



Alabama Gulf Coast Convention & Visitor's Bureau
Board of Directors
Regular Meeting Minutes

Date: January 28, 2025
Recorded by Sally Westendorf

Board Members Present: Susan Boggs, Karen Bobe, David Bodenhamer, Bill Brett, Robert Craft, Penny Groux, Glen Kaiser, Tony Kennon (arrived at 8:38), Ken Kichler, Frank Reed; (a quorum was met)

Board Members Absent: Bill Bennett, Mark Stillings

GSOBT Staff Members Present: Kim Chapman, Beth Gendler, Kellie Herrod, Crystal Hinds, Jo Phillips, Michelle Russ, Carlos Serrano

Visitors: Greg Alexander, Steve Meyer, Billy Widner, Gary Ellis, Sheila Hodges, Ford Handley

Call to Order

Chairman Glen Kaiser called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. in the conference room at the Orange Beach Welcome Center in Orange Beach, AL.

Board Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes from the November 19, 2024 meeting were presented. Bill Brett made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Ken Kichler. After no discussion, the motion passed. Members absent in November abstained.

Action Items

Board Officer elections were held. Glen Kaiser agreed to continue as Chairman; Mark Stillings agreed to continue as Secretary/Treasurer; and Bill Brett agreed to continue as Vice Chair. There were no additional nominations. All positions were approved unanimously, with no opposition.

Carlos Serrano reviewed the Employee Handbook Update Summary document. In November 2024, the Board requested that voting be postponed until January 2025. Bill Brett moved for approval, seconded by Penny Groux. With no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Carlos Serrano reviewed *Resolution 25-01 – Approval of 2025 Profit Sharing Plan*, which was reviewed during the January 21 Finance Committee meeting. The Finance Committee

Page Two
Board of Directors Meeting
January 28, 2025

recommended approval: Bill Brett moved to approve, and Penny Groux seconded the motion. With no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Carlos Serrano outlined *Resolution 25-05 – Designation of Check Signers 2025*. Bill Brett made a motion to approve the resolution, with a second from Robert Craft. With no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Carlos Serrano summarized each of the budget adjustments following the *January 21, 2025 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes* handout. Beginning with *Resolution 25-04 – 2025 Operating Fund Budget V2*, Carlos briefly covered changes connected to StaySense revenue, reallocation of marketing funds (to earlier quarters), and a slight payroll reduction.

Tony Kennon and Susan Boggs arrived during the review of *Resolution 25-04 – 2025 Operating Fund Budget V2*.

Carlos specifically noted a change in the transfers between funds (a significant increase of \$2.1 million) and handed the floor over to Beth Gendler for a special announcement. Beth announced that NCAA has requested to host the Beach Volleyball Championship Tournament in May of 2025, because of the California fires. The budget reflects this change. The Tournament will be May 2 – 4, 2025.

Bill Brett explained that the Finance Committee recommend approval of *Resolution 25-04 – 2025 Operating Fund Budget V2*, making a motion. Karen Bobe seconded the motion, and with no further discussion or opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Bill Brett congratulated Jo Phillips and Carlos Serrano for their last and first Finance Committee meeting, respectively. Then Carlos Serrano introduced Kellie Herrod, the new Director of Finance. Glen Kaiser seconded his thanks and congratulations to Jo Phillips on her retirement.

Carlos Serrano quickly summarized *Resolution 25-02 – 2025 Special Events Fund Budget V2*, with minor changes. Bill Brett made a motion on behalf of the Finance Committee, seconded by David Bodenhamer. With no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Carlos Serrano briefly covered *Resolution 25-03 – 2025 Sports Commission Fund Budget V2*, including a few new sponsorships and small event adjustments. Bill Brett moved to approve, with a second from Robert Craft. With no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Carlos Serrano noted *January 21, 2025, Finance Committee Meeting Minutes*, pointing to the H&I department name change to “Visitor and Partner Services,” which was approved by the committee. He also mentioned the investment in a CD (in Q2) and borrowing from the Capital Fund/LOC.

Beth Gendler announced that the Strategic Plan would be presented at the February meeting, and representatives from Key Data would be present as well. Beth also announced that SFC consultants will have questions answered (from the Board Retreat) during the March meeting. Beth will be virtual during the March meeting.

There was a lengthy discussion about accommodation inventory.

Page Three
Board of Directors Meeting
January 28, 2025

Consent Agenda Items

Beth Gendler summarized the November and December DGIs (October, November, and December data). There was a brief discussion about spring break schedules and comparisons to prior years because of the late Easter date. Beth also shared an article from Key Data.

Crystal Hinds reviewed the November and December Communications report, the 2025 Marketing Plan booklet, and provided an update on the StaySense website booking engine.

There was a brief discussion about the new Allegiant air service at the Gulf Shores International Airport. There was a brief discussion about the new bridge development and relationships with ALDOT officials and representatives.

Kim Chapman reviewed the Visitor and Partner Services reports from November and December. Key updates were focused on a decrease in traffic, an increase in Industry Partner referrals and support, and a mention of the ongoing, successful Winter Showcase Series.

Michelle Russ summarized the November and December Sales and Sports reports. She clarified the “Lost Business” KPIs in the reports. Michelle explained an article she shared about Sports Tourism development and funding, noting how prevalent these types of projects are across the country.

Bill Brett departed at the conclusion of the Sales and Sports report.

Carlos Serrano briefly outlined the November and December Financial Statements.

Karen Bobe moved to approve, with a second from Ken Kichler. With no opposition, the motion to approve the Consent Agenda items from November and December 2024 passed unanimously.

Announcements & Discussion Items

Beth Gendler and Penny Groux outlined a few key notes on behalf of GUMBO, namely an upcoming meeting on Friday, 1/31, with local elected officials. They expect a very busy next few months in Montgomery, with major work happening on the topics of education, immigration, and more.

Beth explained that the international housing complex in Foley (and the workplace placement company) has availability for nearly 1,000 individuals/employees. There are contracting options for J1s and H2Bs, but housing options are also available for other types of employees (citizens).

Adjourned

Chairman Glen Kaiser adjourned the meeting at 9:41 am.