STATE PARKS, RECREATION AND TRAVEL COMMISSION
Rogers, AR
July 17, 2025, 8:30 AM

Commissioners Present
Blair Allen
Austin Albers, Vice-Chair
Shash Goyal
Kalene Griffith
Marshall Ney
Randy Wolfinbarger
Bob Connell
Jim Shamburger
Clint Gaston

Commissioners Absent
Jordan Wright
Gary Vernon
Mitchell Allen
Rebecca Baker
Eric Jackson
Molly Houseworth

Staff Present
Shea Lewis, Secretary, ADPHT
Suzanne Grobmyer, Chief of Staff, ADPHT
Kori Bull, Project Coordinator, Tourism
Jami Fisher, Chief Financial Officer, ADPHT
Clay Stone, General Counsel, ADPHT
Dalaney Thomas, Tourism Director, Arkansas Tourism
Jenny Ward, Marketing Manager, Arkansas Tourism
Susie Cowan, Industry Relations Manager, Tourism
Leah DiPietro, Deputy Chief of Communications, ADPHT
Klein Mitchell, ADPHT Public Information Coordinator
April Kiser, Deputy Chief of Communications
Jeff King, Deputy Director, Arkansas State Parks
Mike Wilson, Assistant Director, Arkansas State Parks
William Armacost, Manager, Bentonville Welcome Center

CJRW
Darin Gray
Jill Joslin
Jessica Frahm
Katherine Vasilos
Mary Read Hedges
Shawna Blair
Wade McCune

Guests
Joe DeVito, Ozark Mountain Region
Samantha Rojas, Destination Rogers
Dane Clark, Destination Rogers
Luke Wiggins, Destination Rogers

Welcome and Call to Order
Chair Blair Allen attended via phone. Vice Chair Austin Albers led the meeting.

Vice Chair Albers called the meeting to order at 8:31 am. Kori Bull called roll. Albers welcomed guests and Destination Rogers and thanked them for hosting.

Approval of Agenda
Vice Chair Albers asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

Jim Shamburger made the motion to approve the agenda, and the motion carried.

Approval of June 2025 Minutes
Albers asked for a motion to approve the June 2025 minutes.

Clint Gaston made the motion to approve the minutes, and the motion carried.

Secretary's Report
Shea Lewis, ADPHT Secretary, provided updates on the following:

- ADPHT Office move from MAC to DAH is 75% complete.
- FY26 Fiscal Year planning is under way. ADPHT and CJRW are working on the FY26 Tourism plan
- Planning & Development is working on prioritization of their FY26 project list.
- Staffing/filling positions throughout ADPHT.
- State Parks is working with EDG (engineering/architecture firm) to develop a plan for implementing experiences across several state parks.
- Tourism is partnering with Biju Thomas (celebrity chef, author, TV personality) to provide expertise and help elevate culinary experience in central Arkansas.
- Arkansas 250 Commission efforts are ongoing and include plans a historic marker project, an oral history program, and an exhibit at the Old State House.
- A Tourism Roundtable was held in El Dorado to discuss ways to help support Arkansas South.

General Council update
Clay Stone, ADPHT General Council, provided updates regarding the following:

- Streamlined meeting minutes for ADPHT meetings.
- FOIA requests
- Consent agenda/streamline processes

Financial Report – June 30, 2025
Chief Fiscal Officer Jami Fisher presented the FY 2025 Year-to-Date Financial Report for the one (12) month period ending June 30, 2025.
FY 2025 Year-to-Date Revenues were:

Parks Division Operating Revenue - $34,066,512 a decrease of 4.95%
War Memorial Operating Revenue - $1,424,781 a decrease of 9.99%
1/8 Cent Conservation Tax Revenue - $48,515,704 an increase of 2.01%

2% Gross Tax Collections - $26,113,118 a decrease of 1.18%

FY 2025 Year-to-Date Expenditures were:

Parks Division (including Construction and Grants) - $128,437,882 an increase of 11.80%
Tourism Division - $28,743,580 an increase of 8.77%
War Memorial - $1,519,070 a decrease of 6.22%
Department Total - $158,700,533 an increase of 11.03%

Please Note: percentages (%) are in comparison to the same period in the prior fiscal year.

Jim Shamburger made the motion to approve the financials, and the motion carried.

TOURISM DIVISION

Tourism Director's Report

Dalaney Thomas, Director, introduced Jenny Ward, Marketing Manager, and provided tourism team updates, and introduced and reviewed data from newly released 2024 economic impact report. Clarification was requested for the marketing attribution data presented.

Fiscal Year 2026 Marketing Budget

Katherine Vasilos, CJRW reviewed creative initiatives, strategy and budget by contract for Tourism and State Parks.

Kalene Griffith made a motion to approve, and the motion carried.

Marketing Update

Katherine Vasilos and Wade McCune, CJRW, presented a marketing update which included: paid media results and market insights, audience growth, FY25 creative overview, cooperative marketing program results, key partnerships initiatives and the terminal media initiative. More details requested regarding FIFA World Cup marketing initiatives.

STATE PARKS DIVISION

Director's Report

Jeff King, Deputy Director, reviewed revenue comparing FY24 and FY25, as well as holiday results and comparisons. He provided storm damage updates. He also shared park highlights from Crater of Diamonds, Trails at Mena progress and next steps, and an update on the U of A vs ASU game at WMS.

Planning & Development

Queen Wilhelmina State Park – Mena Trails Request for Alternative Delivery Method of Contracting *

Jeff King asked for approval to utilize an alternative delivery method during implementation of the Mena Trails project.

Kalene Griffith made a motion to approve, and the motion carried.

Petit Jean State Park – Rock Climbing Concessionaire – Frontier Climbing Company, LLC *
King requested approval to partner with Frontier Climbing Company, LLC for climbing services at Petit Jean State Park.

Shash Goyal made a motion to approve, and the motion carried.

Systemwide – Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Quarterly Report
Chris Myers, Manager Planning & Development, explained that this item is informational and shared a current number and cost breakdowns of projects Arkansas State Parks has under contract, under DBA review, and in pre-design.

Certificate of Appreciation
Region 2 – Certificate of Appreciation – Tracy King *
Assistant Director Wilson requested approval for a certificate of appreciation for Tracy King in recognition of 40 years of outstanding service, leaders, and dedication to the State of Arkansas and the Division of Arkansas State Parks.

Clint Gaston made a motion to approve, and the motion carried.

MISCELLANEOUS/CLOSING
There were no public comments.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Vice Chair Albers at 11:19 a.m.

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