

State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission
The Grange at Wilson Gardens, 15 South Jefferson St, Wilson, AR 72395
November 14, 2018

Commissioners Present

Jim Shamburger, Chair
Kalene Griffith, Vice Chair
Austin Albers
Danny Ford
John Gill
Ron Gossage
Weston Lewey

Montine McNulty
Ness Sechrest
Cindy Smith
Mike Wilson
Randy Wolfinbarger

Absent

Bill Barnes
Jeff Baskin
Shash Goyal

Eric Jackson
Bob Knight

Department Staff Present

Kane Webb, Executive Director
Grady Spann, Director, State Parks
Jim Dailey, Tourism Director
Shea Lewis, Deputy Director, State Parks
Kristine Puckett, Deputy Director, Tourism
Cynthia Dunlap, Director, Administration
Kim Williams, Director, Great River Road
Theresa Helliwell, Agency Controller
Kris Richardson, ADPT Executive Assistant
Randy Roberson, Planning & Dev Manager
Joe Jacobs, Marketing and Revenue Manager
Kelly Farrell, Program Services Manager

Marcel Hanzlik, Region 3 Supervisor
Jeff King, Project Manager
Angela Allen, Administrative Analyst
Leah DiPietro, Communications Manager
Jessica Ledbetter, Tourism Sales Manager
Kayla Hardage, Welcome Center
Administrator
Joy Barlogie, Research & Dev Manager
Leigha Jones, Tourism Dev Consultant
LaJeana Carroll, Parks Executive Assistant
Tammy Boyce, Tourism Director Assistant
Melinda Miller, Real Estate Officer

CJRW

Darin Gray
Jennifer Morgan
Delanie Thompson

Chris Ho
Keegan Wright

Miles Media

Susie Kardas
Bobby Taylor

Guests

Ammi Tucker Executive Director, Osceola/South Mississippi County Chamber of Commerce
Gary Jones, Gary Jones Video

Call to Order

Chair Jim Shamburger called the meeting to order at 2:06 pm on Wednesday, November 14, 2018. Kris Richardson called roll.

Approval of Agenda

Jim Shamburger requested approval of the Agenda.

Weston Lewey moved to approve the Agenda as presented. Mike Wilson seconded and the motion carried.

Presentation of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Jim Shamburger requested approval of the Minutes from the October meeting.

Kalene Griffith moved to approve the Minutes from the October 17-18 meeting. Danny Ford seconded and the motion carried.

Welcome

Jim Shamburger thanked The Lawrence Group for the use of The Grange as a meeting space and Osceola/South Mississippi County Chamber of Commerce for hosting the refreshment break.

Ammi Tucker Executive Director, Osceola/South Mississippi County Chamber of Commerce welcomed and thanked the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission for choosing Wilson for the November meeting. Tucker commented the Arkansas shaped cookies and muffins were made by Amber's Sugar Shack in Osceola and the Arkansas cookie cutter is available at the Historic Dyess Colony Johnny Cash Boyhood Home Visitor Center.

ADPT FINANCIAL REPORT

Cynthia Dunlap presented the year-to-date financial report for the period ended October 31, 2018. The expenditures were - Parks Division, \$33,346,503 - including Construction and Grants;

Tourism Division, \$5,223,658; Keep Arkansas Beautiful, \$105,013; Administration Division, \$1,351,709; War Memorial, \$1,141,607. YTD expenditures for the Department totaled \$41,168,490 an increase of 7.57% over the same period FY18. The year-to-date revenues included - Operating Revenue for Parks Division of \$10,715,242 a decrease of (8.62)% over the same period FY18; War Memorial Operating Revenue of \$826,270 a decrease of (36.91)% over the same period FY18; 1/8% Tax Revenues of \$11,236,199 an increase of 3.41% over the same period FY18; 2% Gross Tax collections of \$6,640,377 an increase of 0.67% over the same period FY18; and Grocery store wine income revenue of \$9,206. **

**Note: Grocery store wine income is a new revenue source that represents Parks and Tourism's portion of revenue generated from retail off-premises permits for the sale of wine at grocery stores - established by Act 508 of 2017.

