

Minutes
State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission
Ozark Folk Center
Mountain View, Arkansas
April 18-19, 2002

Commissioners Present

Debra Haak, Chairman

Bill Barnes

Polly Wood Crews

Loretta Lever House, Thursday only

Mike Mills, Thursday only

Ness Sechrest

Wade Williams, Thursday only

Billy Lindsey, Vice-Chairman

Jane Christenson

Danny Ford

Montine McNulty, Thursday only

Ted Mullenix, Thursday only

J.D. "Bud" Shamburger

Commissioners Absent

Jim Gaston - Business conflict

Department Staff Present

Richard W. Davies, Executive Director

Joe David Rice, Tourism Director

Greg Butts, State Parks Director

Nancy Clark, Assistant Tourism Director

Larry Cargile, Central Administration Director

Mac Balkman, Manager, Operations

Stan Graves, Manager, Planning & Development

Tony Perrin, Supervisor, Region II

Bill Young, Manager, Ozark Folk Center

Jane Ellen Frazier, Group Travel Manager

Jay Harrod, Communications Manager

Debbie Hess, Group Sales, Ozark Folk Center

Katie Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, Mammoth Spring State Park

Stacey Mullins, Manager, Mammoth Spring Tourist Information Center

Gloria Robins, Executive Assistant

Sandy Burch, Administrative Assistant

Jennifer Carson, Administrative Assistant

Agency Staff Present

Shelby Woods

Karen Mullikin

Wayne Woods

Libby Doss

Aristotle

Marla Johnson Norris

Dina Crane

Jonathan Eudy

Guests Present

Kelley Linck, Ozark Mountain Region
Ross Moore, Greer's Ferry Lake/Little Red River Association

Call to Order

Chairman Debra Haak called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and Gloria Robins called the roll.

Approval of the Agenda

Jane Christenson moved to approve the agenda. Loretta Lever House seconded and the motion carried.

Presentation of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Montine McNulty moved to approve the minutes. Wade Williams seconded and the motion carried.

Financial Report

For the period ended March 31, 2002, the Parks Division fiscal year-to-date expenditures, including construction/grants, totaled \$36,267,967, or 41% of annual budget. Tourism Division expenditures, including Curran Hall pass-through grant, totaled \$7,792,241, or 63% of annual budget. Keep Arkansas Beautiful expenditures were \$252,955, or 49% of budget. Administration Division expenditures totaled \$1,577,682, or 69% of budget. History Commission expenditures were \$882,954, or 71% of budget. Total Department expenditures - \$46,773,799. or 44% of annual budget.

The 2% Tourism Promotion gross revenues for tax months May through January totaled \$6,383,476. The year-to-date Parks Division Conservation Tax totaled \$15,846,482.

Ness Sechrest moved to approve the financial report. Montine McNulty seconded and the motion carried.

Recognition of Guests

Chairman Haak recognized guests in attendance. She also introduced Annette Woods, President of the Mountain View Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Woods welcomed Commissioners to the city and invited the Commission and staff to a luncheon later in the day as well as to Woods Old Fashion Soda Fountain for ice-cream.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Arkansas Wine Producers Council

Richard Davies stated that a law was passed several years ago that created the Arkansas Wine Producers Council. The State Parks, Recreation & Travel Commission must appoint a staff person or Commissioner to the council. Chairman Haak nominated Joe David Rice as the Commission's designee to the Arkansas Wine Producers Council.

Mr. Davies stated that in the past, the appropriations had been used for research, but the council would now like to use it to market the vineyards of Arkansas. One of the projects the council is working on is a standardized highway directional sign indicating an Arkansas vineyard. Although the Highway Department will allow the placement, the Council will have to purchase the signs. Mr. Davies noted that in the future, the Council might have a financial resource with which to help the Department promote Arkansas vineyards.

Amendment 75 Report

Mr. Davies informed the Commission of a dinner, hosted by Governor Mike Huckabee, that recently took place at the Historic Arkansas Museum. Candidates for state legislative offices as well as existing legislators were invited to hear about the 1/8-cent Conservation Amendment, its importance and the intent behind it. Jim Hill, President-elect Pro Tem for the Senate and sponsor of the legislation that put the Conservation Amendment on the ballot was also scheduled to host the event, but was unable to attend. State Representative Herschel Cleveland, Speaker-elect of the House of Representative hosted the event with Governor Huckabee.

A video was produced that highlighted how the money from Amendment 75 has been spent. The video, which illustrates how the money from the Amendment has improved projects, and enhanced the state's natural and cultural resources, will also be used to educate constituents. For every candidate or legislator that did not attend, a video will be hand-delivered to them.

The fifteen-minute video was played for Commissioners and guests. Although the educational video was paid for by state funds, the dinner was paid for entirely by private funds from the Arkansas Hospitality Association, the Arkansas Tourism Development Foundation, the Arkansas Forestry Association, the Arkansas State Chamber, Entergy Arkansas, Southwestern Bell and Kay Kelly Arnold.

Miscellaneous

Mr. Davies stated that the footage shot for the Department is used by a number of other state agencies. Keep Arkansas Beautiful recently used some of it to create a new commercial that will be distributed to schools, as well as, run on in-state television stations. The commercial was played for Commissioners and guests.

Tourism Division

Joe David Rice mentioned that Nancy Clark had received the Silver Cup Award from the Arkansas Hospitality Association for her tireless work for the tourism industry. Montine McNulty stated that Ms. Clark received the award for her many years of work for travel and tourism and for her stellar Governor's Conferences. Ms. Clark said a few words of appreciation for the award.

Tourist Information Center (TIC) Update

Joe David Rice distributed sketches and other information on the soon to be built Texarkana Tourist Information Center. He stated that details are being finalized for the purchase of the land for the TIC. The center will be relocated to Mile Marker 7, outside of Texarkana, which is close to the Flying J truck stop. The design is a lodge motif with big timbers and rocks. Although the TIC project is over budget, due to the land purchase, the Highway Department may or may not pick up the added expense. There is a possibility that the project may qualify for ISTEAs or TEA21 supplemental money through the Federal Highway Administration.

Polly Crews asked if the Center would be easily accessible. She questioned whether or not people would be able to access the site from the other side of the highway. Mr. Rice stated that the Information Center is directed at people entering the state, but that people would easily be able to turn around at the next exit. Ms. Crews suggested an effort be aimed at getting tourists on the other side of the highway into the Center.

Mr. Davies stated that the look of the Center is a lot of times enough to entice tourists to stop. He further stated that our Center would have a garden area in the front and trucks and RVs would park in the rear of the building. Mr. Davies stated that the Highway Department has been supportive of making the Centers first-class. Mr. Rice noted that the groundbreaking for the Center would be held later in the summer.

Mike Mills suggested that during the Governor's Conference, the Tourist Information Center Managers should host a table or mingle with operators more. He stated that they are the most important people for promoting and cross-selling Arkansas.

