STATE PARKS, RECREATION AND TRAVEL COMMISSION
Virtual
September 18, 2025, 8:30 AM

Commissioners Present
Austin Albers, Vice-Chair
Mitchell Allen
Rebecca Baker
Bob Connell
Clint Gaston
Shash Goyal
Kalene Griffith
Eric Jackson
Molly Houseworth
Marshall Ney
Jim Shamburger
Gary Vernon
Jordan Wright

Commissioners Absent
Blair Allen, Chair
Randy Wolfinbarger

Staff Present
Shea Lewis, Secretary, ADPHT
Suzanne Grobmyer, Chief of Staff, ADPHT
Kori Bull, Project Coordinator, Tourism
Zack McGill, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator, ADPHT
Kelli McKenna, Administrative Analyst, ADPHT
Jami Fisher, Chief Financial Officer, ADPHT
Dalaney Thomas, Tourism Director, Arkansas Tourism
Leah DiPietro, Deputy Chief of Communications, ADPHT
Katie Fite, Chief of Communications, ADPHT
April Kiser, Deputy Chief of Communications
Jeff King, Deputy Director, Arkansas State Parks
Mike Wilson, Assistant Director, Arkansas State Parks
Chris Myers, Planning and Development Manager, Arkansas State Parks
Darin Mitchell, Information & Innovation Manager, Arkansas State Parks
Ed Thomas, Law Enforcement Section Chief, Arkansas State Parks
Mark Clippinger, Superintendent, Hobbs State Park-Conservation Area
Sharon Allen, Administrative Assistant, Arkansas State Parks

CJRW
Darin Gray
Jill Joslin
Jessica Frahm
Jordan Rose
Katherine Vasilos
Lauren Euseppi
Mark Raines

Mary Reed Hedges
Wade McCune

MMGY
David Kenworthy
Anna Lowry
Andrea Ringgenberg
Emily Ditto

Welcome and Call to Order
Secretary Shea Lewis called the meeting to order at 8:37 am. Zack McGill called roll.

Approval of Agenda
Secretary Shea Lewis asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

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

Approval of August 2025 Minutes
Secretary Shea Lewis asked for a motion to approve August 2025 minutes.

Kalene Griffin made the motion to approve the minutes for the August SPRTC meeting, and the motion carried.

Approval of September Special SPRTC Minutes
Secretary Shea Lewis asked for a motion to approve the minutes for the September 2 Special SPRTC meeting.

Kalene Griffin made the motion to approve the minutes for the September 2 Special SPRTC meeting, and the motion carried.

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

- The recent NASPD Conference in West Virginia
- State Parks visitation trends around the United States
- AGFC's Outdoor Recreation Curriculum roll-out efforts across Arkansas
- AI and Arkansas Roundtable in Fayetteville
- Second meeting with Little Rock International Airport
- Razorback vs. Red Wolves game at War Memorial Stadium
- ALC week meetings
- Upcoming Mena Bike Concessionaire interviews
- Upcoming festivals across Arkansas

FINANCIAL REPORT – August 31, 2025
Chief Fiscal Officer Jami Fisher presented the FY 2026 Year-to-Date Financial Report for the two (2) month period ending August 31, 2025.

FY 2026 Year-to-Date Revenues were:

Parks Division Operating Revenue - $6,784,382 an increase of 4.18%
War Memorial Operating Revenue - $147,168 a decrease of 72.54%
1/8th Cent Conservation Tax Revenue - $8,539,985 an increase of 5.94%
2% Gross Tax Collections - $5,523,893 a decrease of 0.31%

FY 2026 Year-to-Date Expenditures were:

Parks Division (including Construction & Grants) - $18,877,903 an increase of 5.46%
Tourism Division - $3,012,832 a decrease of 15.88%
War Memorial - $250,667 a decrease of 24.20%
Department total - $22,141,402 an increase of 1.51%

Kalene Griffin made the motion to approve the financials, and the motion carried.

TOURISM DIVISION

Tourism Director's Update

Tourism Director Dalaney Thomas provided an update regarding upcoming Tourism staff training, and the development of a new research dashboard that will be made available to tourism industry and partners. Enhanced advertising in the Salt Lake City market was highlighted due to the new direct flight to Little Rock.

Website Update, MMGY

David Kenworthy, MMGY, provided an update of the Arkansas website redesign. The projected launch date for the new website is early 2026.

Website topics included design approach and intention. The evolving role of content was discussed, and new technologies were highlighted.

Marketing Update, CJRW

Katherine Vasilos presented marketing updates including the fall campaigns, national public relations, and August website performance. Future fall and winter campaign planning was highlighted, as well as upcoming activations.

STATE PARKS DIVISION

Parks Committee Report

Jeff King, Deputy Director, provided a quick overview of yesterday's Parks Committee meeting which included updates on Emergency Services and Law Enforcement and the recent Razorback vs. Red Wolves game at War Memorial Stadium.

Director's Report

Jeff King, Deputy Director, provided insights into August financials. King also provided updates on first year performance for the new Summer Splash Aqua Park at Crowley's Ridge State Park, Mena Trails

project updates, and a recap of the NASPD conference in West Virginia. Finally, Commissioners were invited to attend the grand opening on October 2 for the new Mountain Bike Trails at Bull Shoals-White River State Park.

Hobbs State Park – Conservation Area – Visitor Center Renaming Recommendation*
Jeff King requested approval for the visitor center naming recommendation.

Austin Albers made the motion to approve, and the motion carried.

Leases, Agreements, and Policy Directives

Queen Wilhelmina State Park -City of Mena – Ward Lake - Lease *
Jeff King requested approval for a draft copy of the new Ward lake Lease Agreement with the City of Mena.

Eric Jackson made a motion to approve, and the motion carried.

Lake Chicot State Park – Lake Chicot Water Supply Association, LLC – Use Permit Agreement *
Jeff King requested approval for a new Use Permit Agreement with the Lake Chicot Water Supply Association for continued use of an elevated water tank at the park.

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

Lake Chicot State Park – Property Removal Request – Seasonal Employee Residence *
Jeff King requested approval for removal of a structure from the park's building inventory.

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

Petit Jean State Park – Robertson Family Farms, LLC – Use Permit Agreement *
Jeff King requested approval for a 25-year permit with Robertson Family Farms, LLC to create a new multi-use route trail connecting Mather Lodge, Bear Cave, and the Seven Hollows Trailhead.

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

Note: Rebecca Baker abstained from voting on this agenda item.

MISCELLANEOUS/CLOSING

There were no public comments.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Secretary Shea Lewis at 10:39 a.m.

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