

**State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission
Mount Magazine State Park, Paris, AR
November 20, 2014**

Commissioners Present

LeRoy Dangeau, Chair
Mike Mills, Vice Chair
Steve Arrison
Bill Barnes
Jay Bunyard
Jim Dailey
John Gill

Shash Goyal
Barbara Harvel
Weston Lewey
Jim Shamburger
Cindy Smith
Mike Wilson

Commissioners Absent

Danny Ford
Jim Gaston
Billy Lindsey

Bob Knight
Montine McNulty
Ness Sechrest

Department Staff Present

Richard Davies, Executive Director
Cynthia Dunlap, Director of Administration
Greg Butts, Director, Arkansas State Parks
Joe David Rice, Tourism Director
Gloria Robins, Executive Assistant
Jon Brown, Park Operations Manger
Randy Roberson, Planning & Development Manager
Joe Jacobs, Marketing & Revenue Manager
Joan Ellison, Public Information Officer
Leah DiPietro, Communications Manager
Tracey Morales, Group Travel Manager
Tiffany Knox, Welcome Center Administrator
Jennifer Neubauer, Research Project Analyst
Kristine Puckett, Tourism Development Manager
Kris Richardson, Administrative Specialist, Parks Division
Tom Stolarz, Region 1 Supervisor
Marcel Hanzlik, Region 3 Supervisor
Shea Lewis, Region 4 Supervisor
Grady Spann, Region 5 Supervisor
Jill Rohrbach, Travel Writer
Becky Bariola, Superintendent, Mount Magazine State Park

Aristotle

Marla Johnson

Laura Kirk

CJRW

Shelby Woods
Joy Phillips

Wayne Woods
Brian Clark

Guests

Chrissy Egleston, Hot Springs CVB
Gretchen Hall, Little Rock CVB
Bob Major, North Little Rock CVB
Tom Larimer, Arkansas Press Association
Claude LeGris, Fort Smith CVB
Bill Ott, Crescent & Basin Hotels, Eureka Springs

Roll Call

Chair LeRoy Dangeau called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, November 20. Gloria Robins called the roll.

Welcome

Chair LeRoy Dangeau introduced Becky Bariola, Superintendent of Mount Magazine State Park (MMSP). Superintendent Bariola welcomed all to MMSP noting that MMSP lodge opened in May 2006 and has been going great since. This year's revenue is up with an increase in group sales. The group sales staff is focused on recruiting group business which is increasing revenue. In addition, new management in the restaurant is doing great things, including increased sales in the "Bear Den." Bariola noted design for renovation of the 1930's WPA amphitheater is also underway. Again, she welcomed all to MMSP.

Approval of the Agenda

Jim Shamburger moved to approve the meeting Agenda. Weston Lewey seconded and the motion carried.

Presentation of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Jim Shamburger moved to approve the Minutes from the October meeting. Steve Arrison seconded and the motion carried.

Financial Report

Cynthia Dunlap presented the year-to-date financial report for the period ended October 31, 2014. The expenditures were: Parks Division, \$25,803,689; including construction and grants; Tourism Division, \$4,835,752; Keep Arkansas Beautiful, \$185,354; Administration Division, \$1,126,094; and History Commission, \$685,563. Expenditures for the Department totaled \$32,636,452 a decrease of 10.5% over the same period FY14. The year-to-date operating revenue Parks Division totaled \$10,791,621 an increase of 10.0% over the same period FY14; 1/8% Cent Tax \$9,891,372 an increase of 0.24% over the same period FY14; and 2% Tax \$5,549,646 an increase of 8.0% over the same period FY14.

Steve Arrison moved to approve the Financial Report. Weston Lewey seconded and the motion carried.

In response to questions regarding the decrease in sales tax for Washington County, Cynthia Dunlap advised that the Sales Tax Division of the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) has reported there was not a credit issue. There were late collections reported in 2013 which resulted in the fluctuation of figures. Jim Shamburger noted his skepticism in the cause of the decrease.