Budget Update

Richard Davies gave a quick overview of the budget. He stated that the Department's revenue comes from different funds, which include the 1/8-cent, the 2% Tourism tax and general revenue. He stated that a succinct way of putting the situation is that when there are shortages, the funds must be cut. Mr. Davies explained by stating that what it actually causes is a shifting of funds to something else. He also stated that the general revenue was cut by \$179,243, above the earlier cut of \$78,812. He stated that this amount of money had to be cut out of general revenue this fiscal year. Mr. Davies also stated that next year's forecast has been adjusted to include an

additional cut of \$537,412. He did note that if the economy were to recover, the Department already has the appropriation. He also stated that half of the overall state cut is to come from the school fund, \$5.6 million comes from DHS, \$4.7 million from Higher Education and \$1.5 million from Corrections. Mr. Davies stated that the number one drop in revenue is the corporate income tax, the second is personal income tax and the third is the sales income tax. He also stated that Arkansas's diverse economy is what has kept the state from having to make even deeper cuts. Mr. Davies concluded by stating that due to the cuts there will be some tight budget situations for the rest of this fiscal year and that it would not be just in general revenue.

Joe David Rice stated that the 2% tax collections are coming in less than projected. So far, \$6.19 million has been collected from the tax. He stated that with three months left in this fiscal year, the projection was for \$1.86 million, which is 5% less than the original projection. Mr. Davies interjected that the projection is 1% less than actual. Mr. Rice also stated that for FY 2002, there was a carry-over of a little over \$438,000. The total money available for this fiscal year is slightly under \$8.5 million dollars, but right now expenditures are projected at \$8,580,495 leaving a debt of \$83,374.

Nancy Clark stated that after reviewing the 2002 Tourism Division Fiscal Year Budget, the following items will be put on hold: \$125,000 - Bass Fishing Trail, \$42,050 - Direct Mail (CJRW); \$1,740 - Budget left from background images, \$21,450 - Video e-mail, \$25,190 - Banner Ad Research & Placement (Aristotle); \$50,000 - Capital Equipment, \$3,400 - Character 09 Travel, \$15,000 - Contract Line Item (Other Line Items). Total budget cuts equal \$283,830 minus the projected 2% shortfall would leave \$200,456 carryover for the 2% collections for FY03.

Jane Christenson asked if a motion needed to be made. Mr. Davies stated that a motion did not need to be made and noted that the projects could be implemented if the 2% tax projections were to recover.

Mr. Davies stated that although salary savings could cover most of the cut from the general revenue fund, salary savings would have been the source for CLIP (Career Ladder Incentive Program) money. He explained the program and how it works. He likened it to a Christmas bonus in the private sector. Mr. Davies stated that he would still like for the program to be funded.

Cooperative Promotional Proposal

Joe David Rice stated that this would be the last Community Partnership proposal for this fiscal year. In the budget, \$50,000 was set aside for cooperative programs. The proposal from Barry Travis, Mary Lou Davenport, Steve Arrison and Bob Purvis anticipates a partnership project with the Department of Parks & Tourism. An effort, which will likely continue for three to five years, would be aimed at African-American group travel, attendance at diversity meetings

and tradeshows to promote Arkansas as well as a possible direct mail effort aimed at the Memphis market. The Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau, North Little Rock Visitors Bureau, Hot Springs Convention & Visitors Bureau and Pine Bluff Convention Center have collectively committed \$25,000 for the effort and have requested the Department's participation in the amount of \$15,000 allocated from the Community Partnership budget.

Ted Mullenix commented that he would no longer participate in the Hot Springfest partnership because he felt like it was a government-subsidized event that took business away from the private industry. He stated that the private industry could not compete with free, well-known entertainment. He further stated that with a budget shortfall, the money could be better spent. Joe David responded by saying that the State is trying to be cooperative with its tourism partners and leverage the money for the best value. There is no dictate for how the money is spent, but it must be matched and the Department counts on local contacts to direct the expenditure of the funds. Mr. Mullenix reiterated that the government should not be in direct competition with private industry. Mr. Rice stated that Mr. Mullenix had some good points, but clarified that the proposal on the table did not in any way compete with private industry. Mr. Davies stated that this proposal is a media campaign targeted at the Memphis area. Mr. Rice agreed with Mr. Davies but further explained that the promotion was specifically aimed at convention, meeting and reunion planners.

Wade Williams stated that he is concerned about the sketchy nature of the proposal as well as the fact that in the past, the participation was below a 25% level. He questioned any participation in the project until such a level had been reached. Mr. Rice replied that he realized the proposal was a little sketchy, but with 4 communities and 2 advertising agencies there wasn't a concern that they would not come up with a good plan. Montine McNulty agreed that there was not a need to be concerned about the sketchy plan. Joe David Rice stated that there was not a problem with putting a 25% cap on the match. Mr. Davies asked Shelby Woods if there was enough time (before the end of the fiscal year) for the cities involved to come back with a final proposal. Shelby Woods stated that there would be enough time before the campaign would start in May. Chairman Haak stated that the cities have the burden of getting together to make a final proposal.

Joe David Rice stated the two available options. First, the Commission could approve the proposal as had been discussed. Second, the Commission could ask the cities to come back with a more detailed proposal. Wade Williams stated that he liked the proposal, but he wants more detail and to cap the match at 25%.

Loretta Lever House moved to approve the Community Development partnership proposal from Little Rock, North Little Rock, Hot Springs and Pine Bluff at the 25% match. Ness Sechrest seconded.

Chairman Haak questioned whether or not this sets a precedent for cities that propose projects that are not fully developed. Ness Sechrest stated that the people involved have a working relationship with the Department and when there are that many people involved, the money will be well spent. Chairman Haak questioned if this should be handled on a subjective basis in the future. Mr. Sechrest agreed and Mr. Rice noted that it should be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Billy Lindsey asked if this line item in the budget if it was on a trial basis. Mr. Davies and Mr. Rice agreed that it was on a trial basis. Mr. Lindsey further stated that the problem Mr. Mullenix had earlier stated had not occurred to him and that he voted for the Hot Springs expenditure. Mr. Lindsey also stated that if this was to continue that the criteria needed to be more specific. Ms. McNulty stated that the proposal is a bit further along and that it's not just a 30-day plan, it's long-term and as a result, the cities will put more money into the campaign. Mr. Lindsey stated that he is concerned about the vagueness of the proposal but it is a tremendous effort to cross-sell Arkansas.

Wade Williams moved to table the previous motion until more details for the campaign are received. Jane Christenson seconded and the motion carried.

2002 Arkansas Governor's Conference on Tourism Report

Nancy Clark reported the results of the 28th annual Governor's Conference on Tourism to the Commission. She stated that the staff works hard to make sure the program is a cross-section so that everyone would like at least a portion of the conference. Ms. Clark stated that Mike Mills had sent an e-mail, in which he had suggested some table topics. She also responded to his earlier suggestion of having the TIC Managers host a table by explaining that TIC managers do a tremendous amount of work for the auctions, but she would take a look at implementing his suggestions.

