Marketing Council Meeting Minutes
June 11, 2025
Meeting In MBACC Boardroom

Marketing Council Members in Attendance: Sean Bailey, Charlie Belissary, Suzanne Hinde, Mayur Jeram, Matt Klugman, Declan McGonigal, Tom Tse, Jordan Watkins

Staff in Attendance: Stuart Butler, Jen Brunson, Bob Harris, Matt Pivarnik

Call to Order: 11:02 AM

Minutes Approval: Suzanne Hinde -Motion, Mayur Jeram- 2nd – All Approved

Groups Update: The June 2025 Marketing Council Group Sales Update provided a detailed overview of year-to-date group sales performance, upcoming events, and key developments in lodging and tourism. As of May 30, the team reported 323 group leads, resulting in 174,394 group lead room nights and 142,273 definite room nights. Major efforts included hosting the Travel Alliance Partners (TAP) tradeshow and familiarization tour at Avista Resort in May, as well as themed motorcoach FAM tours in collaboration with Group Travel Leader Magazine.

Myrtle Beach was announced as the host city for the 2026 South Carolina Governor's Conference on Tourism, scheduled to take place February 8–11 at the Sheraton and Convention Center. Additionally, Myrtle Beach will host several high-profile meetings events in the coming years, including Rendezvous South in 2026, Meetings Today Live in 2028, and the Arrowhead Religious Planner meeting in August 2025.

In sports tourism, the 2025 Myrtle Beach Bowl Game will be held at noon on December 19 at CCU. Myrtle Beach has also been included as a potential base camp city for one of the FIFA World Cup teams in 2026, with final selection details expected in January 2026.

Canadian sales efforts have been active, with team participation in several key trade shows including the Granite Travel Show in Barrie, the CAA Atlantic conference in New Brunswick, and the Ottawa Travel & Vacation Show, engaging hundreds of travel professionals and consumers.

Numerous past and upcoming trade shows were highlighted, including the American Bus Association, Sports ETA events, Connect Marketplace, IPW, and HelmsBriscoe, with a focus on maintaining strong industry visibility and relationship-building through the remainder of 2025.

Marketing Updates: The June 2025 Marketing Council Update for Visit Myrtle Beach highlighted year-over-year progression, key consumer behavior trends, and several major

marketing initiatives. According to the 2024 Annual Report, Myrtle Beach welcomed 18.2 million visitors, marking a 3.4% increase from the previous year, with total visitor spending reaching $13.2 billion—a 10.5% increase. Sentiment analysis for May 2025 revealed a spike in both negative and positive online mentions, driven by high-profile events like the ONEflight Myrtle Beach Classic and Wheel of Fortune Beach Week. While negative mentions rose, positive content reached a significantly broader audience.

Myrtle Beach was ranked the third most popular U.S. summer destination by Tripadvisor, and was ranked the #1 beach destination. Myrtle Beach State Park was also listed as one of the top attractions by Tripadvisor in their Summer Trend Index.

A new occupancy model refresh indicated that different accommodation tiers are impacted differently by inflation and gas prices. Economy travelers are most sensitive to inflation, while upper-tier guests prioritize weather and are less price-sensitive. Forecast models show 2025 occupancy trends aligning closely with 2024 through Q2 and a steady summer season.

Flip.to booking data indicated that transactions had lagged early in the year but rebounded in May. The average booking window was been shortened, and ADR (average daily rate) rebounded above 2024 levels.

The booking engine generated 184 bookings, over $122,000 in revenue, and an average stay length of 3.23 nights.

Promotional highlights included Wheel of Fortune Beach Week, which reached 19.8 million viewers and generated over 791,000 contest entries and 95,000 new marketing opt-ins. Additional initiatives included the ONEflight Myrtle Beach Classic recap, the Matador Creator House partnership update, and several award wins. “Traveling the Spectrum” was nominated for a Southeast Emmy and received a Silver Telly Award, while “Chef Swap at The Beach” earned multiple Telly awards across editing and directing categories.

Open Discussion: N/A

Meeting Adjourned: 12:24 PM, Suzanne Hinde -Motion, Matt Klugman - 2nd – Approved – All