Chair LeRoy Dangeau requested a moment of silence in honor of Marla Crider. Richard Davies sadly reported that Deputy Tourism Director Marla Crider passed away on November 16, 2014. He advised the loss of a colleague, friend, supervisor, and hard worker on her passing. Davies stated that the Tourism industry, as well as the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism (ADPT) and friends and family, have lost a great asset. He noted that her family will hold a Celebration of Life service at 11:00 a.m. on December 13 at First Christian Church in Fayetteville, AR.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2015 Tentative Meeting Schedule

Richard Davies presented the proposed 2015 meeting schedule for the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission (SPRTC) and requested approval.

Weston Lewey moved to approve the 2015 meeting schedule as follows:

January 14-15	Fayetteville
February 18-19	Hot Springs
March	Governors Conference – Texarkana
April 15-16	P. Allen Smith – Little Rock
May 20 – 21	Harrison
June 17-18	Delta Resort – McGehee
July 15-16	Queen Wilhelmina
August 19-20	DeGray State Park
	Staff Appreciation Dinner and Service Awards
September 15-17	Little Rock AHA Show
October 14-15	Fort Smith
November 18-19	Eureka Springs

Mike Wilson seconded and the motion carried.

Governor’s Transition Team

Richard Davies reported that the transition team for the new administration has been announced. ADPT submitted a transition report to Governor Beebe prior to the election as requested. Davies advised he anticipates contact from the new administration in the next few weeks. He noted that some agencies have been contacted with some directors remaining while others will be moving on. Jim Dailey reported that Stacy Hurst had advised she will be the liaison for ADPT for the Hutchinson administration.

Richard Davies reported that the ADPT biennium budget request had been submitted and received executive recommendation (governor’s approval) and forwarded to the Personnel and Special Language Committees for review. He thanked several commissioners who spoke with Personnel Committee members and Chairman Dangeau for his successful presentation to the committee. Davies advised that Arkansas State Parks (ASP) did receive approval for most reclassification of staff positions as requested. He noted that the process may be repeated once the new administration is in place.

Entertainer’s Hall of Fame

Richard Davies provided a brief history of the Entertainers Hall of Fame (EHF) and stated that the Legislature had requested ADPT to manage the funding of the program several years ago. He stated that the SPRTC had initiated requests for proposals from various cities for a home for the Hall of Fame and as a result Pine Bluff was selected. The SPRTC pledged \$250,000 of the initial \$300,000 from the Legislature for Pine Bluff to establish the Hall of Fame exhibitory. The SPRTC approved \$50,000 to be spent, with the first \$5,000 and half of the ticket sales thereafter to be repaid to fund the annual EHF Awards Banquet. The funding has been managed successfully by ADPT with a current balance of \$35,000. The SPRTC establishes the

fiscal policies with ADPT the banker of the funds while the EHF board makes decisions on the annual induction ceremonies and inductees. However with several new EHF board members there may be renewed interest for the EHF to manage the fiscal aspects once again. Davies suggested the EHF may make an effort to regain control of the funding element of the program as well as the event. Discussion ensued regarding feasibility of funding and legislative authority. Davies noted he was providing an update in the event there is change in the works.

PARKS DIVISION

Greg Butts thanked Superintendent Becky Bariola for her many years of service at MMSP. Running the park and lodge operation is no small task and Butts noted he appreciates her staying the course and congratulated her for the park staff's accomplishments.

Arkansas Press Association Agreement Renewal

Greg Butts introduced Tom Larimer, Executive Director of the Arkansas Press Association (APA). He reported that ASP has been in partnership with APA for 26 years. The purpose is to promote facilities and services across the park system, create statewide pride and promote travel throughout Arkansas. Butts reported since 1988, ASP has invested \$1,680,000 in ad space and received \$3,360,000 in advertising results. Deemed a wonderful marriage between the two organizations, Butts recommended renewing the agreement for another year.

Tom Larimer brought greetings from 129 newspapers throughout Arkansas. He too concluded a great partnership with ASP and that the APA members are happy to continue in the grant partnership as well. Grateful for the partnership with ASP, the APA would like to see the agreement continue with the same terms for another year.

Weston Lewey moved to approve the grant partnership between Arkansas State Parks and the Arkansas Press Association for the coming year. Jim Shamburger seconded and the motion carried.

