

Minutes

**The Mississippi River Parkway Commission of Arkansas
Moore-Hornor House
323 Beech Street
Helena-West Helena, Arkansas
November 2, 2009**

Commissioners Present

Garland Hayes
Bobby Kennedy
Phyllis Stinson
Carole Bulloch
Joe St. Columbia
Terri Austin McCullough
Taralou Dunklin
Molly Houseworth Jackson

Commissioners Absent

Eva Hollowell
James Banks

Technical Advisors/ Department Staff/Guests Present

Nancy Clark, Great River Road Division Director
Dr. Ruth Hawkins, Executive Director, Delta Byways Regional Association
Paula Miles, Delta Byways Regional Tourism Association
Beth Wiedower, Rural Heritage Development Initiative
Julia Hart, Scenic Byways Coordinator, Arkansas Highway & Transportation Department
Debra Smith, Delta Cultural Center

Call to Order

Chairman Garland Hayes called the meeting to order, and thanked everyone for taking time from their busy schedules to participate in the meeting.

Approval of the Minutes from the Previous Meeting

Bobby Kennedy moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Phyllis Stinson seconded and the motion carried.

Tour of Moore-Hornor House

Commissioner Joe St. Columbia introduced Debra Smith from the Delta Cultural Center to present information about the Moore-Hornor House. Ms. Smith stated the house was built in 1859 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is a wonderful example of asymmetrical Greek Revival and Italianate architecture within the Delta. Magnificent wrought iron grillwork, reminiscent in the Italianate style, graces the entryway of the home. Standing in

front of the house, you can view Graveyard Hill, the site of one of the bloodiest battles during the Battle of Helena on July 4, 1863. Graveyard Hill is located directly behind the house and slopes down to join the yard. After belonging to the Moore and Hornor families for 118 years, the Moore-Hornor House now belongs to the people of Arkansas. The Delta Cultural Center is in the process of restoring the house using U.S. Department of Interior Guidelines for Restoration of Historic Places.

National Mississippi River Parkway Commission Meeting in Red Wing Report

Chairman Garland Hayes reported that the national meeting held in Red Wing was a success, and that Arkansas had good representation from the Commission and Technical Advisors.

Delta Byways Activities Update

Dr. Ruth Hawkins asked everyone to mark their calendars for Friday, January 29, 2010, for the 10th Annual Arkansas Delta Byways Banquet and Delta Awards. It will be held in the Event Room at Southland Park Gaming and Racing. She stated that ten awards will be given to include Media Support, Hospitality, Entrepreneur, Tourism Support, Festival/Event of the Year, Boot Strap, Promotional, Outstanding Member, Cultural Heritage and Tourism Person of the Year Awards.

Dr. Hawkins also reported that two grant applications for scenic byway funds have been approved. One is a project at Chalk Bluff Natural and Recreational area to pave 1.85 miles of gravel road by providing access to one of the few places along Crowley's Ridge Parkway where the ridge, an erosional remnant from the Ice Age, can still be seen in its prehistoric state. The amount of the grant is \$622,174. The other grant is for the first phase of the Crowley's Ridge Parkway Trail, providing a multi-modal trail along the Parkway. This segment of the trail will connect historic downtown Jonesboro with Arkansas State University, Turtle Creek Mall and the Jonesboro Greenway. The trail will link to multiple points of interest when it fully extends the length of Crowley's Ridge, and will also connect to the Mississippi River Trail, increasing multi-modal tourism. The grant amount is \$1,766,525.00.

Dr. Hawkins said that Arkansas Delta Byways commissioned the development of an extensive, region-wide marketing and promotion plan. When complete, this regional marketing plan will identify the ideal visitor and audience, and guide future marketing and promotional efforts. Mangan Holcomb Partners, a leading regional advertising agency based in Little Rock, was chosen to assist in developing a comprehensive branding, advertising and public relations plan to support upcoming marketing and promotional efforts.

Arkansas Great River Road Geocaching Project

The Arkansas portion of the Great River Road geocaching project now includes 25 caches which have been found a total of 646 times, up from 598 in September. Cachers log each of their finds daily, and many make comments about the cache spot being a nice place to visit and they plan to return in the future.

Endless Feast Filming at Whitton Farms

Nancy Clark reported that the California firm, Film Garden, filmed local produce growers at Whitton Farms in October. She said she also attended the celebration feast prepared by Chef Lisa Godsey of Godsey's Grill in Jonesboro, with wine served from Chateau Aux Arc Winery near Altus. A banquet table for over 100 people was dressed with white table cloths and decorations from Whitton Farms' flower gardens—it was an impressive site. Dena Woerner,

Communications Manager for the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism also attended and took photographs which she posted on Whrll.com giving the event terrific coverage. The film will be shown on the Public Broadcasting System in the spring of next year.

Mississippi River Country USA

Nancy Clark reported that Mississippi River Country USA has recruited Japanese travel writers and photographers for a year-long series in *Ocean Life* magazine on "Life Along the Mississippi" which includes the entire states which border the Mississippi River. The magazine will feature a 6-page story on one of the Great River Road States each month for 10 months. Delta Airlines is sponsoring the air travel for the series, and each state is responsible for getting complimentary lodging, etc. A tentative itinerary for the tour was presented.

Miscellaneous

Chairman Garland Hayes reminded Commissioners to return their TR1s to Nancy Clark for processing.

A discussion ensued as to the next meeting date, and it was decided that a meeting would be held in conjunction with the Delta Byways annual meeting and banquet to be held at Southland in West Memphis on Friday, January 29, 2010.

The meeting was adjourned, and Commissioner Joe St. Columbia invited everyone to join he and Joyce for a luncheon at Temple Beth El where they are serving the famous "Pasquale's Tamales." Commissioner St. Columbia said that over the years the congregation at Temple Beth El had declined, and in 2006, they came to the difficult decision to bring 139 years of congregational history to a close. They donated the temple to the state for use as a community arts center. After lunch a private tour of the Phillips County Museum's Civil War history is planned for those who can participate.

Respectfully submitted:

Garland Hayes, Chairman
Mississippi River Parkway Commission

Nancy Clark, Director
Great River Road Division