



CONVENTION CENTER ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

May 9, 2023 – 9:30 AM

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order

Vice-Chair Peter Matos called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. Approval of Minutes from the April 11, 2023, Meeting (Action Item) – Minutes unanimously approved.

3. Old Business

a. Status Reports:

i. Marketing Sales – Carol Motley (GMCVB)

Carol expressed satisfaction with the team's progress and thanked everyone for their hard work. The team is currently on track and meeting the desired pace. It was mentioned that they had expected some challenges along the way but were pleased with the team's efforts. A specific milestone was highlighted as the mid-year point, which the team is approaching. It was emphasized that the GMCVB is currently holding steady for P1's and P2's for the destination, specifically for the Miami Beach Convention Center. It was acknowledged that the hotel bookings business is performing well, with a significant 4% increase. Carol noted that the numbers are flattening out in all destinations, but despite the stiff competition, the team remains confident and committed to achieving their goals. Carol emphasized the positive performance of the hotel bookings sector, particularly in relation to beach destinations. She recognized the increasing competition in the market and the need for the team to remain vigilant.

The GMCVB suggests monitoring the competition closely and identifying strategies to stay ahead in the market. Action items were assigned to team members to explore innovative approaches and identify potential areas for improvement. Carol focused on the current tentatives in the books. The tentatives were categorized based on timeframes, ranging from short-term (24 hours) to long-term (2029).

The short-term tentatives received particular attention as the team is highly optimistic about their potential. The long-term tentatives, particularly those leading up to 2029 and involving the headquarters hotel, were discussed. The team acknowledged that several clients prefer to witness the hotel groundbreaking in the destination before committing fully.

Carol provided updates on the groups, in relation to their potential for success, including those deemed promising with a 90% likelihood of closing deals.

She also provided updates on various events and initiatives taking place. For example, the PCMA (Professional Convention Management Association) event was discussed, with a focus on national associations.

The Michelin Guide sponsorship and announcement of Michelin-starred restaurants was discussed, with the reception expected to offer exceptional food. Over 600 RSVPs were received for the event on Thursday, which will feature PCMA CEO announcing the selection of Miami Beach Convention Center as a significant victory.

ii. City of Miami Beach

1. MBCC Vertical Hotel Update – Maria Hernandez (CMB)

The revised development schedule from Terra was received. While progress on the project was positive, the schedule had slipped by 60 days. The completion date was now estimated to be January or February 2026, instead of by Art Basel 2025. Internal communication was already sent to inform the team not to commit to the previous completion date. The City Manager, Deputy City Manager and Assistant City Managers were informed about the updated schedule. Possession date was shifted from July to September and the groundbreaking ceremony for vertical construction was rescheduled for November. The delay in obtaining permits, particularly the foundation permit, contributed to the revised schedule. The foundation permit approval was delayed due to issues with DERM (Department of Environmental Resource Management). Discussions took place with Balfour Beatty, who presented plans for maintenance of traffic and other considerations. Efforts were made to ensure Convention Center Dr. would remain open during construction. The coordination with Balfour Beatty and Public Works is ongoing to address the impact of construction activities on adjacent streets. The formal schedule from Balfour Beatty, which will consider all aspects, including permits, was yet to be received.

The Chair inquired about the availability of the construction loan. Maria replied that the construction loan and equity financing were targeted for September. The initial equity contribution of \$10 million had been surpassed, with \$15 million already spent. Schedule was adjusted to align with milestones, such as the Boat Show in 2026. Efforts are already underway within the Building Department, led by Eric Carpenter, to address the permitting challenges. The optimism surrounding the project schedule and meeting milestones was acknowledged but the goal of completing the project before Art Basel was deemed unrealistic. The target for substantial completion was set for January or February 2026, rather than the Art Basel 2025 deadline. The project's Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO) is anticipated for October, with additional time required for setup.

iii. Operations – Freddie Peterson (OVG360)

April featured several notable events including eMerge Americas, Aesthetic Society, ribbon-cutting ceremonies, and medical product launches. The sales team has been actively targeting corporate accounts in North Florida, such as Tampa and St. Pete. June is expected to be a busy month, with 12 events scheduled. Efforts are underway to collaborate with Destination Management Companies (DMCs) to showcase the MBCC's capabilities for trade shows, meetings, 2 conventions, social, and corporate events. On the marketing side the desire to

discuss marketing efforts in the next meeting will include the Venue, convention side, and partnership initiatives. The website was recently relaunched, replacing the old and outdated version. The Venue operations were highlighted, emphasizing the scale and complexity of managing a large space with numerous events. Recognition was given to SodexoLive! and their contributions to sustainability efforts, including constipation diversion products and the kids program.

iv. Food & Beverage – Danny Medina (SodexoLive!)

Danny informed the group they are exploring different platforms including OpenTable & Rezy, but advised it came with a hefty price tag and would try and find some alternatives with high impact results and low costs. Questions were raised about the visibility of the site and the need for signage. It was confirmed that plans are underway to deploy a second round of capital investments for signage and other improvements. These investments go beyond the original scope of work and are aimed at enhancing the overall appearance and functionality of the property. Exterior signage and additional illumination were mentioned as significant components of the second round of investments and the details of these enhancements are currently being finalized. The team celebrated a successful month in April, with notable events such as the Miami City Ballet and were commended for their exceptional job in managing and organizing this event. The focus has been on getting the new establishment up and running smoothly. Happy hour promotions were discussed, with half-off appetizers and great deals on drinks; everyone was encouraged to visit and enjoy the happy hour offerings. It was mentioned that several groups have shown interest in hosting events at the establishment and in the coming weeks, there are corporate parties scheduled during happy hours.

4. **New Business**

- a. The Palm Beach Neighborhood Association has issued its perspective on private parking changes; the Committee will receive an update and share the information with the association.
- b. The City Commission Neighborhoods Committee June meeting will discuss including family-friendly, free events in the Pride Park. Other topics under discussion include fencing and questions from pickleball advocates. Updates on these matters are expected to be provided at the July meeting.
- c. Attendees shared positive experiences, including enjoying meals at the Rum Room, and appreciating the attentive waitstaff; the message of appreciation will be passed on to the restaurant.
- d. A question about virtual meetings was brought up in the last meeting. The City Clerk clarified that a quorum of members must be present in person, but virtual participation is possible for the remaining members. The possibility of allowing virtual participation for absent members will be discussed and decided upon by the board.
- e. The City will have a booth at the Bitcoin 2023 conference in May and is seen as an opportunity to showcase Miami Beach as a business destination.

5. **Attendance** – Larry Herrup joined virtually. Seth Cassel and Prakash Kumar absent.