ABA Winter TV & Radio Spots

Joan Ellison presented the winter TV and radio spots for approval.

Jim Dailey moved to approve the winter TV and radio spots for Arkansas State Parks for the upcoming year as follows:

Radio Cut #1: "My park, your park, our parks"

Radio Cut #2: "Experience an Arkansas State Park in Winter"

TV Cut #2: "Fifty-two State Parks ... Four Beautiful Seasons"

TV Cut #1: “Captured Moments from the State Parks of Arkansas”

Barbara Harvel seconded and the motion carried.

Bill Barnes noted a shortage of winter footage shown in the four seasons’ ad. Joan Ellison advised that the current inventory of winter footage exists in an old format and TV stations are requesting a new high definition format, therefore ASP is working to increase winter footage in the new format as requested.

John Gill inquired if a brochure containing the many great still photographs around Arkansas has been provided to the Legislature highlighting Arkansas. Richard Davies replied there is a law prohibiting providing legislators any information they have not requested.

Parks Committee Recommendation on Pet Policy

Greg Butts reported that demand for dog friendly accommodations is growing. In response to growing demand and the SPRTC’s request, ASP has reviewed the pet policy in conjunction with the SPRTC’s Parks Committee. He advised that the Arkansas Hospitality Association did not have any scientific data on the subject at this time. Research obtained via state park systems across the US concludes that 45% of state parks systems offer pet friendly accommodations, approximately 26% of inventory and that 13% of park systems offer pet friendly lodge rooms, approximately 2% of inventory. With assistance from the Leadership Committee and SPRTC Parks Committee, information has been reviewed to determine how ASP can increase the numbers of pet friendly accommodations. Discussion ensued.

John Gill moved that the Parks Committee recommends an increase from 10% to 25% of cabins established as pet friendly cabins. In addition, to offer one pet friendly lodge room per five rooms on the ground floor near exterior exits of lodges. Weston Lewey seconded and the motion carried.

Greg Butts stated that this is a public policy and will go through the Administrative Rules and Regulations process. However, the committee does not meet during a legislative session but will be placed on the agenda for review when the legislative committee reconvenes.

Bill Barnes expressed his opinion that he would like a larger increase and looks forward to a larger increase in the future, making state parks as competitive as possible. He suggested that pets offer no more issues than dealing with the public in general. In addition, he suggested it’s not advisable to spend money “hardening” pet friendly accommodations. He reports very limited damage occurs at his property and does not think the hardening process is necessary. Jim Dailey commented he appreciates the cautious approach and supports the incremental steps for increasing cabin and lodge room inventory. Jim Shamburger also suggested hardening the

facilities is not necessary and stated the increase in pet friendly accommodations is a good move in the right direction. He suggested that the policy may need to be addressed again in the near future.

Certificate of Appreciation

Greg Butts reported that Harvey Jordan, a construction inspector with Planning & Development, will retire at the end of the year. Jordan has had a hand in the success of many projects throughout ASP including MMSP, and he will be missed. Butts requested approval for a certificate of appreciation for Harvey Jordan for 23 years of outstanding service with Arkansas State Parks.

Jim Shamburger moved to approve a certificate of appreciation for Harvey Jordan for 23 years of service with Arkansas State Parks. Barbara Harvel seconded and the motion carried.

Final Approval of Land Acquisitions

Greg Butts reported the A.C.A. 22-4-106 process requires preliminary and final approval for land acquisitions from the SPRTC. In addition, favorable advice has been received from the governor's office, DFA and the Arkansas Legislative Council as required. Butts requested final approval from the SPRTC for land acquisitions as follows:

- Pinnacle – The Ranch Property
- Petit Jean – Five acres wooded tract
- Logoly – 12.9 acres Fallin land donation

Mike Mills moved for final approval to acquire the three properties described as follows:

Pinnacle Mountain State Park – The Ranch Property

A part of the South ½ of Section 12, Township 2 North, Range 14 West; and a part of the Northwest ¼ of Section 13, Township 2 North, Range 14 West; and a part of the East ½ of the Southeast ¼ of Section 11, Township 2 North, Range 14 West; and a part of the Northeast ¼ of the Northeast ¼ of the Northeast ¼ of Section 14, Township 2 North, Range 14 West; all lying in Pulaski County, Arkansas, containing 247 acres more or less.

