# September’s 2024 MALA Meeting Minutes

**September 12, 2024**

**11:00am**

**Renaissance Riverview Plaza Bon Scour III**

1. Networking
2. Call September’s Meeting to Order- Shannon Harris
3. Individual Introductions around the room - Members and Guests
4. Approval of August’s Meeting Minutes – 1st Shannon Harris 2nd  Spike Blackinton
5. MALA Financial Report – Shannon reported $2,413.07 in the bank account, which includes the $2,000 for the Ronald McDonald House. All dues have been paid and everybody is good.
6. Guest Speaker – Mobile Chamber of Commerce – Bradley Byrne – In 2022 We announced 1,500 new jobs in the area, in 2023 another 2,000 new jobs. 2024 got off to a slow start, but if you look at what we are going to announce by the end of the year, we will clearly be in excess of 1,000 new jobs this year.

In a couple of weeks, they will announce the expansion of a shipyard in Bayou La Batre, that was bought by an Australian Company. They have a contract with the Coast Guard to build ships that only operate in rivers. Also, there will be a new warehouse site off of Rangeline Rd. In Clavert there are going to build a new steel mill plant. Another major announcement before the end of the year about Austal. The Navy and Electric boat are making submarines.

The economy is going to grow it is not slowing down.52 projects are active and believe that once interest rates start coming down, which we should see soon, the pace will pick up. All of this will entail construction.

A few months ago, it was announced that a government grant was issued to build the bridge. The bridge will start next year and will be finished in our lifetime.

By the end of March, they will finish deepening and widening the ship channel that will make Mobile the deepest Port on the Gulf of Mexico. It will be bigger than New Orleans and Tampa. In the last 4 years, Mobile has become the fastest growing Port in the USA.

Moving the airport is on schedule to be completed next year.

Building a new Civic Center with the groundbreaking to begin in February and having it ready for Mardi Gras 2027.

We have several big industries in Mobile: 26 Chemical plants, Austal/Alabama Shipyard/ Navy Ships, Steel Mill, Health Care, Hospitality, and aviation,

Airbus is expanding. They are building their third line and should be completed next year. Once it matures Mobile will the fourth largest aircraft producer in the world. Also, out at Brookley is Continental, and Mobile Aerospace. The Chamber is going after suppliers for Airbus with incentives to get them to relocate the companies to Mobile.

1. TID –Up for renewal for renewal for the 5 year TID. We are in a tight window for the renewal. We have to negotiate with the City Council member and they have to pass the ordinance. With all the projects going on, the city wants to raise our occupancy tax. We have not had an increase in at least 17 years. We will need to negotiate with the city on the lodging tax because they will need to pay for all these projects, which is going to benefit us, but we should not have to take the entire brunt. We need to raise lodging tax and TIP to strike a balance. We do not have to petition again.
2. Marketing Fund – No update.
3. Member and Guest Updates:
* Visit Mobile – August was a tough month the city ran around 60% occupancy. Some hotels did better than others did. September will be about the same. The Civic Center with start demolition. The cruise ship will be back in October. The sales team is working hard.
* Mobile Sports Authority – Groundbreaking has started for the $23.5 mil aquatic center on Halls Mill Rd. Phase One will be an outdoor 50 meter pool, which will take about 2 years to build. Phase Two will be an indoor pool. Once the indoor pool is built, we can go after State championship tournaments and even the Southeastern Championship tournaments. They are adding 4 more field to the soccer complex. The next two biggest events will be the Gulf Coast Challenge in Oct and then the Port City Classic in November.
* Shannon Harris – Needs someone to audit the Hotels books. Gwynn volunteered.
* National Maritime Museum will host a free day October 19 – which allows the community to come in to visit.
* Jubilee Craft Festival will be October 19 and 20th in downtown Daphne.
* Mobile Latin Festival will be October 12. Other than Mardi Gras this is the biggest event in downtown Mobile.
* Future Meetings: October 10th – Holiday Inn Airport and November 14th – Mobile Mardi Gras Museum
1. Adjournment