

MALA Monthly Meeting Agenda

May 13, 2021

12:00pm Briquettes Steakhouse on Montlimar Dr.

Spike Blackinton – Renaissance Riverview
Shannon Harris – Homewood Suites Providence
Danny Corte – Mobile Sports Authority
Duncan Millar – Hampton Inn I-65
Sally Ericson – Bellingrath Gardens
Stephanie Bondura – Hampton Inn Dtown
Ron Moore – Alabama Power/Restaurant Assoc
Nakita Jackson – Home2 Suites I-65
Jeremy Brownlee – Home2 Suites I-65
Diana Moorer – Springhill Suites/Hilton Garden Inn Mobile West

Margo Gilbert – The Battle House
Danny Calametti – Alabama Coasting
David Clark – Visit Mobile
Robin Perkins – Holiday Inn Airport
Cynthia Mitchell – Hampton Inn Dtown
David Clark – Visit Mobile
Philip D'Amico – Visit Mobile
Johnetta Moultrie – Residence Inn
Brian Timm – Home2 Suites I-65

I. Call Meeting to Order 12:00pm

- Shannon Harris

II. Approval of April Minutes

- Motioned by Shannon Harris, Seconded by Robin Perkins

III. Financial Report

- We have \$19,211.80 in the account. That includes all of the golf income that we made.

IV. Golf Tournament Results

- We made \$5,200. Final payment on the scholarship was \$13,850. \$80,000 is now sitting in that scholarship account for the Hospitality & Tourism Management program at South.

V. Hospitality & Tourism Workforce & Education Center

- Margo sat on a conference call about this idea of a training center here in Mobile. For the state, 40% or 50% of the lodging tax comes from our area. It will be state-wide but based in Mobile. It is being spearheaded by multiple organizations including the University of South Alabama. This is in its infancy.
- It started out as a regional discussion. The conversation moved towards high level education. We will need to go back and look at it and try to tie in with ARHA.

VI. Wage Survey

- South Alabama Workforce Council is doing the survey. There has been progress on it. They have a list of questions to ask. They are still working up a format of how they are going to do it of whether it will be online or in person. They have been asked to do both. The hope is to have that done for budget season for next year.

VII. Job Site (Hospitality Website) Update

- That is about 8 weeks away. That is kind of hurting us this summer. We believe next month we will have two guest speakers come and talk to us. Adam Prodister will show us a shell of the website. The whole design of this website has been simplicity to target people from 18 to 24.
- They answer like 5 questions and it gets filtered out to hotel postings that match.
- We have great marketing behind this.

VIII. Threshold 360 Reminder

- Some people have gotten that done. This is a free service provided by the TID money. It takes about 30 minutes to 90 minutes depending on the size of the hotel. That gets fed out to all your google searches. This is only for hotels within the Tourism Improvement District.

IX. Marketing Fund Committee (Tillman's Corner Rep)

- We need a representative for this. Kerrian has expressed interest. This appointment will be very similar to how it was done with appointing Duncan. We are not saying we shouldn't vote but we will not get a quorum on this based on the number of hotels and participation. There are no bylaws saying that we can't appoint an individual.

X. Summer Business & Conventions

- There are some big conventions coming in this summer. It will keep downtown busy which will compress out to everyone else. Some businesses that are coming include MEGA Teacher Conference, Buffalo Soldiers, Alpha Phi Alpha, and more. Keep your eye on the convention calendar for July.

XI. Other business

- Alabama Restaurant & Hotel Association is working on a program where people can go through a training class to get credentials for the beginning of training for hospitality. These are state-wide credentials. Spike will be sitting on a conference call for that next week where he will get more information.
- The other guest speaker for next month is Leslie Walker. She runs a program geared towards hoteliers being trained in servicing travelers with autistic children. If your

hotel gets certified, then these families can go onto a special website and see who is trained to handle their needs. She is from Montgomery.

- There will be a TID board meeting at the end of this month. They have spent most of this weird time collecting data. It is expected for the May meeting to actually have some items on it. Taking the data we got and start marketing and targeting these people to get their business.
- Please reach out with any suggestions you may have for what you need from us the lodging association.