Petit Jean – Five acres wooded tract The East ½ of the Southwest ¼ of the Northwest ¼ of the Southeast ¼ of Section 33, Township 6 North, Range 18 West, Conway County, Arkansas, containing 5 acres more or less. Logoly – 12.9 Fallin land donation a part of the Northeast Quarter of the Northeast

Quarter of Section 20, Township 16 south, Range 20 West, in Columbia County, Arkansas, containing 12.9 acres more or less. Bill Barnes seconded and the motion carried.

Structure Removals

Randy Roberson requested approval to remove structures at three parks as follows:

DeGray - A circa 1975 structure containing a pump for an irrigation system needs to be demolished. The approx. 220 square foot structure has not been used since its replacement was completed in 1999.

Powhatan Historic - A small 16 square foot pump house structure located on the former Bait Shop property needs to be demolished as it is no longer used. The Bait Shop has been approved for removal and will be demolished at the same time.

Withrow Springs - A circa 1930 substandard 900 square foot house that has served as the Assistant Superintendent's residence is being replaced with a standard staff residence in early 2015. With the addition of this new residence, this dilapidated structure is no longer needed and requires removal.

Mike Mills moved to approve based on the information presented; the commission finds the structures obsolete notwithstanding their insured value and approves the removal of the structures as follows:

- **DeGray – Irrigation Pump Building (Building No. 14.25/AASIS 120005688)**
- **Withrow Spring – Employee Residence (Building No. 58.10./AASIS No. 120006551)**
- **Powhatan Historic – Pump House (Building No. 62.15/AASIS No. 120006623)**

Shash Goyal seconded and the motion carried.

John Gill inquired if the employee residence could be saved and repurposed. Greg Butts replied no, that the residence is substandard.

Greg Butts reported that the park superintendent at DeGray is requesting approval to remove a restroom facility and close a day use area at the park. A circa 1971 Corps of Engineers restroom facility that was built prior to the DLRSP's establishment in July 1977 needs to be demolished. The 242 square foot structure is in deteriorated condition with roof leaks,

foundation problems and does not meet ADA requirements. Park staff believes it to be unsafe for park visitors. In addition, the Lakeside Vista Area in the eastern area of the lease has also become deteriorated over the last several years with potholes in the road and severe shoulder erosion. The area has been declining use in recent years. The superintendent would like to close the area to the public, remove all utility connections and let it revert to its natural state.

Mike Mills moved to approve based on the information presented; the commission finds the structure obsolete notwithstanding its insured value and approves the removal of the Lakeside Vista restroom and closure of the Lakeside Vista area as follows:

- **DeGray – Lakeside Vista Restroom (Building No. 14.28/AASIS 120005691)**
- **DeGray – Lakeside Area Closure**
A part of the NW ¼ of the NW ¼, of Section 2, Township 20 West, Range 20 West, lying in Clark County, Arkansas; and a part of the SE ¼ of Section 35, Township 5 West, Range 20 Rest, lying in Hot Spring County, Arkansas; and a part of the SW ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 36, Township 5 South, Range 20 West, lying in Hot Spring County, Arkansas.

Barbara Harvel seconded and the motion carried.

Hampson Museum Update

Greg Butts reported that since the last SPRTC meeting various discussions have occurred regarding the lease purchase proposal for the Hampson Museum project. He advised that state government is prohibited from financing purchases through a lease. Brandon Robinson, Attorney General's office, is currently editing the latest agreement from Wilson City LLC to remove any inference that is prohibited in the constitution. Butts reported that the proposed museum design is considered high risk in commercial real estate appraisals and could demand a higher monthly cost. Wilson LLC has requested a commercial appraisal to determine its lease high risk value and an appraisal that would cover ADPT's option to buy over five years. He advised that ADPT can pay lease values on a supported IRS range of high risk values. Further ABA and Brandon Robinson noted that the option to purchase the new museum at the end of years 1-5 would have to be supported by a fair market value appraisal.