Ness Sechrest moved to approve the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism Financial Report as presented. Austin Albers seconded and the motion carried.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

State Parks Recreation and Travel Commission – 2019 Schedule

Kane Webb discussed a proposed 2019 State Parks Recreation and Travel Commission (SPRTC) meeting schedule with a suggestion for a reduced number of formal meetings advising that 2019 will be an extremely busy year for ADPT with legislative session convening, along with implementing the Governor's Transformation Plan and various agency events. The proposed schedule would consist of six formal meetings during the year, in addition to other events i.e. Superintendent's Conference, Governor's Conference on Tourism, Arkansas Hospitality Association's Trade Show throughout the year. Reducing the number of SPRTC meetings would provide financial savings as well as a time-savings for Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism (ADPT) staff and SPRTC Commissioners. Kaleen Griffith commented she had requested Kris Richardson provide meeting information with historic information, agendas, approval items, for review. Griffith noted Kane Webb is very proactive with communication and keeps the SPRTC informed and up to date between the monthly meetings. Webb requested Commissioners to consider a revised schedule and provide feedback on the proposed schedule.

The SPRTC Chair approved the preliminary 2019 schedule with further discussion if needed, as follows:

January 16-17	Little Rock
February 24-26	Governor's Conference in Hot Springs

March 20-21 North Little Rock

Webb suggested a teleconference could be scheduled in December for further discussion, if needed, and welcomed feedback from Commissioners in the interim.

Governor's Transformation Plan

Kane Webb briefed the SPRTC on the Governor's proposed Transformation Plan to reduce the number of agencies reporting directly to the Governor from 42 to 15. Webb stressed no state employees will be laid off with savings expected through attrition. The proposed change is to create the Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism (ADPHT) by moving the Department of Heritage (DAH) to Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism (ADPT). This is a good fit for both departments. Webb announced his recommendation for the wine tax to follow the Arkansas Wine Producers Council to the Department of Commerce. Webb also commented on the 11 boards and commission that fall under DAH. When these are added to the boards and commission already in ADPT, total will result in 16 active boards and commissions for ADPHT. Webb explained that Human Resources, Purchasing and Computer Services mentioned in the Transformation Plan refers to the departments currently in Department of Finance and Administration and will not affect ADPHT. Discussion followed.

PARKS DIVISION

Certificates of Appreciation

Grady Spann requested approval for a certificate of appreciation for Richard Boyes, Park Superintendent at Lake Catherine State Park, with 37 years of dedicated service to Arkansas State Parks.

Ness Sechrest moved to approve a certificate of appreciation for Richard Boyes with 37 years of dedicated service with Arkansas State Parks. Austin Albers seconded and the motion passed.

Ozark Folk Center State Park Memorial Wayside Exhibit

Grady Spann requested approval for the Ozark Folk Center State Park Dale Bumpers Memorial Wayside Exhibit donated by the Committee of One Hundred, in memory of Governor Bumpers, who was instrumental in the creation of the Ozark Folk Center State Park.

John Gill moved to approve the Dale Bumpers Memorial wayside exhibit to be displayed at Ozark Folk Center State Park. Randy Wolfinbarger seconded and the motion passed.

Hampson Museum Update; Old and New Facilities

Grady Spann invited Danny Ford to relay information from the November 8, 2018, meeting with Gaylon Lawrence. Ford stated Gaylon Lawrence Jr. had a plan for the community to be extraordinary and the new museum building is a part of that plan. Ford remarked he had asked John Gill to review the agreement, plan, and the two appraisals.

John Gill reported the two appraisals obtained by ASP and the Lawrence Group contained multiple duplications and inconsistencies. Gaylon Lawrence and ASP agreed to select a new appraisal firm to appraise the museum and the exhibits and provide a new appraisal. Gill remarked that Melinda Miller, Real Estate Officer for ADPT Planning and Development did an excellent job wading through the documents and sorting out the agreement and appraisals. Discussion followed.

