

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Chamber Boardroom and Zoom

August 25, 2021 - 9:00 am

- Attendees:** Rachel Beckerman, Clay Brittain, Pablo Chavez, Tracy Conner, Kenny Generette, Radha Herring, Alex Husner, Theresa Koren, Steve Mays, O'Neil McCoy, Billy McGonigal, Ryan Moore, John Rutenberg, Alberto Semidei, Eileen Siosson, Ryan Swaim, Alicia Thompson, Tom Tse, Heidi Vukov
- Absent:** Woody Brownson, Seth McCoy, Samantha Slapnik, Atiya Stokes-Brown, Amy Stevens
- Guests:** Demming Bass, Power 10
- Staff:** Karen Riordan, Diana Greene, 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 9:03 a.m. and a quorum was established.

The June 23, 2021, meeting minutes were reviewed. Steve Mays made a motion to approve the June 23, 2021, minutes as presented. Clay Brittain seconded the motion, which passed upon a unanimous vote.

An e-vote was taken on July 2, 2021 to appoint Mil Servant to the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Stuart Butler. The vote was unanimously approved in favor of the appointment. In the present meeting, O'Neil McCoy made a motion to ratify the e-vote to appoint Mil Servant to the Board of Directors for the remainder of the vacant seat term which expires on December 21, 2021. Seconded by Clay Brittain, the motion passed unanimously.

Presentations

Demming Bass gave a presentation on the findings and recommendations of the feasibility study conducted by Power 10 to determine community support for a capital campaign for the three established initiatives. Based upon interviews with key business leaders, the Power 10 group determined that the goals were validated by the interviewees and recommends moving forward with the capital campaign to fund the 2022-2026 Economic Growth Initiative.

Upon a motion made by Alicia Thompson and seconded by Alberto Semidei, the Board unanimously agreed to move forward with the initiatives of the 5- year capital campaign as recommended by Power 10 group.

Division Reports

Community Engagement

Committee members have attended neighborhood meetings to garner support, educate the community and encourage participation in the Keep Myrtle Beach Beautiful effort. The Tourism Education subcommittee is working with the chamber on a video presentation on the benefits of tourism to share with the community. The Downtown Redevelopment subcommittee is preparing information for a push for support in the downtown area businesses.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Eileen Siosson reported for the DEI Council. Members recently attended a meeting at Grand Strand Pride wherein they learned how to better connect with minority businesses in the area. Upcoming events include an Evolve webinar in August, a CEO roundtable meeting, and the BMW Supplier Diversity conference.

Legislative

Radha Herring reported that the Advocacy Council met on August 2, 2021. In the meeting, William Golden gave a report on I-73, noting that that 20 counties in SC are in need of broadband improvement, which could be potentially favorable for I-73. The 2022 legislative initiatives will be approved in the next Advocacy Council meeting in October. Freshman Caucus is set for September 23rd at the Island Vista Resort.

Investor Relations

O'Neil McCoy presented a list of 15 new member-investors for approval. Upon a motion made by Ryan O'Neil and seconded by Alberto Semidei, all new members listed were unanimously approved.

An e-vote was taken on July 27, whereby 25 new members were approved. Upon a motion made by Ryan Swaim and seconded by Clay Britain, the July 27, 2021 new member vote was ratified unanimously.

Tourism Marketing

Stuart Butler reported that area occupancy numbers are at a record high for the summer and Myrtle Beach continues as one of the most searched destinations. The Myrtle Beach International Airport set the record as the highest monthly passenger count ever recorded at an airport in the history of South Carolina. Fall campaigns are underway which will include photo and video efforts to embrace more guest diversity. Planning is taking place for the holiday season and the Chamber will be creating a holiday guide to drive tourism. Marketing Council will be revamping the TIP program for 2023. The marketing team attended the ESTO awards in California wherein the MBACC & CVB was awarded the 2021 Destiny Award by the U.S. Travel Association in the category of Integrated Marketing and

Messaging Campaign with an Overall Marketing Budget of More Than \$5 Million. The award recognizes the “Visit Myrtle Beach Shares Some Sunshine” campaign.

Tourism Sales

Bob Harris reported that the 356 group leads have been received YTD. The number of leads is down from previous years due to family and military groups who are hesitant to travel in light of covid concerns. Room nights for 2021 are up by 40,000 mainly due to the sports market. The Esports feasibility study will be completed by the first week in September. The sales team continues work with groups for fall 2021 and 2022 travel as area hotels continue to monitor the impact of the covid delta variant.

Finance

The financials were reviewed for the period ending July 31, 2021. John Rutenberg, Chair, presented the updated MBACC Accounting and Finance Policies as revised by the Finance Review Committee.

O’Neil McCoy made a motion to approve the MBACC Accounting and Finance Policies as presented. Seconded by Alberto Semedei, the motion passed upon a unanimous vote.

CEO Report

Karen Riordan thanked Diane Charno, Scott Schult and the marketing team for an outstanding job on the 2020 *Sending Sunshine Your Way* campaign. The MBACC was awarded the SCDHEC Community Star award for the Check My Beach program. The program was developed in response to the issue of outdated national water quality reporting in 2018-2019. Special thanks were given to Jimmy Gray for spearheading the initiative joined by area municipalities and Chambers of Commerce.

Pat Creed was named Employee of the Month for August 2021.

The MBACC is working in conjunction with the City of Myrtle Beach to present Winter Wonderland at the Beach for the holiday season. Plans include a light show and ice-skating rink located at the Pavilion site. Southwest Airlines and HTC have agreed to sponsorships. The chamber will be investing \$200,000 from the holiday campaign tourism budget for this festival. Themed lighting packages will be offered to businesses for purchase. Santee Cooper will partner for electricity and community support is growing for the event.

The MBACC covid policy is under review and will be revised based upon the recommendations of the CDC, federal mandates and discussions with other chambers. Masks are required in common areas of the building regardless of vaccination status.

The Board workshop for 2022 strategic planning will take place on September 22 at the Sheraton.

The regular meeting of the board ended at 11:00 upon the call for an executive session by Chairman McGonigal.