In addition, Greg Butts advised ADPT cannot do a land trade at this time and hold the deeds in escrow as originally planned. Concurrent with acquisition of the new museum structure, a land trade can be consummated. He stated that the SPRTC has previously given Richard Davies and he the authority to work out the details of the purchase proposal but the process is taking longer than expected to make sure all is in order and in accordance with the

constitution. Butts noted with a land trade, ADPT's deed must be acknowledged by the governor. With an approved agreement and anticipated future land trade, the deed will be signed under a new administration and acknowledged by a different governor. He thanked John Gill for his assistance in navigating the law and mentioned he would like to have Heartsill Ragon from John Gill's firm review the final draft. Butts is working to have the process completed before end of year if possible. Cindy Smith advised that she had been in Wilson recently and was very impressed with the progress that is being made.

Parks Miscellaneous

Greg Butts advised there were several articles of interest, including when 70+ riders converged on Lake Fort Smith State Park (LFSSP) to challenge their longboarding skills on a steep descent on the state highway entrance road's steep descent. A second year for the group event, Arkansas is a place of choice for the group that races downhill at 40 mph just outside the park boundary.

Randy Roberson provided an update on the progress of the Delta Heritage Trail project. He reported that a contract has been awarded to complete Phase I construction of the levee top roadway from Arkansas City to Rohwer, which is half the distance of the 14 mile project. In 270 calendar days from now guests will be able to bike or drive along top of the levee from Arkansas City to the Bungee grain elevator. The next phase will go to Rohwer for completion of the project.

Randy Roberson provided an update on the lodge renovation at Queen Wilhelmina State Park. He reported that Nabholz Construction, the completion contractor, is doing a fine job. Work is progressing and things are taking shape nicely. Roberson advised that he is waiting for the bid for the kitchen re-design. Upon receipt of bid, additional costs and time can be determined. Greg Butts noted that the expected completion date was early February plus 60 days for moving, training, etc. prior to the kitchen re-design. The re-redesign of the kitchen for improved efficiency will increase the time of completion but how long is not known at this time.

TOURISM DIVISION

Directors Office

Joe David Rice presented to the Commission a Wall Street Journal article on Dubai Courts Families in regards to their growing theme park industry.

A Certificate of Appreciation was awarded to Don Bacigalupi, Crystal Bridges Museum President. Bacigalupi will be leaving Crystal Bridges for the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art in Chicago.

Research & Information Services

Jennifer Neubauer presented the Research & Information Services report to the Commission. The section processed 12,771 requests for travel information during October 2014, an increase of 2.44% from October 2013. The calendar year 2014 inquiry total is 130,271, up 16.4% from 2013. The rise in inquiries is partially due to better reporting practices such as reporting Bing CPC, and more accurate track of literature requests out of the Little Rock Welcome Center.

There were 730 requests for retirement/relocation information in October, up 15.3% from October 2013. This is due to changes in ordering patterns through the year. The retirement/relocation calendar year inquiry total is 5,018, up 0.7% from calendar year 2013.

Neubauer stated that she attended the Travel and Tourism Research Association's annual Marketing Outlook Forum October 20-22 in Atlanta, Georgia.

Welcome Centers

Tiffany Knox presented the Commission with updates regarding the Arkansas Welcome Centers. Knox informed the Commission that October 2014 Welcome Center visitation was 76,098, down 1.3% over last October. Welcome Center calendar year visitation is 703,808, down 2.6% from calendar year 2013. Visitation to Welcome Centers excluding West Memphis decreased 1.5% over October 2013. Visitation to Welcome Centers YTD over 2013, excluding West Memphis decreased 1.6%.

Knox informed the Commission that Facebook pages have been set up for each Arkansas Welcome Center. She stated that CJRW is curating content and posts which she then reviews and approves. She stated that she is encouraging each Welcome Center manager to create content and post photos from day to day of activity at their center.

Communications

Leah DiPietro informed the Commission that the Communications section has been hard at work making final edits on the 2015 Tour Guide, facilitating fall color media coverage and photo request, and launching customized itineraries for the Trail of Holiday Lights.

