STATE PARKS, RECREATION AND TRAVEL COMMISSION
Hot Springs, Arkansas
March 12, 2026, 8:30 AM

Commissioners Present
Austin Albers, Chair
Clint Gaston, Vice-Chair
Eric Jackson
Gary Vernon
Harvey Williams
Jim Shamburger
Johnny Brazil
Kalene Griffith
Mitchell Allen
Randy Wolfinbarger
Stewart Hornor
Tyler Griffin

Commissioners Absent
Jordan Wright
Marshall Ney
Rebecca Baker

Staff Present
Shea Lewis, Secretary, ADPHT
Suzanne Grobmyer, Chief of Staff, ADPHT
Zack McGill, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator, ADPHT
Kelli McKenna, Administrative Analyst, ADPHT
Jami Fisher, Chief Financial Officer, ADPHT
Katherine Andrews, Director, Office of Outdoor Recreation
Clay Stone, General Counsel, ADPHT
Dalaney Thomas, Tourism Director, Arkansas Tourism
April Kiser, Deputy Chief of Communications
Kori Bull, Project Coordinator, Tourism
Jeff King, Deputy Director, Arkansas State Parks
Mike Wilson, Assistant Director, Arkansas State Parks
Chris Myers, Planning and Development Manager, Arkansas State Parks
Walt Reding, Region I Supervisor, Arkansas State Parks
Jenny Ward, Marketing Manager, Tourism
Faith Carr, PR & Sales Manager, Tourism

CJRW
Darin Gray
Jordan Rose
Katherine Vasilos
Mark Raines
Mary Reed Hedges
Wade McCune
Estefanie Perez



Guests
Alicia Payseno, Arkansas Hospitality Association, Chief Executive Officer
Gathan Borden, Oxford Economics (Tourism Economics)
Michael Sindelar, Retired Arkansas State Parks Employee

Welcome and Call to Order
Chair Austin Albers called the meeting to order at 8:33 am. Zack McGill called roll.

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

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

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

Kalene Griffith **made the motion to approve the minutes, and the motion carried.**

Secretary's Report
Shea Lewis, ADPHT Secretary, provided the following updates:
Tourism Roundtable (3/11/26)
Local Hot Springs Events
Introduction of new Commissioners
Thank you to retiring Commissioners
John Gill's service to Parks and Tourism
2% Tourism tax
GovCon success
Website update
GuideARK launch
Project updates
- Petit Jean State Park
- Mena Trails
- Delta Heritage Trail State Park
- Pinnacle Mt State Park

Old State House – Arkansas 250 exhibit opening
AR250 Historic Markers
Blanchard Springs State Park

Eric Jackson made a motion to honor retiring Commissioners with plaques, and the motion carried.

Eric Jackson made a motion to send flowers to John Gill's funeral, and the motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT – January 31, 2026

Chief Fiscal Officer Jami Fisher presented the FY 2026 Year-to-Date Financial Report for the six-month period ending January 31, 2026.

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

Chief Fiscal Officer Jami Fisher also presented the FY 2026 Travel Reimbursement rates.

Eric Jackson made the motion to approve the FY 2026 Travel Reimbursement rates, and the motion carried.

STATE PARKS DIVISION

Director's Report

Jeff King, Deputy Director, provided updates on the following:

- State Parks Revenue
- State Parks Occupancy
- Winter Promotions
- Spring break forecasts

Leases, Agreements, and Policy Directives

Blanchard Springs – Authorization of new State Park *

Jeff King requested approval for creation of Blanchard Springs State Park.

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

Blanchard Springs – Cooperative Operating Agreement with USDA FS *

Jeff King requested approval for a new cooperative operating agreement with USDA FS for Blanchard Springs.

Tyler Griffin made a motion to approve, and the motion carried.

Queen Wilhelmina – Authorization of new Wildlife Management Area *

Jeff King requested approval for establishment of a new wildlife management area (WMA).

Mitchell Allen made a motion to approve, and the motion carried.

Woolly Hollow – Aqua Park – Concession Lease Agreement *

Jeff King requested approval for a concession lease agreement for a new aqua park at Woolly Hollow.

Randy Wolfinbarger made a motion to approve, and the motion carried.

Jacksonport – Holden/Conner – Use Permit Agreement *

Jeff King requested approval for a new use permit agreement at Jacksonport.

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

Petit Jean – Timber Removal *
Jeff King requested approval for timber removal at Petit Jean.

Stewart Hornor made a motion to approve, and the motion carried.

Petit Jean – Airport – Concession Lease Agreement *
Jeff King requested approval for a concession lease agreement with Superior Aviation Flying Services of Arkansas.

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

Planning & Development
Systemwide – CIP Quarterly report and Major Project Updates
Chris Myers, Planning & Development Manger provided the following updates:

- Quarterly CIP Report
- Pinnacle Mountain State Park projects
- Petit Jean State Park Via Ferrata Construction
- Petit Jean State Park Mather Lodge Renovation
- Devil's Den State Park Cabin Renovation
- Delta Heritage Trail Construction

Consent Agenda Items

- **Prairie Grove Battlefield – Clothesline Faire/Lions Club – Concession Lease Agreement (5 years) ***
- **Queen Wilhelmina – Miniature Train & Associated Facilities – Concession Lease Agreement ***
- **Delta Heritage Trail – Uplink LLC – Use Permit Agreement ***
- **Systemwide – ANCRC FY27 Grant Application – Certification of Approval ***
- **Select Parks – FY27 RTP/TAP Grant Memo and Resolutions ***
- **Petit Jean – Division of Aeronautics – Airport Grant ***
- **Lake Dardanelle – Tree Donation – Erika Sivils ***
- **Pinnacle Mountain – Bench Donation – Tyndall Jackson ***
- **Lake Ouachita – Bench Donation – Bryan Fincher ***

Eric Jackson made a motion to approve all of the consent agenda items, and the motion carried.

TOURISM DIVISION

Tourism Director's Report
Dalaney Thomas, Tourism Director provided updates on all of the following:

- GovCon Recap, Survey feedback and enhancements for next year
- Basecamp Towns Strategy
- The status of the Great American State Fair
- Upcoming media events and Trade event schedules
- New Website overview

Tourism Economics Presentation
Gathan Borden gave a presentation on economic trends and data in the tourism space.

Marketing Update (CJRW)

- **July-December Marketing Performance**

Certificate of Appreciation – Martin Reese *
Dalaney Thomas requested approval for a certificate of appreciation for Martin Reese.

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

Office of Outdoor Recreation Update *
Katherine Andrews, Director of Office of Outdoor Recreation, gave updates on several items including the following:

- Natural State Initiative Opportunity zones
- Growth of the Outdoor Recreation Economy in Arkansas
- Launch of Guide ARK
- SHOT Show recap

MISCELLANEOUS/CLOSING
There were no public comments.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Albers at 11:54 a.m.

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