Ms. Clark stated there were 585 attendees to this year's Conference. Although attendance is normally over 700, she attributed the decline to the economy. She further stated that the number of full registrants was average while the number of registrants at the door declined.

Mr. Mills stated that part of the problem might be the timing of the Governor's Conference. He elaborated by saying that March is traditionally when spring breaks are held and is the busiest part of his season. Mr. Davies questioned whether the cost might be too prohibitive either by itself or in conjunction with the timing of the conference. Mr. Mills replied that changing the timing would certainly eliminate that excuse for smaller operators not to attend.

Status on Motorcoach Industry Report

In response to Mr. Mullenix's request for a report on the status of the Motorcoach industry, Mr. Rice stated that such a report would be presented at the May Commission meeting. A speaker from the National Tour Association will submit the latest information.

2002 Travel South Showcase Report

Jane Ellen Frazier presented a report on Travel South Showcase. The Travel South Showcase celebrated its 25th anniversary in Hot Springs, February 23-27, 2002 with over 600 participants. As a result of appointments and networking opportunities the following locations have booked tours: Hot Springs, 5 tours, estimated economic impact \$15,000; Little Rock, 2 tours, estimated economic impact \$14,664; Holiday Inn Fort Smith, 1 tour, estimated impact \$2,015 and Fayetteville, 50 tours, estimated economic impact \$150,000. DeGray Lake Resort State Park and the Ozark Folk Center have booked 6 and 2 tours respectively, with a combined estimated economic impact of \$71,000. General comments from Buyers and Suppliers indicated that the Travel South Showcase was a successful show. Both contingencies ranked the Hot Springs show above both the New Orleans, Louisiana and Charleston, South Carolina show.

2002-2003 Arkansas Group Tour & Meeting Planners' Directory

Jane Ellen Frazier presented the newly printed Group Tour & Meeting Planners' Directory to the Commission. She stated that the 408-page publication was delivered in the third week of March, just in time for a preliminary distribution at the Governor's Conference. Ms. Frazier stated that positive feedback had been received from the Group Travel partners.

Arkansas Commemorative Stamp Report

Joe David Rice stated that the Travel Industry Association of America teamed up with the U.S. Postal Service to collaborate on the Greetings From Commemorative America Stamp campaign. He stated that a number of items could be purchased with a picture of the Arkansas stamp on it. A news conference was held on April 4th. First Lady Janet Huckabee, U.S. Representative Vic Snyder, Secretary of State Sharon Priest were in attendance. A sheet of stamps, with one from every state, can be purchased, but a sheet of Arkansas stamps cannot (be purchased). The stamp includes a scene of Hot Springs and of the Buffalo National River.

Advertising Committee Meeting

Mr. Rice stated that in response to the Commission request to be more involved in the advertising creative campaign, the advertising committee would be asked to come a day early for discussion purposes. The meeting would start about noon or 1 o'clock on Wednesday July 17th.

Section Reports

Research & Information Services

There were 25,146 requests for information fulfilled in February 2002 and 60,873 requests were processed in March 2002. Tourist Information Center visitation was 36,469 in February and 62,130 in March. The year-to-date-total is up 4.4% Requests for Retirement/Relocation information totaled 1,505 in February and 7,238 for March. Visits to the four Department web sites in February totaled 187,697 and 215,953 for March.

Charles McLemore and Alex Mitchell with Aristotle jointly prepared a presentation on Internet Conversion studies, which will be presented at the 2002 International Travel & Tourism Research Association annual conference in Washington, D.C. Mr. McLemore also has been working with Joe David Rice and the staff at the Highway Department on plans for the TIC Rebuilding project.

Eddie Fugatt is currently analyzing the 2001-2002 Sport Show numbers in order to make recommendations for next year's shows. Reports have been completed on the Fall/Winter Conversion Study and the Internet Conversion Study. The *2001-2002 Arkansas Annual Tourism Report* has been completed and was distributed at the Governor's Conference.

Communications

The section sent out the first Department HTML e-newsletter. Staff members also worked with Aristotle to fix minor web site glitches and created lists of desired work for Aristotle and Cranford Johnson Robinson Woods to be accomplished in FY 2003. Preparations are also being made for a celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Buffalo National River. A media familiarization tour was conducted and the Arkansas Press Association Trade Show was attended. Also, the March issue of Arkansastravel.com was posted.

Tourism Development

All regional associations met the monthly deadlines for February and March. The annual Regional Tourist Association meeting has been scheduled for June 5th and will held at the Arkansas Hospitality Association office in Little Rock. Donna Perrin conducted a Leadership Group for Jonesboro as well as presented programs to the Arkansas Parks & Recreation Association, Employment Training Alumni and the A P & L Retiree Steering Committee. Ms. Perrin also attended an Arkansas Festival Association meeting.

Entry forms have been mailed for the Fall Calendar of Events. Event coordinators can also enter and proof information on-line at www.arkansas.com. The staff anticipates approximately 800 events to be included.

Group Travel

The section fulfilled 112 inquiries in February and 209 inquiries in March. Year-to-date, 479 requests have been fulfilled. The Travel South Showcase that took place in February has received positive evaluations on Hot Springs and Arkansas. In fact, Tour Operators rated the 2002 Showcase higher than the 2001 Showcase held in New Orleans, Louisiana. The anticipated 408 page Group Tour & Meeting Planners' Directory was delivered the third week of March and disseminated at the Governor's Conference. Comments about the Directory have been positive. Jane Ellen Frazier and Beth Wiedower also attended the Kaleo Travel Show in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

CJRW Marketing/Advertising Items

"See Arkansas First"/Travel & Win Game Update

Libby Doss stated the Travel & Win game started April 1st and will continue through August 31st. The number of "must see" destinations has been increased to thirty locations. A guest logbook has been sent to each location to track the response rate. Ms. Doss stated that in the first three weeks of the contest, two game cards had already been returned, including one from an Iowa resident. She also stated that the "must see" destinations have received good feedback about the Travel & Win game.

The "See Arkansas First" campaign is also currently running. Radio and television ads are being utilized as well as billboards. Ms. Doss stated that she is currently working on talk show placement to enhance the campaign. She further stated that the promotion has already gotten some good publicity.

Buffalo National River 30th Anniversary Celebration Media Event

Libby Doss stated that a two-day media event would be held for the 30th anniversary of the Buffalo National River, the first national river. Plans are to hold the event May 7-8 at the Buffalo River. Invitations have been sent to all major Arkansas television networks and some regional television networks as well as the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* and local newspapers. Ms. Doss presented the invitation that was sent out, which included a drink holder shaped like a life jacket with the Arkansas logo, Buffalo National River, the date of the event and the 30th Anniversary printed on it. She also stated that she had worked closely with Mike and Rhonda Mills at the Buffalo Outdoor Center. Ms. Doss has also contacted other outfitters along the Buffalo River in hopes that they will participate in the event.