DiPietro announced that the fall media tour coordinated by Geiger & Associates has concluded and the department should see coverage from the tour within the next month. In addition, the new Arkansas Media Room has made its initial launch, with the full system scheduled to be up and running by mid-January, along with the newly re-designed Arkansas.com site. The Communications Section has been in close contact with Aristotle during this transition.

Zoie Clift and Mary Osteen were key in coordinating a successful visit to Arkansas by Italian cyclist writing for *Ciclismo* magazine, one of the most popular cycling magazines in Italy.

DiPietro announced that the Communications section is almost fully staffed after DiPietro began on October 27 and former multimedia specialist Casey Crocker will return to his former position January 5, 2015.

Tourism Development

Kristine Puckett presented the Tourism Development report to the Commission. Puckett informed the Commission that all but five of the Regional Tourist Associations met the monthly compliance deadline for October reports. Those delinquent were Arkansas' South, Arkansas River Valley Tri-Peaks, Greers Ferry Lake/Little Red River, and Western Arkansas' Mountain Frontier. As of report date, Ozark Mountain Region's report has not been received. Kristine Puckett and Jessica Ledbetter reviewed the reports and minutes of each association.

Puckett stated that her team worked all month planning and finalizing the October 30 Arkansas Retirement Symposium. ADPT partnered with the Arkansas Economic Development Commission and the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service to provide a day of educational programming and industry networking for more than 60 attendees.

Group Travel

Tracy Morales presented the Group Travel report to the Commission. Morales stated that Group Travel comparison figures for inquiries generated through October 2014 YTD indicate 2,056 leads vs. 894 leads generated October 2013 YTD. Group Travel received 114 new inquiries in October. These leads were generated from 10 website requests, 77 magazine requests, two phone inquiries, one email request and 24 requests from the Small Market Meetings Conference.

Cheryl Ferguson attended Rejuvenate Oct. 28-31 in Atlanta, Georgia. Group Travel, Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau along with Fort Smith Convention & Visitors Bureau sponsored breakfast and presented the Barrett Baber video, A.R.K.A.N.S.A.S. This sponsorship also allowed for a brief overview of Arkansas.

Tracy Morales and Cheryl Ferguson represented ADPT during the Boomers in Groups trade show Nov. 7-9 at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock. Cheryl Ferguson led 23 tour leaders on the Magical Moments of Yesteryear FAM tour Sunday, Nov. 9 through Tuesday, Nov. 11.

Morales attended the TEAMS Conference Nov. 10-14 in Las Vegas, Nevada. The following Arkansas Sports partners participated in this trade show and facilitated 60 sport-related appointments: David Russell, Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau; Marlo Priest, Fayetteville Visitors Bureau; Jennifer Snow, Bentonville Convention & Visitors Bureau; Rachel Earls-Shaw, Conway Convention & Visitors Bureau and Kalene Griffin, Bentonville Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Internet-Related Items

Marla Johnson reported that Arkansas.com had 539,776 visitor sessions in October, a five percent decrease over October 2013. However, year-to-date visitor sessions are up. Sales leads to partners at a little over 90,000 were down also, a 19 percent decrease over last October. Arkansas fell to the 8th most state visited tourism site, coming in behind Virginia, Michigan, Oklahoma, Alaska, North Carolina, Hawaii, and New Jersey, respectively.

Johnson reported that Arkansas's decrease in web presence is a result of several factors. One element is that a very big diamond was found in October of 2013 at Crater of Diamonds State Park in Murfreesboro, resulting in 11,098 visits to the website, a lot of press and higher social media visits.

Johnson explained that the traffic that comes to Arkansas.com is measured in value. Organic search is the main lead, resulting in 66 percent of the traffic. Paid search comes in at 10 percent of the visits with direct links also at 10 percent of visits. Online ad buys for fall was responsible for 6 percent of visits. Referral traffic, the kind that comes from articles like the one about Crater of Diamonds, was 5.9 percent. Traffic from social media was 1.2 percent and exact target, which is email marketing, was at 0.6 percent.

