

# **MALA Monthly Meeting Agenda**

**February 10, 2022**

**12:00pm Briquettes Steakhouse on Montlimar Dr.**

Margo Gilbert – Battle House Renaissance

Maggie Thrasher – ASM Global

Daniel Meadows - BCC Waste Solutions

Cynthia Mitchell – Hampton Inn Dwntwn

Stephanie Bondora – Hampton Inn Dwntwn

Ross Peterson – Bay City Conventions & Tours

Danny Corte – Mobile Sports Authority

Tiffany Griffin – Springhill Suites

Kent O’Rear - Puroclean

Diana Moorer – Springhill Suites/Hilton Garden Inn Mobile West

Aaron Watz – Holiday Inn Dwtown

Ryan Foster – ASM Global

Stephanie Ward – Project Search

April Brooke – Project Search

Gwynn Pitman – Residence Inn

James Small – Residence Inn

Jennifer Suns – Drury Inn

David Clark – Visit Mobile

I. Mingle **11:30am**

II. Call Meeting to Order **12:21pm**

III. Approval of January Minutes

- Motioned by Diana Moorer, Seconded by Gwynn Pitman

IV. Financial Report

- Our balance right now is \$1,551. Dues are starting to roll in right now. We change the billing up a little bit this year. In the last couple years, we have added on \$50 automatically for the scholarship program. This year we backed off and just did the regular dues but added the option to do the \$50.

V. Update on revision of MALA By-Laws: In process

Changes: Electronic voting, Electronic Meetings-Zoom, Quarterly Meetings required instead of monthly, resigned board of director appointed for remaining term instead of voted in, increase amount of checks written requiring 2 signatures-\$100 to \$500, registered address change, dues due annually instead of quarterly, quorum constitutes 51% of paid members in attendance at meeting

- We went through the by-laws. We are working with our attorneys. For those of you who are new to our organization, the original bylaws were drawn up in 1992. We are reviewing the bylaws. They are very archaic right now. Right now, we can't do e-voting or Zoom meetings. In addition, our quorum is a little wonky. We are looking at the quorum procedures. If we need to take a vote, it would be 50% of paid members that are in attendance at the meeting.
- Right now, when we write a check, One signer is for \$100 or less. We will increase that to \$500.

- Right now, the bylaws state that we must meet monthly as an organization. We are going to tweak that to no less than quarterly.
- For the board of directors if someone was to leave their position, we have always gone back to another vote. What we will do is do an appointment for the remainder of the term.

## VI. ARHA Update

BCBS insurance plan

Community college certification for workforce

Working on lowering required age to work

- ARHA has a really good program for health insurance. If you or your hotel become a member of ARHA, you can get on to the insurance plan. It is very robust. Reach out to Spike or Margo and they can point you in the right direction.
- Mindy and her folks with ARHA are actively involved with State legislation. They're working with their local folks and on the state level to put in some language and change legislation to lower the age limit for some of the hospitality work positions, that you have to be at least 17 or 18. So they are working on that.
- They are in the middle of working with a community college group and they're working on a hotel or a hospitality certification program. It offers two or three digital classes. It is a few hours. It is to get some people after coming out of high school and maybe not going into college but really want to better themselves. There have been a lot of local folks in Mobile that have been helping them with this program. Panini Pete's with Squid Ink has been very active with creating this program. They're working on front desk, food and beverage, and maintenance. As we get more updates, we will be sure to share them with you.

## VII. Work in Mobile App Update

- We are on the final stages of the Work In Mobile app. It has been a lot going on. We have been waiting until after Mardi Gras to do a bigger launch from a marketing perspective. They're trying to get it going sooner than that per David Clark.
- The Work In Mobile app is another venue to get people to go on their phones and devices to do a mini application. It is kind of like a request for proposal. It goes out. Hotel sign up for it. If a particular hotel is the first one to see it, then that hotel can grab them and bring them in before anyone else does.
- All the hotels on I-65 on the Beltline, there have been some growing concerns with homelessness and trespassing. If you want to stay behind, we can help kind of organize some things for y'all. Getting the hotel together and setting up up a meeting with the local precinct and the police officers.