John Gill moved to approve a resolution, to give notice that the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism is no longer operating a Museum at the premises described in the warranty deeds from Lee Wilson & Company dated October 28, 1958, and May 28, 1976. Danny Ford seconded and the motion passed.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the State of Arkansas obtained warranty deeds from Lee Wilson & Company dated October 28, 1958, and May 28, 1976 to property at the corner of Lake Drive and U.S. Highway 61 in Wilson, Arkansas, and

WHEREAS both deeds contain the same reverter clause, to wit:
“if the State of Arkansas shall ever cease to operate the above described premises as Hampson Museum State Park, then the aforesaid real estate shall revert to Lee Wilson & Company” and

WHEREAS, the Parks Division of the Arkansas Department for Parks and Tourism, which is responsible for operating the above-described Museum, removed the artifacts collection and offices from the above-described Museum and relocated the Museum at a new facility located at 33 Park Avenue in the City of Wilson, Arkansas, and

WHEREAS, the new Museum was opened to the public on October 26, 2018, and the Parks Division ceased to operate at the premises described in the warranty deeds.

NOW THEREFOE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Arkansas Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission gives notice that the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism is no longer operating a

Museum at the premises described in the warranty deeds from Lee Wilson & Company dated October 28, 1958, and May 28, 1976.

THIS RESOLUTION adopted by the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission on this 14th day of November 2018.

ARKANSAS STATE PARKS, RECREATION AND TRAVEL COMMISSION
/S/ Jim Shamburger, Chair

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND TOURISM
/S/ Kane Webb, Executive Director

Miscellaneous

DeRoche Ridge Campground

Shea Lewis reported that he had met with Daniel Faulkner from the Attorney General's Office, the bonding company and contractor to inspect the DeRoche Campground at DeGray Lake Resort that needed repairs. Lewis stated ASP is waiting for the recommendation from the bonding company.

Grady Spann reported the Crater of Diamonds State Park Diamond Statistics Report for October 2018, shows the number of diamonds found last month was higher than the same month in 2017. Attendance to the park is down since no large diamond finds have been in the news.

Spann reported the article "New interpreters start at battle site; Two Civil War re-enactors feel at home at Prairie Grove" (Kutter, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, October 8, 2018). Bart Taylor and Matt Mulheran both come from outside the ASP system and both are experienced Civil War reenactors.

Spann mentioned the news segment "Adventure Arkansas: Lake Fort Smith State Park" (Bates, 5 News, October 18, 2018) featured Heather Hula, Park Interpreter at Lake Fort Smith State Park. The Fall Magic Lake Tour focused on the natural resources of the park, the changing colors along the shoreline of the lake, and the history of Lake Fort Smith.

Spann noted the article "Arkansas Sightseeing: State has 17 Natural Historic Landmarks" (Schneider, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, October 23, 2018). Of the 17 properties in Arkansas with the ultra-elite designation of Natural Historic Landmarks, seven are in Arkansas State Parks: Louisiana Purchase State Park, Old (Historic) Washington State Park, Poison Springs Battlefield State Park, Marks' Mills Battlefield State Park, Jenkins Ferry Battlefield State Park, Parkin (Archeological) State Park, and Toltec Mound Archeological State Park.

Spann announced news from the National Association for Interpretation “Members approve governance documents, elect board members” (NAI NOW, October 24, 2018). Heather Runyan, Park Interpreter at Village Creek State Park was elected to serve on the national Board of Directors for National Association of Interpretation (NAI). Spann commented NAI contains just over 7,000 active members and Arkansas is well represented.

Spann mentioned the article “Yurts, camper cabins, RV rentals, and more. Some unique ways to camp at Arkansas State Parks” (Bartholomew, Fayetteville Flyer, October 25, 2018) highlighted the “other” options for camping at ASP. Spann encouraged the SPRTC Commissioners to experience the parks.

Mount Nebo State Park - Use Permit Agreement

Randy Roberson requested approval for a use permit request from Robin Smith for use of an existing residential access to property that she inherited from her mother, Selma Ratley, at Mt. Nebo State Park and legally described as: *Lot 8 of Block 1, Town of Mt. Nebo, Yell County, Arkansas*

Use Permit Agreements to allow access to the above described property have been granted in the past to one previous property owner: Gilbert Cornwell: *A Use-Area Description running from Lot 8 of Block 1, Town of Mt. Nebo, Yell County, Arkansas along “Arkansas Avenue” (Platted-Not Open) and along “Cave Avenue” (Platted-Part Developed) to Arkansas State Highway #155.* Staff recommends granting the Use Permit Agreement.

