



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

Date: May 27, 2025

Recorded by Sally Westendorf

**Board Members Present:** Bill Bennett, Karen Bobe, David Bodenhamer, Susan Boggs, Bill Brett, Penny Groux, Glen Kaiser, Ken Kichler, Frank Reed, Mark Stillings (a quorum was met)

**Board Members Absent:** Robert Craft, Tony Kennon

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

**Visitors:** Greg Alexander, Jon Walker, Steve Meyer, Angela Patel, Stirling Bobe, Sheila Hodges

### **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.

Guests introduced themselves.

### **Board Meeting Minutes**

The meeting minutes from the April 22, 2025 meeting were presented. Bill Brett made a motion to approve the minutes, which Karen Bobe seconded. After no discussion, the motion passed. Members absent in April abstained.

### **Consent Agenda**

Beth Gendler summarized the *Destination Growth Indicators Dashboard and Reports*. YTD, Hotel stats were down; monthly stats for STR were all up, while YTD stats were down. Beth summarized lodging and retail tax reports for March. She then noted the sewer flow data from 2024 and prior, from both municipalities.

Crystal Hinds provided an outline of the *Communications Report*. She reported 22% growth on website performance and stated that pageviews were up 6%; the flyalbeaches.com site saw a 38% increase, month-over-month. Crystal highlighted the April VR lodging snapshot, pointing to an increase in occupancy, nights available, guest nights, length of stay, and average booking window, while canceled nights decreased. Crystal he showed a competitive analysis (i.e., Destin

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and Panama City). Crystal then showed the new IP email with new KPIs to be reported bi-monthly. Beth explained she heard from a few IPs there were concerns with the utility of Occupancy as a KPI. Moving forward, four key KPIs will be reported to IPs: Nights Available, Nights Reserved, Occupancy, and Length of Stay.

Kim Chapman briefly reviewed the *Visitor & Partner Services Report*, highlighting positive welcome center staff interactions with guests at the airport, on incoming Allegiant flights. She also shared that there were seven event appearances in the month of April with BEV (the mobile welcome center “pink van”), reaching nearly 900 people.

Michelle Russ outlined the *Sales and Sports Report*. She outlined monthly and YTD stats for meetings and sports/events, and explained her staff attended trade show in Tulsa attributing to 9 new leads. Michelle mentioned an article outlining Sports Tourism in Cabarrus County (NC). She then showed a video recap from the May NCAA Beach Volleyball Championship event.

Beth gave an update about the sports tourism complex project, stating that the city of Orange Beach has a proposed agreement and intends to sign it. Her updates spurred a larger discussion about community advocacy and the upcoming local election season as it relates to the next steps of the project.

Carlos outlined the *April Financial Statements*. He provided updated YTD and monthly stats in a handout (data received 5/24). He explained the ‘flip-flopping’ of the budget for April and May revenue, justified due to the late Easter date in 2025. He explained the report showed a combination of both April and May revenues for reference. All in all, Carlos stated he expected to be up 12%-13% once final deposits were made.

Susan Boggs made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items, seconded by Bill Bennett. With no opposition, the motion carried unanimously.

**Announcements & Discussion Items**

Beth Gendler proposed Board Retreat dates and location: Pensacola Beach Hilton, Wednesday, December 3 through Friday, December 5. There was no opposition to the location or dates.

Glen Kaiser announced Karen Bobe’s reappointment to the Board for another 4-year term, and highlighted the privilege he feels to be reappointed for another 4-year term himself.

Beth Gendler announced and displayed the *Beach Safety Week Proclamation* (from the Baldwin County Commission), which occurs each year, the week before Memorial Day.

There were some questions and updates about the *Shark Alert* process/program

As for legislative updates, Penny Groux summarized the Mobile dredging project (being referred to as “Mobile Bay Mud Dumping”; expecting to relocate 90M cubic yards over the next 20 years).

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Guests introduced themselves.

Jon Walker announced that Hangout/SIMB organizers and the city will hold a public hearing and are open to receiving public comments.

The next Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 24, 8:30 am, Orange Beach Welcome Center

**Adjourned**

Chairman Glen Kaiser adjourned the meeting at 9:59 am.