Focus Group Update

Karen Mullikin stated that the focus groups were held in Tulsa, Oklahoma and Memphis, Tennessee. She stated that in lieu of flying, the State Parks bus was used for transportation.

Ms. Mullikin thanked Bill Young, Manager of the Ozark Folk Center for providing both the bus and the driver. She stated that representatives from Aristotle, the Department and CJRW, including the creative team as well as Pam Jones from the Pine Bluff Convention Center attended the groups. Donna Creighton was the moderator for the focus groups again this year. Ms. Mullikin also stated that although good reviews were received, a full report would be presented at the June Commission meeting.

"Song of Arkansas" Distribution Update

Karen Mullikin stated that the video has been distributed to all educational co-ops so that schools may check them out. In central Arkansas, the agency worked with Little Rock, North Little Rock and the Pulaski County Special School Districts since they are not part of the educational co-op. Copies have also been sent out to private and parochial schools. She also stated that a video went out to each public library in the state and that each individual request for a video has been fulfilled. The film will also be shared with an Arkansas History Teacher's conference, held in June. Ms. Mullikin noted that out of the 1,500 videos duplicated, approximately 140 are left.

Aristotle Report

"See Arkansas First" Update

Jonathan Eudy stated that the "must see" destinations had been increased to thirty locations. He stated that the web site design embraces the creative design of the campaign and that the information will be up until the conclusion of the campaign. Mr. Eudy pointed out the features of the campaign on the web site.

Coke, Arkansas & You Update

Jonathan Eudy stated that the web site was designed to promote the contest creative and point-of-sale merchandise. An on-line form was available for participants to enter the contest. There were 887 entries received, which will be forwarded to Karen Mullikin and Coca-Cola.

See America First Update

Jonathan Eudy stated that Aristotle had been working with the Travel Industry Association of America, the U.S. Postal Service and Cranford Johnson Robinson Woods on the "See America First" campaign. The web site is designed to compliment the campaign and includes an itinerary for seeing Arkansas. Hot links were created to give the contest higher visibility. An on-line form was available for participants to fill out in order to enter the contest.

Hot links are also included to the attractions on the itinerary as well as to the Tourism Partners. Mr. Eudy stated that the Travel Industry of America and the U.S. Postal Service also have this campaign prominently displayed on their web sites.

Overview of March Site Performance

Jonathan Eudy stated that they are trying to make the web site (www.Arkansas.com) more accessible to Commissioners so they can keep track of site growth. Mr. Eudy stated that in the month of March, visitors looked at 802,291 web pages. During the same month in 2001, visitors looked at 777,577 web pages. That's an increase of about 25,000 web pages over last year. Page impressions per day averaged 25,880 and total visitors to the site were 140,780 in March. Last year, there were approximately 135,000 visitors, an increase of about 5, 600 visitors.

Mr. Eudy stated that a report is generated each day, to Charles McLemore, of the number of inquiries through the Arkansas.com web site. Also tracked is the number of fulfillment pieces fulfilled.

Jonathan Eudy stated the database mining had been completed for the 2001 project, which includes the number of categories and the number of e-mails per category. He stated the amount of people on the list had not declined much since the project started. It includes people who have requested more information on specific subjects. Commissioners questioned what information was sent to people requesting the information. Marla Johnson Norris stated that the information came from the Communication section staff and was just some little tidbits of information that directs people back to the web site. Bill Barnes asked if there were a way to track how many of those people actually went to the site. Ms. Norris stated that there is a way and there will be a report at a later date. Billy Lindsey asked if this were a program that would be continued. Ms. Norris and Mr. Davies agreed that the program would continue. Jonathan Eudy noted that the consumer had a way to opt-out of the e-mails and in the majority of cases, chose to continue receiving them.

Miscellaneous

Ms. Mullikin reminded Commissioners that they should be receiving complimentary issues of magazines in which Arkansas ads are located. She also mentioned that if Commissioners were not receiving the magazines, they needed to contact her.

Ms. Mullikin stated that the first newspaper insert had been dropped the last weekend in February and the second was scheduled to drop on April 21st in the test markets, including Tulsa, Shreveport and Dallas. To better gauge consumer response from the insert, two evaluation forms were mailed to each advertiser after each insert was dropped. Ms. Mullikin stated that a report should be presented at the June meeting on the results of the test insert.

Shelby Woods noted that he had done some analysis of some numbers obtained from Larry Cargile. He stated that Pulaski County impacts the 2% collections by three percent. He further stated that since the 2% collections had decreased so dramatically, it was easy to see what counties were hardest hit by the economic slowdown. Mr. Woods stated that meeting and convention travel is down 20%. He also stated that the agency staff would be looking at recommendations and would try to come up with a solution to increase travelers. Mr. Woods noted that state revenues were down 1%. Mr. Davies stated that it was interesting that the state's revenues were down 1% and 2% Tax collections were also down by 1%. Billy Lindsey noted that his business was down in the spring due to the weather. He stated that it rained every weekend, in his area, in March. Bill Barnes concurred. Ted Mullenix questioned if there was a feasible way to track tourism versus family and corporate travel. Richard Davies replied that Shifflet breaks it down by leisure travelers including visiting friends and relatives (VFR's) and business travelers including conventioners and meetings travelers. Mr. Mullenix questioned how accurately an ad campaign could be tracked without that information. Mr. Davies and Mr. Woods agreed that they would see if Shifflet could break those numbers down. Mr. Woods also stated that virtually 100% of the requests from the 800 number, the Internet or are mailed in are from leisure travelers. Approximately 50% of all the people who request Vacation Planning Kits visit the state according to the Department Conversion Study. Mr. Mullenix stated that it would be helpful to have that information.

Nancy Clark presented a suggested logo to be embroidered on shirts for Commissioners. The logo is an adaptation of the Department of Parks & Tourism logo. Ms. Clark noted that shirts would not be sold to the general public, just to Commissioners. A general discussion ensued about the suggested logo. Ms. Loretta Lever House commended Ms. Clark for her development. Billy Lindsey stated he would like to use our logo (The Natural State), in keeping with our advertising. Bill Barnes stated that the logo needs to be consistent, whatever is chosen, and that only one logo should be used. A general discussion ensued about the shirts. Danny Ford commended Nancy Clark on her efforts. He suggested keeping "Arkansas The Natural State" and including the word "Commissioner" under it. Mr. Rice stated that he would have an order form made so that all the Commissioners could order their particular size shirt.

Danny Ford moved to approve that Commissioners shirts keep the "Arkansas The Natural State" logo and add the word "Commissioner" under the logo. Ness Sechrest seconded and the motion carried.

PARKS DIVISION

Ozark Folk Center - Leisure and Recreation Concepts, Inc. (LARC) Study

Greg Butts introduced the members of the Ozark Folk Cultural Center Commission (OFCCC) who had joined the meeting: Vice Chair Dr. George Lankford, Van Rosa, Polly Livingston and Joe Wyatt.

