

# Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

## Chamber Boardroom

January 27, 2021 - 9:00 am

**Attendees:** Rachel Beckerman, Clay Brittain, Woody Brownson, Stuart Butler, Pablo Chavez, Tracy Conner, Kenny Generette, Radha Herring, Alex Husner, Theresa Koren, Steve Mays, O'Neil McCoy, Seth McCoy, Billy McGonigal, Ryan Moore, John Rutenberg, Alberto Semidei, Samantha Slapnik, Eileen Siosson, Amy Stevens, Ryan Swaim, Alicia Thompson, Tom Tse, Heidi Vukov

**Absent:** Atiya Stokes Brown

**Guests:** Mayor Brenda Bethune

**Staff:** Karen Riordan, Diana Green, Cindy Gettig, Jimmy Gray, Randy McKeel, Bob Harris, Diane Charno, Rebecca Edgar

### **Call to Order / Approval of Minutes**

Billy McGonigal, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A quorum was established for the meeting via Zoom.

The December 17, 2020, meeting minutes were reviewed. Clay Brittain made a motion to approve the December 17, 2020 minutes as presented. John Rutenberg seconded the motion, which passed upon a unanimous vote.

Mr. McGonigal welcomed the new Board members for 2021:

Rachel Beckerman – MB SkyWheel  
Clay Brittain – Brittain Resorts & Hotels  
Woody Brownson – Vacation Myrtle Beach  
Tracy Conner – MB Golf Course Owners Association  
Alberto Semidei – Sheraton  
Eileen Soisson – The Meeting Institute  
Ryan Swaim- Dunes Realty  
Heidi Vukov – Croissants & Hook & Barrel

### **Presentations:**

Mayor Brenda Bethune gave an update on the City of Myrtle Beach initiatives relative to the downtown redevelopment master plan. The City of Myrtle Beach has been revitalizing Nance Plaza to support Grand Strang Brewing which is on schedule to open in February. Construction on the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue buildings will begin in February with an anticipated completion date in August 2021. Meetings are planned with the SC DOT regarding realignment of Hwy 501. A draft lease with Coastal Carolina University has been crafted for the downtown CCU Theater. The city is also looking closely at Ocean Blvd. beautification and safety concerns.

## Division Reports

### *Community Engagement*

Clay Brittain, Chair, reported that a list of potential committee members has been compiled and goals of the committee are being established. The purpose of the Community Engagement Committee is to drive support of downtown redevelopment, as well as informing residents of the benefits of tourism.

### *Diversity, Equity & Inclusion*

Eileen Soisson reported that all 2021 meeting have been set with the first meeting taking place on February 25. They are promoting the EVOLVE webinar series and staff is working on sponsorship options for future events.

### *Advocacy*

Radha Herring stated that the first Advocacy meeting of the year will take place on February 8, with special speaker, Shane Massey, Senate Majority Leader. The House and Senates are back in session and considering issues surrounding Santee Cooper, DHEC and Covid Legislation.

The legislative reception will take place on April 27, 2021.

### *Investor Relations*

O'Neil McCoy, Business Development Committee Chair, presented 18 new member investors for approval. Thirteen members were previously included in the Board packet and 5 additional members were added for the present meeting. Upon a motion made by Ryan Swaim and seconded by Alberto Semidei, all members were approved upon a unanimous vote.

All Business Development Committees have been established and meeting dates set. Business to Business Expo will be held on March 23 and the Annual Meeting has been set for April 1.

### *Tourism Marketing:*

Stuart Butler, Marketing Council Chair, reported that the transition to MMGY full time will be complete in February. Karen Riordan informed the group that the search committee is working closely with Searchwide Global on the CMO search.. Meetings with their recommended candidates will take place in February. The Marketing Coordinator position has been tentatively filled and the team is working on finding a Content Coordinator and Communications Manager.

### *Tourism Sales*

Bob Harris, EVP of Sales reported that they continue to see leads increase, primarily in the sports market. The sales team is making efforts to secure group events that were displaced in nearby states. A motorcoach lead has led to a group booking in 2022. Multiple virtual events have been planned for clients. Trade shows for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter have been postponed or been changed to a virtual platform. Final TIP contracts are in progress to bring in those remaining memberships.

### *Finance:*

John Rutenberg, Finance Review Committee Chair, stated that the FRC has reviewed the unaudited 2020 year end financials and Smith Sapp will be conducting the audit beginning February 2. Total

restricted revenues were \$9.6M as of December 31, 2020. Program expenses are expected to be \$1M over budget due to Covid funds received that must be spent by June 2021. Net assets are \$8.6 above budget. Total cash in the bank is \$16M and receivables are \$8.73, which includes TDF and A-Tax receivables.

The Chamber is eligible for the new Paycheck Protection Program stimulus and has submitted a first-time application through TD Bank. US Travel Association and National Hotel Association are credited for advocating for these funds for 501 C corporations.

### **CEO Report**

Karen Riordan reported that she continues to work closely with Clay Brittain and Pablo Chavez on establishing the Community Engagement Committee. The MBACC has received a grant for \$3500 to start a local chapter of Keep America Beautiful. Staff continues to collaborate with the City of Myrtle Beach to secure the affiliation. The Keep Myrtle Beach Beautiful chapter will have an operating committee and recruit residents to be a part of the effort. The Chamber is moving forward with a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion organizational assessment starting in February. Karen noted the approval for membership of the Charlotte based PDN Enterprises who will be working to create the new 21,000 seat amphitheater. Affinity partnerships are being reviewed. These programs provide benefits to the membership at no charge while bringing in non-dues revenues. Ms. Riordan and Mr. McGonigal met with the city on final TDF and A-Tax agreements designating the MBACC and CVB as the sole DMO for the City of Myrtle Beach.

There was a brief discussion regarding accessibility of the Covid vaccine and the possible impact on tourism.

Kenny Generette gave an update on Horry County schools. Plexiglass has been installed in elementary schools and the students will start a hybrid schedules on February 8. Middle and high schools will be assessed on a school by school basis. Additional bus routes have been scheduled to make certain that there are no crowding issues.

### **Chair Report**

Billy McGonigal thanked Radha Herring and Jimmy Gray for working out the logistics of Senator Massey's visit and welcomed the Board to participated in the Zoom meeting of the Advocacy Council.

### **Adjourn**

Upon a motion made by Steve Mays and seconded by Tracy Conner, the meeting adjourned at 10:15 am.

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