Reporting on some comparison numbers, Johnson said that 1.47 percent of Arkansas.com desktop traffic is social while Oklahoma sees 16.87 percent. Also, Arkansas's pay-per-click keyword buy is small compared to Oklahoma. Arkansas's is 3.68 percent and Oklahoma's is 15.54 percent. Arkansas falls behind in some other areas as well. For example, Arkansas's Facebook fan base is 72,294 and Louisiana's is more than 301,000.

Johnson also provided the commission with statistical breakdowns of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to see what drives traffic and what Arkansas needs to do to be more competitive. She reiterated that Google+ needs to be focused on. Arkansas's Google+ followers are low at 61 while Michigan's followers are at 739,651. She added that Arkansas spends less dollars on its keyword buys compared to the top seven most visited tourism sites.

Tactics to improve Arkansas's web presence include rolling out a redesigned website on Jan. 15. Several hundred terms will then be added to search engine optimization. With the website redesign, mobile traffic will see a more responsive design, more engaging content, and more of a focus on sales leads. Johnson also recommends a social media campaign promotion for the website redesign that will include Facebook and Google+ components, and a bigger keyword buy budget. She explained that previously when a state ranked higher than Arkansas, which usually falls in the top three most visited sites, that state would have a keyword buy for about a month that would push them up in visits. Then, the keyword buy would stop and that state would drop back below Arkansas. She said it is obvious that in the last six months, several states have increased their keyword buy budgets and are not backing off after a single month.

Advertising Items

The CJRW staff presented two "Meet the Locals" videos to the Commission for approval; the first was about the Japanese Internment Camps located in Rohwer and Jerome, and the World War II Japanese American Internment Museum in McGehee. The museum exhibits provide a glimpse into the lives of nearly 17,000 Japanese Americans once interned at the two locations. The second video highlighted the historic Dyess Colony: Boyhood Home of Johnny Cash, the Hemingway-Pfeiffer Museum and Educational Center in Piggott, the Matilda and Karl Pfeiffer Museum, the Study Center in Piggott, and the Southern Tenant Farmers Museum in Tyronza. The videos will be used online, shared through social media, and can be used by industry partners.

Cindy Smith moved to approve the Meet the Locals videos. Mike Mills seconded and the motion carried.

The CJRW also presented a Trail of Holiday Lights video featuring the Holiday Hog. This year, the Holiday Hog needs a name. People are being asked to post their suggestions for the mascot's name at [Facebook.com/ArkansasStateTourism](https://www.facebook.com/ArkansasStateTourism) and on [@arkansas](https://www.instagram.com/arkansas) with the hashtag #NameARHog. Holiday Hog will visit several sites on the Trail of Holiday Lights. Those sites include: El Dorado on Nov. 20; Corning and Rogers on Nov. 29; Rogers and Texarkana on Dec. 1; Russellville and Jacksonville on Dec. 4; Dardanelle and Mena on Dec. 5; Fort Smith and Heber Springs on Dec. 6; Greenwood and Bull Shoals on Dec. 7; Newport on Dec. 11; Bentonville on Dec. 13; Benton on Dec. 13 and 16, and Paris on Dec. 20.

Bid Presentations: 2016, 2017 & 2018 Arkansas Governor's Conference on Tourism

After presentation from Springdale, Eureka Springs, Little Rock, West Memphis, and Fort Smith, the Commission selected Springdale to host in 2016, Little Rock in 2017 to showcase the new Robinson Center, and 2018 in Fort Smith to show case the U.S. Marshal's Museum.

Steve Arrison moved to host the 2018 Governor's Conference in Fort Smith. Jim Dailey seconded and the motion carried.

John Gill moved to host the 2017 Governor's Conference in Little Rock. Shash Goyal seconded and the motion carried.

Shash moved to host the 2015 Governor's Conference in Eureka Springs. John Gill seconded motion failed.

John Gill moved to host the 2016 Governor's Conference in Springdale. Shash Goyal seconded and the motion carried.

2015 Chairman and Vice Chairman

Jim Dailey moved to accept Mike Mills as the 2015 Chairman and Barbara Harvel as Vice Chairman. Bill Barnes seconded and the motion carried.

Without any further business, the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission adjourned at 3:00 PM on November 20, 2014 at Mt. Magazine State Park in Paris, Arkansas