

MALA Monthly Meeting Agenda

May 12, 2022

11:30am Juicy Crab by Springdale Mall

Spike Blackinton – Renaissance Riverview
Lauren Stallings – Hilton Garden Inn MW
Shariya Seals – Hilton Garden Inn MW
Daniel Meadows - BCC Waste Solutions
Maggie Thrasher – ASM Global
Cynthia Mitchell – Hampton Inn Dwtwn
Megan Davis – Candlewood Suites
Kim Garrett – Victory Health Partners
Danny Corte – Mobile Sports Auth
Diana Moorer – Hilton Garden Inn Mobile West

Shannon Harris – Hanks Fine Furniture
Gwynn Pitman – Residence Inn
James Small – Residence Inn
David Clark – Visit Mobile
Emily Gonzalez – Visit Mobile
Allison Floyd – Visit Mobile
Brittany Gagliano – Visit Mobile
Patty Kieffer – Visit Mobile
Robin Perkins – Holiday Inn Airport

I. Mingle 11:30am

II. Call Meeting to Order 12:22pm

- Shannon Harris

III. Approval of April Minutes

- Motioned by Shannon Harris, Seconded by Robin Perkins

IV. Financial Report

- Spoke with Robert Houston yesterday. Income taxes will be done today. They will be mailed out Monday. \$4,955 is in the account. Pretty much everyone has paid.

V. Guest Speaker: Kim Garrett, Director of Victory Health Partners

- They are a non-profit medical practice. They serve adults who do not have health insurance. They are in their 20th year.
- They are founded by Dr. Robert Lightfoot. He was a general surgeon at Providence Hospital. He was there for about 13 years.
- The uninsured had a 40% greater chance of death.
- Started 20 years ago at the Primary Care Clinic. As they have grown, they have served 25 counties in Alabama, 11 in Mississippi, and 8 in Georgia.
- They provide primary care every day and include dental, OB-Gyn, gynecology, and pulmonary.

- They partner with the drug companies. When a patient comes in with diabetes, they can give them their insulin. Last year, they had 60 million worth of free medicine given out.
- They have partnered with the Anders Group.
- Advocates are needed for them to get the word out. Awareness is their biggest challenge. Include information in your new hire packet or in your break room.
- They are not federally funded. They are a community solution for a community problem. So, **their funding comes from the community.**
- They have anywhere from 3 – 7 physicians, specialist, and counselors volunteering every day.
- They have partnerships also with the Mitchell Cancer Center, USA, Infirmary Health.
- Also have a surgery fund that they fundraise for. They set up the patient to get the surgery, negotiate the cost down as low as they can, and the patient will pay 3% of that. This percentage will go back into the surgery fund to assist with another patient.
- Patients do pay a copay of about \$35.

VI. CVB Update

- David Clark:
 - Work in Mobile.com is out. Posters are up in Mobile County high school now thanks to Amanda Prowell. They met with 12 of the career tech administrators. Look for an uptick in juniors and seniors looking for summer jobs.
 - They are paying for some SEOs for search optimization. Emily is going to start some radio campaigns. They are going to continue to put resources behind it.
 - Posters are also sprinkled throughout South campus. They will be going to Bishop State next.
 - Carnival:
 - There were several Carnival decision makers in Miami a couple of weeks ago. They are okay with the Ecstasy demand. Had a little bit of a downward tick during spring break. They are super excited about the Spirit coming back in October of 2023. It is really great for Mobile to have a ship that NEW. It is more of a luxury ship going to the Bahamas for the first time.

- Conventions:
 - There are 28 conventions representing 15,000 room nights for the next 3 months coming into the marketplace.
 - Thanks to Danny Corte and his team in the sports market. They really never did stop during Covid. There is a lot of activity coming in.
- July 7th is the next record sales meeting. Look out for an invite from Patty Kieffer or Michael Dorie.
- Emily Gonzalez:
 - They have been spending a lot of time and energy on the Work in Mobile campaign. Flyers will be going in community centers, libraries, and throughout.
 - On top of their SEO (Search Engine Optimization), they have also been doing some social media advertising targeting Mobile County and anyone who could technically drive in to Mobile to work every day.
 - Please go to like the Work in Mobile Facebook page and share it on your hotel's page. They have had a post reach of over 31,000 people so far with over a thousand post engagements.
 - If you see the ads pop up in your ads stream, then it is okay to click on it.
 - At the last meeting, David Clark gave a great highlight of what has been going on in the MALC (Mobile Area Lodging Corporation). They spend a lot of time at Visit Mobile really supporting the lodging community.
 - MALC is what runs our TID (Tourism Improvement District). That is the \$1 assessment. For every room night that comes into the city of Mobile, one dollar goes to the corporation. 70% of those dollars collected goes to advertising for the city of Mobile.
 - They have an arrivals dashboard that tracks GPS coming into the area. Just in 2022 through half of April, there have been over 100,000 people come in that we can track. 55% of those have been day trips. They have had about 86,000 people stay in Mobile. The majority are coming in from 300 miles away.
 - They can use the GPS tracking through the apps to see the top markets such as Birmingham, Montgomery, Selma, Atlanta, New Orleans, Gulfport, Biloxi, and Huntsville. They stay an average of 2 nights.
 - This information helps them make strategic decisions on how and who they advertise to.
 - Using the transparency of dashboards, they have and the performance reports that come out, they are able to put out 2 key reports. One is for

Visit Mobile. The other is for MALC. This shows you how each performs.