Mr. Butts reminded the Commissioners of the last joint meeting of the SPRTC and OFCCC in 1997. During that meeting the future of the Ozark Folk Center (OFC) was discussed. It was decided at that time to take a look at where we've been and where we're headed, and also what is occurring in the OFC Arkansas market areas. The Department was able to allocate funding in 2000 to contract with a firm to conduct a visitor use and market study. Following a selection process, Leisure and Recreation Concepts, Inc. (LARC) was chosen for the project. Mr. Butts introduced Wendy Jenkins, Vice President and Director of Economic Development for LARC, who would make a presentation on the results of the study LARC conducted.

Wendy Jenkins gave an overview of LARC's history and the projects in which it had been involved. Ms. Jenkins introduced Michelle West, Director of Research for LARC. Ms. West discussed the methodology used for the study. The first step was to gather and review appropriate data. Following a study of the data, LARC staff made several trips to the area to conduct interviews with OFC staff, visitors to the park, and visitors to Mountain View. The responses to the interviews were later incorporated into recommendations.

Ms. West continued by summarizing various sections of the survey. Using information available from the Tourism Division, the market area used for the survey was determined to be a 300-mile radius from Mountain View. Within the 300-mile market, an analysis was made of population growth, number of households, ages and income. Studying the visitor market, areas considered included the origin of visitors, their activities, length of stay, expenditures and age. Based on the results of this analysis, marketing strategies and recommendations were developed. The effects of air travel on the tourist industry was studied, and the types of attractions visitors frequent. Surveys indicated that since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, most leisure travelers prefer to drive to their destination. Additionally, 45.1% of these travelers have chosen to visit a destination closer to home, a four to five hour drive. Though the OFC is difficult to get to, it lends itself very well to current leisure travel trends. Regarding bus tours, the senior market is not going on bus tours as often today as in the past. Bus tour operators were contacted and all confirmed there is a decline in the senior market; however, there is more interest in a younger generation. This market segment is interested in a different type of group travel that is more luxurious and more specialized.

LARC was very impressed with the OFC and feels it has great potential in the future. Conservatively, the OFC should be able to draw 193,000 visitors within its primary market draw zone. A recommendation to achieve this number is to repackage the OFC. It has always been known as preserving heritage. Marketing efforts today need to focus on cultural tourism. The layout of the park is having a tremendous effect on the amount of money a visitor will spend. It is tiring for visitors to go in and out of the craft buildings. Studies indicate that after a time, a visitor will stop. This has an effect on the bottom line revenues. An example was given where a strip of separate shops were joined, thus the visitor entered one end and flowed through all the shops without having to go back outside. The result of the change was a \$22 million increase in the bottom line revenue. Traffic flow is crucial. Changes that have been made at the OFC are good, but there needs to be a Master Plan for future development.

Arkansas is projected as a place to enjoy the outdoors. People visit expecting to be outdoors, as is exemplified by the town square. Therefore, it is felt there is the need for an outdoor amphitheater with larger events held inside the existing theater. Also, the concrete walks are hot and could be replaced with materials that are cooler. Shade trees and awnings would add the shade visitors are seeking. These are some of the areas that could be addressed in a Master Plan. LARC did not see any large problems with the park being redesigned. Regarding the hours of operation, it is a concern that a visitor comes to the park and then is sent away because the music shows don't start for several hours later. A portion of these guests will not come back. LARC highly recommends closing the gap between when the craft shops close and the music shows begin. Another issue is the craft shops that close for a period of time during the day when crafters have lunch. Guests become frustrated because they cannot go into each shop.

Joint support and sponsorship between the town and the park is very important. It is also important that the OFC share with the citizens of Mountain View the economic impact it has on the community, how many jobs it provides and tax dollars that support the schools. An annual report should be published.

Expanding the workshops and marketing OFC products on the Internet is very important. More activities need to be offered for young people and scout groups such as nature trails and nature hikes, team building exercises, campouts, and expanding the Young Pioneer program. Music workshops are well received and need to be expanded. Re-addressing advertising and changing some wording would be beneficial. An example, cashing in on the current interest in cultural heritage, is to change the word "crafter" to "heritage artist." Find current industry "buzz words" and repackage the OFC to take advantage of what is of great interest to travelers today. LARC feels that the OFC could not be "sitting better." It just needs to be "tweaked", freshened up, repackaged and put back out on the market place. Ms. Jenkins opened the floor for questions and discussions.

Dr. Lankford asked how many visitors were interviewed. Ms. Jenkins responded that there were no calculations on how many were interviewed in town. At the OFC, 39 visitors were interviewed. Ms. Jenkins said, though that was not a large number, the guests' opinions were consistent. A common thread ran through their comments. The comments were not negative. They were more along the lines of, "I love this place and I wish this would happen." Polly Wood Crews asked for specifics about what LARC did not like. Ms. Jenkins said they did not like the closings when they wanted to go back and shop. Ms. Crews asked if they liked the accommodations. Ms. Jenkins said they were clean and good but need updating. The rooms are outdated as compared to what is available in town. Also, the rooms are too far away from the rest of the facilities.

Ms. Crews asked how they felt about transportation from where they were staying and what they wanted to see. Ms. West responded that the first day they were told one could walk to town from the OFC. They felt the distance and terrain prohibited that and wished there had been

a shuttle service available. Ms. West said when they first arrived they were surprised at the look of the buildings. They thought they would be more historically authentic. Ms. Crews asked if they were disappointed when they saw the buildings. Ms. West said she was not disappointed, but she was surprised because from the brochure it seems like the OFC will be more of a historically authentic atmosphere, and it's really more contemporary. Ms. Jenkins said the experience with the crafters is so wonderful one soon forgets about the look of the buildings. She reiterated that the look of the buildings is not the major problem, it is traffic flow. Ms. Jenkins added that the dark windows also cause a problem because people like to be able to see what is inside. Ms. Jenkins said they feel it is very important to change the entrance to the craft grounds. Currently, guests enter through the gift shop, which is not an ideal set-up. Ms. Jenkins said if one thing was selected to address it would be traffic flow. She said it comes down to how much money Arkansas State Parks (ASP) would want to spend to make it right. She reiterated the need to develop a Master Plan, which could be implemented in phases.

Regarding music, Ms. Jenkins said they found it frustrating that there was dead time between performances while microphones were changed. She recommended an upgrade in equipment.

Ness Sechrest asked the rationale about not entering the park through the gift shop. Ms. Jenkins said it is considered that it is setting up a guest psychologically to think they have to purchase before they can come in and enjoy. She said that guests should always exit through retail.