Ness Sechrest moved to approve the use permit agreement for Robin Smith for the location as follows: *Lot 8 of Block 1, Town of Mt. Nebo, Yell County, Arkansas.* Weston Lewey seconded and the motion carried.

Crater of Diamonds State Park - Structure Removals

Randy Roberson reported park staff has requested approval to remove four structures from the park’s inventory at Murfreesboro, Arkansas, as follows:

Sun Shelters (Building Nos. 11.22, 11.23, 11.27, 11.28 /AASIS Nos. 120005601, 120005602, 120005603, 120005604) are four 256 square foot wood pole shelters with concrete foundations and metal roofs that were constructed in 1999 to provide shade for park visitors prospecting at the mine area. The structures have aged considerably due to weatherization over time. New structures will be built and placed in better locations at the mine area to serve the park visitors.

Austin Albers moved to approve based on the information presented; the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission finds the following structures Sun Shelters (Building

Nos. 11.22, 11.23, 11.27, 11.28 /AASIS Nos. 120005601, 120005602, 120005603, 120005604) are obsolete notwithstanding the insured value and approves the removal from Arkansas State Park inventory. Cindy Smith seconded and the motion carried.

Mountain Glory Station Agreement Renewal

Grady Spann reported the Morning Glory Train concessionaire, Ronnie Waggoner, has renovated the concession operation and has been timely with payment and monthly reports. Queen Wilhelmina State Parks staff has received multiple complimentary reviews from guests. Staff recommends renewal of the Mountain Glory Station agreement. Spann requested approval for a one-year renewal for the Mountain Glory Station agreement with Ronnie Waggoner.

Cindy Smith moved to approve renewal of the concession and operating agreement for the Miniature Railroad, Gift Shop/Snack Bar and Miniature Golf with Ronnie Waggoner and Arkansas State Parks for one year. Austin Albers seconded and the motion carried.

Arkansas Broadcaster's Association Partnership Agreement Renewal

Grady Spann reported on the nearly 30 year public private partnerships with Arkansas Broadcasters Association (ABA) and Arkansas Press Association (APA) promoting the diverse facilities and activities of the state park system. Grady Spann requested renewal of the agreement for one year.

Mike Wilson moved to approve the renewal of the grant partnership between Arkansas State Parks and the Arkansas Broadcasters Association for one year. Austin Albers seconded and the motion carried.

Arkansas Press Association Partnership Agreement Renewal

Grady Spann reported that the agreement with APA began in 1988 and inspired Arkansas pride in the state park system, and encouraging Arkansans to travel in-state and visit other Arkansas travel destinations. Grady Spann requested renewal of the agreement for one year.

Mike Wilson moved to approve the renewal of the grant partnership between Arkansas State Parks and the Arkansas Press Association for one year. Austin Albers seconded and the motion carried.

TOURISM DIVISION

Director's Report

The Harrison Welcome Center dedication was held on November 2, 2018. Welcome Center employees are reporting three times as many visitors since opening the new location. Mike Wilson, ad committee chair, gave a brief review of the advertising committee meeting that took place prior to the full commission meeting. He mentioned that the staff will present an executive overview and timeline for planned Tourism research projects.

Jim Dailey shared that Mary Osteen, Tourism Public Information Officer, has resigned to take a job with the Central Arkansas Library System. Tammy Boyce was promoted to Administrative Specialist III.

Kristine Puckett reported on Arkansas Tourism's participation in National Travel & Tourism's "White House Halloween Pumpkin" project. She shared pictures of the various stages of design and production involved in staff artist Jennifer Hoornstra's painting of a pumpkin, which featured the Arkansas Tourism campaign logo and scenery of The Natural State. The finished pumpkin was on display at the White House on October 28, 2018.

Communications

Communications Manager Leah DiPietro updated the Commission on several media tours and events that the team hosted/staffed throughout the fall.

Media Tours Update: In September, Communications hosted Portia Jones, a UK travel blogger and digital influencer. Through her online publication *Pip & the City*, Jones visited and covered locations across the state, including Little Rock, Helena, Dyess and Hot Springs.