- Partner listing referrals are up 45% to pre-Covid numbers. Event listing referrals are up 44%. Long page views are up 233%. Book direct jackrabbit referrals are up 129%. Visit Mobile pays to have a booking engine like an OTA on their own website that doesn't charge you anything. It links directly into your booking link so that you don't have to change the rate. Their newsletter sign up is up 44%.
- They work with Expedia Media Group. Primarily, they work with Expedia.com and Hotels.com. The adr on that site year over year is up 23%.
- Definite bookings for Sales are up 38%.
- Lookout for a podcast on Mobile and all tourism related things. This will be launching in the next month and a half. They have also started public relations campaigns specifically on lodging. They are talking to people and having travel journalist write about family travel, long weekends, and second weekend. That will be kicking off next week. 2 commercials are being cut. Oliver is sitting with the producers right now. Those will be done by the end of the month and go into television rotation. They will start in Birmingham and are looking at 2 other markets. They will start with the Born to Celebrate 2.0 video. They just finished an Eco video that will launch today.
- OTA advertisement has been increased. Have also started some billboard advertisement that are just inside state lines. One is just south of Atmore. Another is close to Loxley. The other is just inside the state line coming from Mississippi pointing to those immediate exits. Some will say Downtown, Tillman's Corner, or the beltline. The one to the beltline references multiple exits. MALC is only promoting the city of Mobile.
- Visit Mobile has been very excited to grow their team.
 - Allison Floyd – Marketing and Events Manager
 - She will be handling any major events that Visit Mobile puts on.
 - Allison has her master's in marketing.
 - Brittany Gagliano – Partnership Manager
 - Brittany was previously with Mobile United, Inc.
 - She is the first partnership manager since Covid.
- See the MALC website for information such as the minutes and meetings. See what is going on behind the scenes to market Mobile and bring in business to your lodging property or attraction.

- In March, we collected a \$100,000 for that month only with the TID.
- For the budget, we are up \$118,000 collected.
- See Emily for specific information to your hotel on how the TID is impacting your business.
- If you haven't gotten your virtual tour, then it is still free for your hotel to participate. This is only available for those properties in MALC. It only takes about 20 minutes and will incorporate to Google photos. About 18 hotels have taken advantage so far. They have gotten a 1 million views.

VII. Sports Update

- Danny Corte – Mobile Sports Authority
 - Study was done from last year. 2021 had not come back fully from 2020. The sports event industry is a \$92 billion industry. They estimated 175 million people traveled last year for sports events. We have almost come back to the 2019 level.
 - They just finished 6 events in 6 straight weekends including volleyball and gymnastics being a few of them.
 - Next event will be Ballin on the Bay. It is their youth basketball tournament held June 3rd through 5th at the convention center. Hoping to have up to 100 teams with probably about 75% of those being from out of town.
 - Overall, they have 18 more events planned between now and the end of the calendar year of 2022.
 - The soccer complex phase 2 will probably be starting this Fall. It will make it 6 soccer fields total.
 - Commissioner Hudson is really dedicated to building the aquatic center.
 - MobileSportsAuthority.com stays updated on a regular basis. See website for more information.
 - Soccer complex bathrooms and concessions
 - The building is about 75% completed. Bathrooms and concessions will be done in July maybe.

VIII. Associate Member Updates

- Maggie Thrasher – ASM Global
 - They are finishing up convention season and moving into sports season.

○ Upcoming events:

- In addition to the upcoming Ballin on the Bay at the convention center, they have some cheer and dance competitions coming for all the weekends in May.
- Tomorrow: Atlanta Braves World Championship Tour coming to Cooper Riverside Park at 3pm. It will be a whole event with parks and rec. There will be food and entertainment.
- There is cheer and dance happening at civic center as well.
- Saenger Theatre is filling up with some concerts.

IX. Open forum

- United Way Flyer: It is a fundraising event by United Way. They have partnered with some other vendors. If you use those vendors, then some of the money spent will go back to United Way.
- Kim Garrett: kgarrett@victoryhealth.org
 - Reach out for information for your uninsured staff.
- \$25 Trivia Winners:
 - April Trivia Challenge Winner: Gwynn Pitman
 - May Trivia Challenge Winner: Cynthia Mitchell

X. Adjournment **01:02pm**

XI. Future Meetings:

- December – FUN!

June Meeting 2022 Trivia Challenge: How is Victory Health Partners funded **AND** what service do they provide? Be the 1st to email DIANA N. MOORER @ Diana.Moorer@marriott.com with **the answer** and receive **\$25** gift card at the next meeting. **You MUST attend the June 2022 meeting to redeem the money.** The winner will be announced then.