## VIII. Guest Speaker: Project Search from Mobile County Public Schools

- Intro by Margo Gilbert:
  - We start talking to project search back in probably July maybe June of last year. They started working at both the Battle House and the Riverview they have seven and ten folks at each Hotel. It's about the teachers but also the students that are coming in. They provide such a big value to their hotels. We hope you consider them for your own business or your own hotels.
  - Back in October or November, they had a 600 person lunch. The governor was coming. It was the typical three ring circus. It was business all over the place and not enough people. No one showed up. They have project search in there setting tables and meeting rooms and vacuuming.
- April Brooke
  - April has been with project search going on 7 years. They have been in Mobile for 9 years. This is her first year at the PCH hotels. They started at Mobile Infirmary and Providence Hospital. They try to service at least 7 to 10 students a year at each site. This year they have a total of 14 students that they work with. All of these are recent high school graduates that come out of high school. They have to go through an interview process to be accepting into their program.
  - They all have some type of developmental delay, some type of disability of some sort. This includes autistic and intellectual disability. With their program, they don't focus on their disabilities. They focus on their abilities. They focus on what they can do. That is a big change for a lot of their guys. All throughout High School, they were told what they can't do. Here they are telling them, " You can do it. Come on. Let's go do it."
  - Their ultimate goal after the program: They train with them roughly six to nine months depending on how much training they need. It goes according to a school schedule. They start with us in August. They run all the way through May. Some of them are ready for employment before that point. If that is the case, they try to get them out in employment. They currently have for working now that are out in the community from where they started with Margo and Spike.
  - Employment is their ultimate goal. They want them to be integrated into the community working in competitive employment just like anyone else. They want them to be part of something bigger. They look in all types of industries or jobs. They have placed retail, maintenance, recycling centers, restaurants, hospitals, and outside lawn care. They try to get them as close to the job that they want as they can.
  - The pamphlet being handed out tells a little bit more about the program, what they do on a daily basis, and what they offer. They also have business cards available.

- If you or your business thinks it's something you might be interested in joining, feel free to contact April or Stephanie. Their number is on the back. They would love to come and sit down with you and learn more about your business an opportunity you might have for their guys. This is a free service. They are with them on sight. They help them with the training on site. It is low liability for the business.
- Some of them can work full time. A lot them do part-time to start off with.
- Question: how big is your applicant pool?
  - Right now, they're working with 14 students currently. They do have other connections that they can reach out to. They could possibly try to reach out to past interns who might need jobs. Moving into next year, they are hoping to up their numbers a little bit with it being their first year in the hotels. They're looking for at least 10 to 12 in each site.
- They have classrooms at each of their hotel using the meeting room. The students get dropped off every morning. They come in and clock in. They are in the classroom for 45 minutes to an hour. Then they go out into the hotel. Some of their folks do housekeeping, food and beverage, and banquets.
- They train them. They go through job skills hands-on in the hotel. They try to teach them as many skills as they can. They teach them the soft skills as well, such as time management and customer service. They try to prepare them as much for their on-site job.
- Question: what schools do you partner with?
  - They partner with all Mobile County high schools from all over the county.

## IX. CVB Update

- David Clark:
  - Work In Mobile app:
    - There is now 13 hotels posting jobs as of right now. It is a One-Stop shop. At some point, they will spread out to restaurants and attractions. David has a meeting with the City of Mobile next week set up with the Yes program. This will be the second meeting. This is important because we have about five thousand underemployed 18 to 24 year olds in Mobile. Once we launch that message on the website and connect it to the Yes program, that will be a nice opportunity. This will go out to the Juniors and seniors and Mobile County Schools. He also met with the University of South Alabama to link our website with theirs. The next step is to launch it with promotions and campaigns behind it such as radio and TV. If you don't have your jobs posted on there, get it on

there. For assistance, reach out to David Clark and he can get you in touch with Adam Chronister. Adam is the web designer. It does not take a lot of time.

