

**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
**Chamber Boardroom**  
June 23, 2021 - 9:00 am

**Attendees:** Rachel Beckerman, , Woody Brownson, 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, Atiya Stokes Brown, Ryan Swaim, Alicia Thompson, Tom Tse, Heidi Vukov

**Absent:** Clay Brittain

**Guests:** Demming Bass, Lieutenant Governor Pamela Evette, Tyler Servant

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

**Call to Order / Approval of Minutes**

Billy McGonigal, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. and a quorum was established.

The April 28, 2021, meeting minutes were reviewed. Alberto Semidei made a motion to approve the April 28, 2021, minutes as presented. Heidi Vukov seconded the motion, which passed upon a unanimous vote.

**Presentations**

Lt. Governor Evette spoke to the group on the state’s efforts to protect and sustain businesses during the Covid 19 pandemic. Ms. Evette highlighted the initiatives of the Accelerate South Carolina Taskforce during the national shut down and the current focus on unemployment strategies. The Lt. Governor commended the Chamber for establishing a Myrtle Beach chapter of the Keep America Beautiful organization.

The Board met on May 26, 2021 to view a presentation by Demming Bass, Senior Counsel for Power 10, of the draft Strategic Initiatives plan developed for the Chamber. A vote was taken and unanimously approved to adopt the Strategic Initiatives as presented.

John Rutenberg made a motion to ratify the vote taken on May 26, 2021, to adopt the Strategic Initiatives and move forward with transitioning to the feasibility study. The motion passed upon a unanimous vote.

**Division Reports**

### *Community Engagement*

Karen Riordan reported the Community Engagement Committee. Three subcommittees were formed to carry out the goals of the CEC and chairpersons have been appointed.

- Community-Resident Involvement – Alfreda Funnye, Chair
- Tourism Education – Ansley Morrow, Chair
- Support Downtown Redevelopment – Michelle Plyler, Chair

The subcommittees will meet monthly.

### *Diversity, Equity & Inclusion*

Eileen Soisson reported for the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Council. The BMW Supplier Diversity Conference will take place in September and the next Evolve series webinar will be in October.

### *Legislative*

Radha Herring, Chair, reported for the Advocacy Council. The next meeting will be held on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. The MBACC partnered with NESAs to hold the legislative reception at the Dunes Club with 12 delegates attending. The Chamber also hosted a happy hour event in Columbia for the Horry county delegation. The event was well-attended. The Council continues to work on budget priority items and issues important to the Myrtle Beach area.

### *Investor Relations*

O’Neil McCoy, Business Development Committee Chair, presented 30 new member investors for approval. Upon a motion made by Kenny Generette and seconded by Alex Husner, all members were approved upon a unanimous vote

An e-vote was taken on May 26, whereby 18 new members were approved. Upon a motion made by Ryan Swaim and seconded by Alberto Semidei, the May 26, 2021 new member vote was ratified.

GSYP met on May 11 and a summary of the meeting is in the Activity Report for the current meeting. Emma Lacy has joined Business Development team as Assistant Graphic Designer. Police and Fire appreciation breakfasts are underway and will continue throughout the summer.

### *Tourism Marketing*

Alex Husner, Chair, reported for the Marketing Council. They have been busy with rollout of the brand and the response has been favorable. Chamber staff will begin meeting with civic groups and local city councils for further brand promotion. Marketing Council met last week wherein they discussed work force issues and pushing the “pack your patience” message. The marketing team has also been meeting with MMGY to begin planning for Fall and Holiday campaigns, as well as 2022 planning. KPIs continue to be strong, showing strong visitation and demand for the destination.

### *Tourism Sales*

Bob Harris reported that the sales team has received over 250 leads YTD. Twenty motorcoach tour group leads will be coming in for fall and the holiday season. The sports marketing team continues to work on the esports study and researching what different destinations are doing. In-person trade shows are back in full force. Jonathan Paris and Taylor Sellers will attend the US Track & Field Conference this week.

### *Finance*

John Rutenberg, Chair, reviewed the consolidated financials for the period ending May 2021. Revenues and assets remain strong. Program and expenses are down due to cancellation of the legislative luncheon. Restricted revenues reflect a positive variance of \$2.5M attributable to the budget revision, making the variance in total revenues over \$4M. Expenses have been managed well with total expenses \$5.5M under budget. Total net assets are \$9.6M for the period. All government PPT funds have been released which will show in the June financials. Cash in bank is at \$23M.

### **CEO Report**

Karen Riordan reported that every effort is being made to educate travelers and encourage their patience prior to arriving in the area. The workforce shortage affects front line hospitality employees and the ability of businesses to satisfy the demands of the busy season.

MMGY has conducted studies on visitor sentiment and community perspective. Karen gave a presentation on the report which shared key insights from their research.

The Tourism Works for Us site shares information on tourism and its impact on the local economy. The Community Engagement Council will engage residents and businesses to communicate to them the benefits of tourism dollars.

### **Adjourn**

Upon a motion made by Alicia Thompson and seconded by Ryan Swaim, the meeting adjourned at 10:35 am.