Richard Davies said it is a largely held perception by a lot of people that the audience for the OFC is dying off. Programmatically, how does ASP "tweek" the program, stay with the Mission of the OFC, and still make it relevant for a 26-year old? Ms. Jenkins said by bringing more variety into the program. The OFC has experienced it already that when different programs were brought in there was an increase in attendance. She said having some variety would also allow for the preservation of the heritage. Ms. West said she was much more entertained with the musician who was funny, injected comments and performed songs that were written at the turn of the century or before, and were humorous. She said the dancing lost them. Mr. Davies asked if it would have appealed to her if the musicians had somehow tied today's music to the songs they were singing. Ms. West said that would be good; however, she attended a music show expecting to hear historical music and was looking forward to that.

Ness Sechrest asked how often she would come back for a show, what would bring her back. Ms. West said she would look on the calendar for a particular show she had enjoyed or something comparable. Ms. Jenkins said that successful theaters rarely have the same performers repeated, even if they were successful. She said there has to be a degree of change. Ms. Jenkins said the night she attended a performance it became very redundant – three songs,

change performers, three songs, change performers, etc. She said they loved the music and the songs but what they became bored with was the arrangement and the set-up. Ms. Jenkins suggested interjecting some form of entertainment between performers.

Ted Mullenix asked what they thought of the signage. Ms. Jenkins said the signage needs improvement. She said the billboards were too wordy and there needs to be more signage further out from Mt. View. Mr. Mullenix explained his difficulty in finding the OFC and finding the facilities within the Center. Ms. Jenkins said that is an easy problem to address.

Dr. Lankford asked what their feeling was about trying to do programming for different kinds of groups. Ms. Jenkins said she, personally, likes this kind of music and this type of facility, but there will always be a portion of the public that likes something else. She said there does need to be a program for children, and other age groups need to be addressed.

Richard Davies asked Greg Butts what would be the next step. Mr. Butts said there are several recommendations ASP would like to get started on right away. Mr. Butts said there are also recommendations that will be very expensive. His suggestion is to involve the Parks Committee, the Commission and staff in prioritizing LARC's recommendations. Mr. Butts stated there has been discussion about a Master Plan for fifteen years, but it was not until 1997 when there was funding available because of the 1/8¢ Conservation Tax that this has become possible. He said the lodge rooms need to be updated and brought up to standard. Ness Sechrest asked what it would cost for a Master Plan. Mr. Butts said up to \$50,000. Ms. Jenkins said she would say around \$35,000 and the Master Plan should allow for work to be done in stages.

Bill Young said some of the areas recommended are already underway such as the on-line store, and some change in programming. The last group that was in from Canada for a special performance resulted in a 43% increase in attendance. Mr. Young said, however, the season pass holders left within five minutes of the show starting. He said the nice thing is the college students who were attracted to the show. Mr. Young also mentioned the new billboard that will be erected. He said that some of the things that are recommended are in the A-75 plan, such as upgrading the restrooms and lodging. Greg Butts said one of the big issues is that all music is connected, as the OFC Music Director, John Van Orman, reminded him. Mr. Butts said an issue is if our visitors' music interests are changing, but the OFC still wants to maintain its mission, how far do we go in changing music programs. Mr. Butts said he sees that as one of the greatest challenges facing the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission (SPRTC) and the OFCCC. Mr. Butts asked Bill Young if there is a dwindling supply of performers. Mr. Young said, locally, yes, because both crafters and performers develop their talents at the OFC and then become in demand elsewhere. He said the OFC might have to look at offering fewer shows each week.

Ness Sechrest asked Greg Butts what is needed from the Commission. Mr. Butts said the study and presentation were meant to be an informative exchange of ideas and a review of the recommendations. Richard Davies said he thinks there are a lot of good ideas that ASP should get started on. Ms. Jenkins suggested taking a look at the location of the Administration Building and making some changes there that would benefit guests' traffic flow. Polly Wood Crews asked what was her feeling about interaction with the people in Mountain View. Ms. West said they had a great feeling. She said the citizens were very talkative and very complimentary. She said the only problem was that some of the visitors in town did not know the OFC existed. Ms. West suggested an information kiosk in town would be helpful or some sort of store within a store selling OFC products. Loretta Lever House asked about signage at the entrance. Ms. Jenkins agreed this is needed. She said when a guest pulls in and the parking lot is empty it would be beneficial if there were better signs welcoming guests. Mr. Young said the small signs throughout town need to be larger and incorporate the new look of the OFC.

Ness Sechrest moved to: (1) direct staff to work with the Parks Committee on LARC's recommendations and (2) authorize the staff to select a consultant to develop a Master Plan for the Ozark Folk Center. The staff's recommendations and the Master Plan would be presented to the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission for approval. Wade Williams seconded and the motion carried.

Richard Davies, on behalf of the Ozark Folk Cultural Center Commission, moved to: (1) direct staff to work with the Parks Committee on LARC's recommendations and (2) authorize the staff to select a consultant to develop a Master Plan for the Ozark Folk Center. The staff's recommendations and the Master Plan would be presented to the Ozark Folk Cultural Center Commission for approval. George Lankford seconded and the motion carried.

Polly Wood Crews asked if it would cost \$50,000 to develop the Master Plan. Mr. Butts said the figure would be negotiated. Debbie Haak asked the time frame for the selection process. Mr. Butts said it would be approximately a 60 to 90 day process. Mike Mills asked if there was the capability of doing a Master Plan in-house. Mr. Butts said the staff could; however, the problem is staff is involved in many other projects in 52 other state parks. Dr. Lankford asked where the money would come from to pay for the development of the Master Plan. Mr. Butts said it would come from the 1/8¢ Conservation Tax.

Bull Shoals-White River State Park - Request to Amend Existing Lease

Stan Graves said ASP has had a lease with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers since 1955 at Bull Shoals-White River State Park. The lease was amended in 1976 by decreasing the size of the park by 62.3 acres. Some of the acreage that was decreased in 1976 is some of the area ASP

wants to add back into the lease. At that time, it was felt it was too far separated from the main part of the park. Mr. Graves said the Amendment 75 plan calls for a Visitor Information Center (VIC) adjacent to the north end of the dam. The design is underway and ASP needs to amend the lease to include the additional acreage so construction can continue on the facility. Other projects on the additional acreage will include trails, a small pavilion, river access, and a residence. Bud Shamburger asked if any campsites are planned in the area. Mr. Graves said no additional campsites are planned. Mr. Shamburger asked if there are any plans to upgrade those campsites to 50 amp electrical service. Mr. Graves said yes and to add sewer hook-up. Mr. Graves added that this is the busiest park as far as occupancy. Greg Butts said there is a Corps campground on the lake about ¼ mile from where the new VIC is planned to be built.

Bud Shamburger moved to approve amending the existing lease with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Bull Shoals-White River State Park to add two parcels of land of approximately 99.6 acres. Jane Christenson seconded and the motion carried.