In October, Communications also hosted Marzio Mian and Nanni Fontana, Italian journalists working with Travel South. The duo covered the US Civil Rights Trail and began initial research on a project titled *The RIVER Journal*, which highlights rivers of the world. Also in October, the team hosted a culinary tour for journalists Sheree Williams of *Cuisine Noir Magazine* and Lori Blalock of *Southerner Says*. The group visited Bentonville and Little Rock. October concluded with the section hosting a Brand USA tour for Emma Reynolds of *News Australia*.

Events Update: The Communications Section worked two biking events in October, including the Oz Trails Off-Road Epic Rides event and Outerbike. Travel writer Kim Williams updated the Commission on the national Mississippi River Parkway Commission meeting held in West Memphis.

Other News: DiPietro shared a video by P. Allen Smith highlighting the work of photographer Tim Ernst and the beauty of Arkansas. An Arkansas Ambassador program update was also given; the new class nominations opened in late fall and will close in January. New categories for the program are being added and are updated on Arkansas.com.

Sales

Jessica Ledbetter gave a report on tradeshow attendance in October. Tamora Williams represented Arkansas Tourism at: Boomers and Groups/Agritourism World Summit in French

Lick, IN; Teams Conference in Louisville, KY; and the World Woman Summit in Little Rock. Ledbetter also discussed upcoming shows and events, including the Travel South International Showcase and FAM tour in November/December. The FAM tour will have nine tour operators from seven different countries in attendance. The tour will conclude with an Arkansas Tourism industry party on Saturday, December 2 in Little Rock. Ledbetter invited all Commissioners to attend and asked for an RSVP.

Jim Dailey added that Arkansas Tourism is being represented well at international marketplaces and continue to develop our international product. The Southern region of the US as a whole is doing well on the international market, and Arkansas is working to draw in tourists who are already visiting surrounding states.

Tourism Development

Joy Barlogie introduced Leigha Jones as Tourism Development Consultant and mentioned her involvement with the Regional Tourism Associations and Relocation/Retirement planning. She reviewed Relocation/Retirement activities including an Ideal Living retirement tradeshow that will take place in Chicago in January 2019. Jones and Barlogie will attend, in addition to representatives from Hot Springs Village, Bella Vista, Fairfield Bay and Cherokee Village.

Barlogie worked with CJRW to build a cost-of-living calculator that will be included on the relocation pages as well as a special landing page designed to support the show in Chicago. The team at the Chicago show will be able to access this page via handheld tablets and use the cost-of-living calculator information to initiate conversations with attendees who are interested in relocating to The Natural State. Leads from this show will be shared with all partners for follow-up. The goal for the Relocation/Retirement section is to add partners from all over the state that would like to promote their cities and regions as relocation and retirement destinations.

Advertising

Susie Kardas with Miles Partnership updated the Commission on Tourism's fall foliage weekly updates and fall attractions pages on Arkansas.com, stating that the Communications team is very pleased with the new CrowdRiff photo gallery, which consists of images uploaded by the public. The gallery logged 35,000 views in October alone.

Chris Ho with CJRW discussed metrics and tracking on Arkansas.com, including partner referral conversions. Of note, Ho reported that promoted pages are seeing an average of 18x higher page views than non-promoted pages. CJRW also announced that the Partner Performance Dashboard has been implemented, where partners can log in and view a variety of reports and performance measures for their listing.

CJRW also recently analyzed performance measurement on the previous version of Arkansas.com; going forward, a new methodology will be used by the CJRW/Miles team.

The website discussion concluded with an update on city page listings, which are currently being updated by Miles and the Communications team, with an initial focus on large cities.

Jennifer Morgan reported on the Trail of Holiday Lights, which was in digital form only for 2018, rather than a print publication as in the past. CJRW plans to promote the Trail with print, digital and video advertising.

SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

Montine McNulty reported that the Nominating Committee nominated Kalene Griffith as chair and Eric Jackson as vice chair of the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission for 2019.

Montine McNulty moved to approve nominations of Kalene Griffith as chair and Eric Jackson as vice chair of the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission for 2019. Ness Sechrest seconded and the motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

The State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission adjourned at 4:33 pm on November 14, 2018, at The Grange at Wilson Gardens in Wilson, Arkansas.