- Cruising
  - The organization is heavily involved with this. They had a plan B that they were working on two years ago should this happen. The ship that they were going to give us they sold it to. Everything's changed. Carnival has been a very gracious partner. They have full confidence in that they will come back in the fall of 2023. We have a gap for a year. Is on them to restore it somehow. They're starting to work on that now.
- Mardi Gras: there is so much pent-up demand. Your hotels should do well.
- Spirit of Ancestors Festival is this weekend at Mobile County Training school. It's probably sold out. It is probably a kickoff to international platform that will be in international play that will fill up a whole lot of beds starting in 2 years when they have it at the Saenger theater and other places.
- The Heritage House will probably open in July instead of June.

## X. Sports Update

- Danny Corte – Mobile Sports Authority
  - Between now and the end of the calendar year, we have confirmed 23 sporting events coming to town. And we are working on 4 to 5 additional events. Sports is red hot right now. They think it will stay hot.
  - This morning, the county commission voted to buy the old Linksman Golf Course. We have had several golf courses shut down. They're looking to redevelop that as a golf course. It is down on Dog River. It might be something if they market it correctly to bring people into our hotels. If you have any questions about anything, go to their website [mobilesportsauthority.com](http://mobilesportsauthority.com) or feel free to call him.

## XI. Open forum: Attractions/Associates updates

- Maggie Thrasher – ASM Global
  - Mobile Convention Center: Right now they're doing Mardi Gras. They do filter over with some smaller events versus the Civic Center this weekend. Starting tomorrow they have the Order of Osiris. Then they go into Conde Explorers. They're going to be really busy. Coming up will be Ryan Foster. He will be speaking about the Civic Center and the Saenger theatre.
- Ryan Foster – ASM Global

- They have 38 Special tonight, Black Jacket Symphony Orchestra coming up Saturday, and Walker Hayes next week at the Saenger Theatre. Downtown should be pretty slammed.
- They have some new materials out. To have the most updated information on concerts and events, hotels can use QR codes to scan and get the latest information on the status of events. So, if an event gets delayed or cancelled you will have the information at your fingertips in real time. It can be displayed on the counter by your brochures.
- Ross Peterson – Bay City Conventions & Tours
  - They're trying to push things for the Azalea Trail Festival for next year.
  - David Clark:
    - What they are trying to do is get this event start next year for a whole month. They did a great job with their website about a year ago. We need to link some things and create some packaging. Looking to create some things around it such as culinary weekend, history weekend, and Pub crawls. Put a lot of things embedded into what Azalea Trail started out to be with the wonderful flowers at Bellingrath Gardens, attractions, lodging, and connect that all together. We can maybe do some things such as Jackrabbit to promote some packages.
- Kent O'Rear – Puroclean
  - They do restoration, fire, water, and mold. They are local, located on Lakeside Drive. If you need quotes, feel free to let him know.
- Daniel Meadows – BCC Waste Solutions
  - They have brand new stock of inventory in. Would love to get with members and get us some quotes for your garbage. They don't charge any fuel fees or overages. They do a flat rate.
  - Question: Do you do compactors, cardboard balers, and recycling?
    - They do for all three including cardboard, plastic, and tires.

## XII. Adjournment **12:53pm**

## XIII. Future Meetings:

- March – November: TBD
- December – FUN!

**March 2022 Trivia Challenge:** What is the minimum amount of hours Project Search seeks for their students. Be the 1<sup>st</sup> to email DIANA N. MOORER @ [Diana.Moorer@marriott.com](mailto:Diana.Moorer@marriott.com) with the answer and receive \$25 at the next meeting. **You MUST attend the March 2022 meeting to redeem the money.**