XII. CVB Update

- David Clark:
 - We have quite a few conventions coming up in July and August.
 - Introduce Philip D'Amico: he is consulting with Visit Mobile in the sales & marketing world. He is working on leisure, business transient, and conventions. They are working on itineraries that they just splashed out on social media yesterday tying in different segments whether it be arts & culture, heritage tourism, and culinary. Take a look at Mobile.org.
 - Carnival Cruise: The Carnival Sensation comes in at 9am tomorrow to the port. All are welcome to come out and welcome them in. They are going to be leaving back out around 6pm tomorrow night. They are vaccinating 110 crew members. That is the first step with many to follow. It is really hard to put a timetable on when they will be cruising from Mobile again. Cruising will resume first in Miami and Galveston in August. Then they will phase in the rest of the fleet as demand catches up to the supply. Carnival alone has 102 ships. The CDC is changing pretty regularly on what they are requiring.
 - Africatown Workshop: The state department of tourism came in the last few days and collaborated with people in Africatown. The theme was “Building Entrepreneurs for the Africatown Community”. Group tour operators and storytellers came in to show them what that would look like. The heritage house may be opening in late summer. The land and water tours may be kicked off then.

XIII. Sports Update

- Danny Corte – Mobile Sports Authority
 - Sports came back a bit slow initially. They had maybe 5 events in the 1st quarter of their fiscal year (Oct, Nov, Dec 2020). Since then, they have had 14 events in the last 14 weeks with volleyball, gymnastics, golf, and softball.

- They have 18 other events scheduled between now and the end of the year. The next event is their annual Ballin on the Bay basketball tournament. They are expecting about 80 teams in town plus families.
 - Coming in June/July in youth baseball. It is growing fast.
 - At the beginning of August, they have the 16 – 18U World Series Tournament that will be at Hank Aaron stadium. To set this up, they are going to host the 8 and 10 year-old state tournaments. This hasn't been announced yet. The 8 year old will play out at west side. The 10 year old will play out at Semmes. It will be about 30 teams coming in the last week of June plus their families.
 - In July, that will be followed up with the 10 and 12 year old regional teams. This will consist of about 25 to 30 teams. We are in the southwest region of Babe Ruth. Those teams will be coming from 6 of 7 states at least. This will be in that middle week in July. 10 year old will be out in west side. The 12 year olds will be out in Semmes.
 - The volleyball tournament that occurred a few weeks ago was the largest tournament ever held in Mobile County. Estimated that about a 180 teams were in Mobile. That is with half of the regions of US volleyball not even playing right now.
- Danny Calametti – Alabama Coasting
 - Looking to getting their magazine Discover Coastal Alabama out soon.
 - They have taken the reins on the Grillin at the Fort event that was spearheaded by Heather Pfefferkorn. They raised a little over \$2,000 for her charity.
 - They do have 2 food events coming up in October on this side of the bay. Grilling in the Bayou will be a steak and oyster event on October 2nd. That will drive some rooms to you down in south Mobile County. People will be coming in from around the region for at least one night. The second event is one that the Hispanic American Business Association will tie in with Art Walk on Oct 8th. This is a first time event and they are looking at growing it. They will be doing some kind of food competition in association with the event. They are not optimistic about driving a lot of hotel rooms for that event because of it being the first one.
 - The Alabama Governors Association of Tourism is having an event over at the lodge in August. Danny is on the exhibits committee. Let him know if anyone wants to come and promote.

XIV. Open forum: Attractions/Associates updates

- Ron Moore – Mobile Restaurant Association

- Will see some new venues downtown. They have a good amount of construction in the Tillman's Corner area.
- Sally Ericson – Bellingrath Gardens & Homes
 - Their Wonderful Wednesday Series starts June 2nd. That is the summer garden walk. That is every Wednesday through the end of July. They have some evening programs such as the Star Gazing program.
 - All the information is on their website, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram feeds.
 - Tonight is Go Public Gardens Night Stroll. It is a chance to relax and enjoy the gardens after hours. It is part of Go Public Gardens week that is an international initiative by American Public Gardens Association to encourage everyone to get out and enjoy the great open spaces.

XV. Adjournment