Petit Jean State Park - John Earl Property Boundary

Greg Butts said in 1983, ASP was contacted by Mr. John Earl, an owner of land adjacent to the park, about his need to have water from Lake Roosevelt. The Commission approved the request. In order to provide water, an easement had to be surveyed. It was discovered that there were mistakes in early surveys and what was thought to be state park land actually belonged to Mr. Earl, and land that was believed to belong to Mr. Earl in reality belonged to ASP. It was also learned ASP did not have access on the north side of Lake Bailey which would have allowed access to the dam for repair and maintenance purposes. Additionally, ASP found out that there was a stock watering clause that had been retained by either the Earl family or former owners that gave them rights to run cattle into the park. Mr. Earl contends there is not proper fencing and protection between his property and the park property, and he had experienced numerous break-ins on his property. The fence has deteriorated and will have to be replaced.

Bud Shamburger said that due to past problems negotiating with Mr. Earl, the Commission had voted that the staff not to bring the subject before the Commission until staff and Mr. Earl had agreed on a settlement. Mr. Shamburger asked if that had taken place. Mr. Butts said it had. Ness Sechrest asked about the values of the parcels of land. Mr. Butts said ASP hired an appraiser who valued the lands involved in the proposed exchange.

**Bud Shamburger moved to approve the land trade agreement at Petit Jean State Park with John Earl:
Part of the Northwest Quarter (Pt. NW1/4), Northwest Quarter (NW1/4),
Section 33 (Sec. 33), Township 6 North (T6N), Range 18 West (R18W),
Conway County (Co.)**

Don Barnes from the Attorney General's office. Mr. Butts said access to the zoo couldn't be denied the non-profit. The ANPWC still has to secure liability insurance and approval from the USDA to operate. The non-profit has booked over 100 school groups between the last week of April and the end of May. The ANPWCs attorney has threatened to sue for loss of income if access is not permitted. Mr. Butts said his intent is to have all parties discuss the issues and come to an agreement. The Fites will not allow access through their new store, which is how the zoo was accessed in the past. Mr. Butts is allowing access to the zoo through another area. The Fites have removed all of their animals. A windstorm in February blew down a fence, which allowed the fallow deer to get out that are now on the fringes of the park. Two young white tail deer have been released and have become the pets of the campers and lodge guests. The animals left are a bear, a cougar, and some raptors that the non-profit owns. There are allegations by the non-profit that the Fites mis-appropriated funds from the non-profit. Other allegations are Scott Fite said he was asked to leave the Board and Howard Davis said Mr. Fite resigned. Mr. Butts said he would keep the Commission posted on future developments.

Richard Davies said he and Mr. Butts saw this conflict as an opportunity to have the zoo removed from the park, but there are many legal issues to resolve. Mr. Davies said if the problems couldn't be resolved, it may still prove to be an opportunity to remove the zoo. Debbie Haak asked if the Fites are being cordial about everything. Mr. Butts said yes. He added that the Fites received a large loan, of approximately \$400,000, from the Bank of Tennessee when they purchased the train and took over operation from Jim Fite, Scott's Father. They also secured a SBA loan of approximately \$40,000 to repair the ice storm damage. The Fites now have lost the zoo income that would have been used to pay off the loans. ASP will still get its portion of the income from the non-profit. The Fites will have to contact the Bank of Tennessee and the SBA concerning the change in ownership. Mr. Butts said again that he would keep the Commission updated on the situation.

Petit Jean State Park - Conway County Regional Water Distribution District (CCRWDD)

Stan Graves said in February 2001 he had updated the Commission on the progress of the water system and approval was given for staff to continue working with the CCRWDD. Also, the Commission had approved the ANCRC grant request for \$250,000 that was slated to go towards ASPs obligation on the water distribution project. Mr. Graves said this would be a great improvement by providing water to the park. A Memorandum of Agreement between ASP and CCRWDD had been drafted. Bill Barnes asked the size of the lines and meters. Mr. Graves said between 6" and 8". He said the meter size would depend on location. Mr. Graves said it is estimated there will be approximately ten meters. He said CCRWDD will set the meters and there is on going negotiations as to how ASP will be treated as a user in terms of total water usage. Bill Barnes asked if that is how the volume rates will be determined. Mr. Graves said it is yet to be determined whether ASP will be billed as one user or ten users within the park. He said it would be advantageous if ASP is billed as one user. Mr. Barnes described the problems his business is having because of being billed as one user because the water district is creating a

graduated rate system based on volume with the rates increasing as the use goes up. Mr. Graves said the CCRWDD rate structure is based on the more water used, the lower the rate will be.

Bud Shamburger moved to approve staff entering into a Memorandum Of Agreement with the Conway County Regional Water Distribution District to supply water to Petit Jean State Park. Ness Sechrest seconded and the motion carried.

Arkansas Recreational Trails Fund Proposal - TEA-21

Stan Graves said ASP has the opportunity to request funds from the Arkansas State Highway & Transportation Department for trail projects. Mr. Graves said ASP had received \$76,000 the previous year. Mr. Graves said ASP would like to request \$287,048 from the Arkansas Recreational Trails Program that would be matched with 1/8¢ Conservation Tax funds in the amount of \$71,764. The proposed request includes improvements and construction of trailheads at the Delta Heritage Trail, Jacksonport State Park, Logoly State Park and Petit Jean State Park.

Bud Shamburger moved to approved a grant request to the Arkansas Recreation Trails Fund in the amount of \$287,048 for trailhead improvements and construction at Delta Heritage Trail, Jacksonport State Park, Logoly State Park and Petit Jean State Park. Ness Sechrest seconded and the motion carried.

Removal of Structures from Inventory

Stan Graves requested approval to remove structures from inventory at three parks. At Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park, building #32.43 is on acreage that was purchased as part of the original Battlefield Protection Plan. It is not used and is an obstruction to the view. At Crowley's Ridge State Park Building #08.09 is a well house that is not used because the park is on the rural water system. At the Delta Heritage Trail building #57.10 is a substandard residence that is adjacent to the new trailhead. Mr. Graves said, though it may seem there are a lot of requests to remove buildings from inventory, it is a major sign of progress.

Polly Wood Crews moved to approve the following buildings from inventory: At Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park Building #32.43 the Tabor building, at Crowley's Ridge State Park Building #08.09 a Well House, and at the Delta Heritage Trail Building #57.10 the Franklin residence. Jane Christenson seconded and the motion carried.

Crowley's Ridge State Park - Long Range Development Plans

Stan Graves said Crowley's Ridge State Park is classified as a recreation park. Mr. Graves said during the 70s the park was more heavily used for day use than it is today. He said it was the "swimming hole" of northeast Arkansas. At that time there would be over 1,500 paid swimmers in the pool per day. Mr. Graves said, even though the park is classified as a recreation park, it has a lot of historic features, several of which are on the historic register. He said it is the only CCC park in eastern Arkansas. Mr. Graves told some of the history of the park adding that the plan includes some additional archeological work.

The Long Range Plans calls for a new wildlife education center in an area of the park that is underutilized. The CCC comfort station, which is on the National Register and was in the Legacy video, is one of the original structures in the park and is in need of repair. The Visitor Information/Education Center is a new structure planned in another underutilized part of the park. Mr. Graves listed other improvements and additions shown in the plan which include the campground, cabins and property acquisitions for staff residences and future development.

