susan Phillips brought to the attention of the committee that our water quality is again in question. We will distribute the talking points to committee members.

The next meeting is at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 2, 2016, in the Chamber boardroom.