Bill Barnes asked why the old campground could not be left available for either regular camping or group camps. Mr. Graves said it would be used for overflow camping and groups. Mr. Barnes said his point was not to isolate it for group camping only but to keep it available and flexible. Greg Butts said there are not any plans to remove the utilities in the campground. Mr. Graves said the plan calls for hardening some of the tent pads.

Bud Shamburger asked the width of the new Class A sites. Mr. Graves said the pavement would be 12'. Mr. Shamburger asked what would be the total size of the sites. Mr. Graves said over 400 square feet of outdoor living area that is hardened for the picnic table, and if there is a tent pad it will be 15' x 15'. The length of the asphalt will be between 55' to 70'. Mr. Graves said they will be wide enough for recreational vehicle slide-outs.

Bill Barnes asked if the Commission voted now, would it be approving each component. Stan Graves said yes and that would include the six cabins that were approved in the Amendment 75 spending plan.

Danny Ford moved to approve the Crowley's Ridge State Park Long Range Development Plan as proposed. Jane Christenson seconded and the motion carried.

Bill Barnes asked if the plan is approved now that would mean the Commission would also be approving the construction of the cabins. Greg Butts said the plan is long-term and the various projects will need to be prioritized. Bill Barnes asked if the plan could be approved with the exception of the cabins. Mr. Butts said yes. Mr. Barnes said he wants to take a look at the need for the cabins when it comes time to build them. Mr. Butts said the cabins are already in

the plan that dates back to 1993, and it is just a question of when to build them. Stan Graves said the cabins are slated for 2005-07. Danny Ford stated that comparable private facilities did not exist in northeast Arkansas and he did not feel the proposed cabins would compete with private interests. Bill Barnes said he wants to look at occupancy rates when its time for the cabins. He said his concern is against constructing things that would be directly against private lodging operations in the area. Mr. Barnes said the emphasis should be on campgrounds and the acquisition of property before building cabins.

Bill Barnes moved that at the time it is appropriate to begin construction on the cabins that are in the Long Range Development Plan for Crowley's Ridge State Park, staff bring that part of the plan back to the Commission for approval. Danny Ford seconded and the motion carried.

Billy Lindsey said it is important to point out the importance of not placing private lodging operations in the position of having to compete with government. Mr. Lindsey added that also there is a possibility that when it is time to build the cabins the Commission may decide that instead of six cabins there should be ten if the need is there and no one else is willing to service the need.

Lake Charles State Park - Long Range Development Plan

Stan Graves said the park is a major day use park and overnight facility in northeast Arkansas. Mr. Graves said, like Crowley's Ridge State Park was a major swimming attraction, Lake Charles State Park is a major fishing destination for the area. He said the park is 140 acres, 73 acres are leased from the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission (AGFC) with the remaining 67 acres owned by ASP.

Ness Sechrest asked the size of the lake. Mr. Graves said it is approximately 600 acres. Richard Davies asked if the wildlife management area is just across the road from the park. Greg Butts said it is down stream from the park. Mr. Graves described the improvements and new additions to the park that include a Visitor Information Center, a barrier free trail, improvements to the campground, relocation of the water treatment plant, cabins, property acquisitions, a pavilion, a boat launch ramp and a courtesy dock. Bill Barnes asked if the land acquisitions are the highest priority for the park. Mr. Graves said it is not. Greg Butts said the greatest demand is for cabins, including use by guides and duck hunters.

Bud Shamburger moved to approve the Long Range Development Plan as presented for Lake Charles State Park. Jane Christenson seconded and the motion carried.

Bill Barnes moved that at the time it is appropriate to begin construction on the cabins that are in the Long Range Development Plan for Lake Charles State Park, staff bring that part of the plan back to the Commission for approval. Billy Lindsey seconded and the motion carried.

National Association of State Park Directors 2002 Annual Information Exchange Report

Greg Butts said the Commission has the full text of the annual report along with a summary that indicates Arkansas's ranking in several areas. Mr. Butts said it is an "apples to oranges" comparison. The park systems' missions are very similar, but facilities and fees vary.

Capital Improvements Report

Stan Graves gave the Capital Improvement Progress Report for January, February and March, 2002. Mr. Graves said there are \$75.7 million in projects that are underway. Mr. Graves also gave the Commissioners a listing by park of construction projects either completed or underway.

Debbie Haak asked about the work being done at the Crater of Diamonds State Park. Mr. Graves said there is \$2.3 million in construction underway. He said progress has been effected by rain, similar to the effect the weather is having on visitation. Greg Butts asked when the water play area would be open for public use. Mr. Graves said it is underway and plans are to have it open either in late July or early August. Polly Wood Crews asked when construction would begin on the lodge at Mt. Magazine State Park. Mr. Butts said he is still waiting for the opinion from the State Supreme Court concerning the Nora Harris lawsuit and the impact that might have on tax money replacing cash funds used to pay off bonds. Richard Davies said it is out of the Department's hands until the Supreme Court solves the issue.

Debbie Haak asked about the *Mary Woods No. 2* hull restoration project at Jacksonport State Park. Stan Graves said it is planned for late summer and would require moving the boat to either Clarksdale or Greenwood, Mississippi.

Greg Butts told the Commissioners that the Grand Re-Opening Ceremony of the Courthouse and the *Mary Woods No. 2* would be held at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 14, 2002. He said the Governor would be in attendance along with an anticipated large crowd from the local community.

Debbie Haak reported that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers had made the request to attend a Commission meeting. It had been decided for the Corps to attend the August meeting in Ft. Smith.

Richard Davies introduced Jack Quail. Jack was the Deputy Director of State Parks, Deputy Director of Tourism and the General Manager of the Ozark Folk Center.

Miscellaneous

Greg Butts showed the Commissioners a photo of Steven Dunlap, an Interpreter at Petit Jean State Park that was in the latest edition of *Legacy*, a publication by the National Association of Interpretation (NAI). Chuck Haralson took the photos in the article. The NAI also recognized the *Childrens Guide to Knapp Trail* at Toltec Mounds Archeological State Park as the 2001 Outstanding Site Publication.

Richard Davies reported on the article in the previous month's edition of the *National Geographic* about the diamond business with an inset article about Murfreesboro.

Debbie Haak thanked Bill Young for the outstanding job he did in making arrangements to host the Commissioners during their stay in Mountain View. Mr. Young said it had been a pleasure having the Commissioners at the Ozark Folk Center.

Ness Sechrest, regarding agenda items that require approval, asked if those agenda items could be grouped which would make it easier for those Commissioners who could not stay for the second day of the meeting. Billy Lindsey said, in light of Chairman Haak's request, that having a quorum the second day should not be a problem in the future.

Jane Christenson moved to adjourn. Bill Barnes seconded and the motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m. on Friday, April 19, 2002.