

STATE PARKS, RECREATION AND TRAVEL COMMISSION

Historic Washington State Park

1914 Schoolhouse

Washington, Arkansas

January 20, 2011

Commissioners Present

Bob Knight, Chairman
Darin Gray, Vice-Chairman
Steve Arrison
Bill Barnes
Jay Bunyard
Jim Shamburger

Jim Gaston
Debbie Haak
Danny Ford
Montine McNulty
Mike Mills
Cindy Smith

Commissioners Absent

Billy Lindsey
Ness Sechrest

Department Staff Present

Richard W. Davies, Executive Director
Gloria Robins, Executive Assistant
Cynthia Dunlap, Director of Administration
Greg Butts, Director, Arkansas State Parks
Joe David Rice, Tourism Director
Nancy Clark, Assistant Tourism Director
Jon Brown, Operations Manager
Stan Graves, Parks Planning & Development Manager
Joe Jacobs, Marketing & Revenue Manager
Joanne Hinson, Research & Information Services Manager
Dena Woerner, Communications Manager
Donna Perrin, Tourism Development Manager
Renee Robinson, Group Travel Manager
Marcel Hanzlik, Region III Supervisor
Shea Lewis, Region IV Supervisor
Dottie Boyles, Administrative Specialist
Kris Richardson, Administrative Specialist
Zoie Clift, Arkansas Travel Writer
Jay Miller, Program Services Manager

CJRW

Wayne Woods
Karen Mullikin
Bryan Jones
Brian Kratkiewicz
Chuck Robertson
Ross Cranford

Aristotle

Jonathan Eudy

Guests

Joe Buckley, Superintendent, Historic Washington State Park
Josh Williams, Curator, Historic Washington State Park
Caleb Howell, Superintendent, Daisy State Park
Jim Gann, Superintendent, Logoly State Park
Peggy Boyd, Southeast Arkansas Regional Archives

Roll Call

Chairman Bob Knight called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 20, 2011. Gloria Robins called the roll.

Approval of the Agenda

Mike Mills moved to accept the Agenda as presented. Danny Ford seconded and the motion carried.

Presentation of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Jim Shamburger moved to accept the Minutes from the November 2010 meeting. Steve Arrison seconded and the motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Cynthia Dunlap presented the year-to-date financial report for the period ended December 31, 2010. The expenditures were: Parks Division, \$35,200,752 including construction and grants; Tourism Division, \$6,043,077; Keep Arkansas Beautiful, \$219,072; Administration Division, \$1,745,763; and History Commission, \$815,065. Expenditures for the Department totaled \$44,023,729, an increase of 1% over the same period FY10. The year-to-

date operating revenue Parks Division totaled \$12,679,373, an increase of 4% over the same period FY10; 1/8% Cent Tax \$ 14,089,708, a increase of 5.00% over the same period FY10; and 2% Tax 6,959,951, a increase of 4.1% over the same period FY10.

Debbie Haak moved to approve the financial report. Montine McNulty seconded and the motion carried.

Cynthia Dunlap requested Staff Appreciation Certificates for Fixed Assets Manager George Lepper, who is retiring after 35 years of service, and Accounting Coordinator Jim Wallace, who is retiring after 9 years of service.

Jim Shamburger moved to approve Staff Appreciation Certificates for Fixed Assets Manager George Lepper and Accounting Coordinator Jim Wallace. Darin Gray seconded and the motion carried.

Welcome /Other Business

Joe Buckley, Superintendent for Historic Washington State Park, welcomed everyone and gave a brief overview of the park. He stated that the two things that make the park unique are its history and the interpretation of that history to its visitors. Several events are held each year including the jonquil festival and Christmas by candlelight.

Chairman Bob Knight presented outgoing Chair Montine McNulty with a plaque of appreciation for her service in leading the Commission during 2010.

Chairman Bob Knight also presented outgoing Commissioner Tom Schueck with a plaque for his service. Mr. Schueck is leaving the Arkansas State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission to serve on the Arkansas State Highway Commission. Mr. Schueck expressed his appreciation and stated he enjoyed serving on the Commission and learning about Arkansas State Parks and the tourism industry.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Richard Davies stated that, by law, the Commission must approve its per diem rate at the first meeting of the calendar year. The per diem approved in 2010 was \$65.00.

Jim Gaston moved to set the per diem at \$65 per day, plus all expenses incurred on Wednesday for early arrival to attend meetings for the calendar year 2011. Steve Arrison seconded and the motion carried.

The 2011 Meeting Schedule was presented as follows:

January 20	Hope/Historic Washington
February 17	Hot Springs/Garvan Woodland Gardens
March 6-8	Annual Governor's Conference on Tourism in Little Rock
April 21	Fayetteville
May 19	Heber Springs/Lindsey's Resort
June 16	Mountain Home/Bull Shoals State Park
August 18	Ozark Folk Center
September 14-15	Little Rock/Arkansas Hospitality Association Show
October 20	Murfreesboro/Crater of Diamonds State Park
November 17	El Dorado

Danny Ford moved to approve the 2011 Meeting Schedule as presented. Debbie Haak seconded and the motion carried.

Mr. Davies reported the 88th General Assembly was underway as of January 17. A list of legislators and their contact information was distributed to the commissioners.

TOURISM DIVISION

Tourism Demonstration Projects: Update

Joe David Rice presented the *Envision Destination Delta – The Southeast Arkansas Economic Development Project* brochure to the Commission. The brochure features seven potential long-term strategic capital projects for growth and revival of the region, possible incentives and funding options, and a map.

37th Annual Governor's Conference on Tourism

Nancy Clark presented the program for the 37th Annual Governor's Conference on Tourism. The conference will be held in Little Rock, March 6-8. The Peabody will be the host hotel. All events will be held in the Statehouse Convention Center with the exception of the Early-Bird Party, which will be held in the Ottenheimer Market Hall in the River Market District.

Research and Information Services Section

The Research and Information Services Section processed 5,181 requests for travel information during November 2010, a decrease of 23.4% from November 2009. The number of requests for December 2010 was 3,633, a 30.1% decrease from December 2009.

Arkansas Welcome Centers received 64,953 visitors during November 2010, down 4.9% compared to November 2009. December 2010 visitation totaled 54,551, a decrease of 1.5% over December 2009. January-December 2010 visitation was 903,420, up 3.4% over 2009.

Joanne Hinson reported the transition from the Alexander Human Development Center to the Arkadelphia Human Development Center (HDC) is almost complete. The Arkadelphia HDC began mailing out vacation kits, fishing and retirement guides in early January.

Ms. Hinson also stated that the driveway for the new West Memphis Welcome Center has been completed. The foundation for the building is scheduled to be laid in the near future.

Tourism Development Section

Donna Perrin reported the finalists for the Henry Awards have been notified and program production is in progress.

Jefferson County was awarded an \$11,650 matching grant towards conducting a \$23,300 tourism attraction feasibility study for the development of a Saracen Historical Outdoor Drama in Pine Bluff. The study is due to be delivered to the Tourism Division on or before March 21, 2011. The City of Hot Springs was awarded a \$10,000 matching grant to conduct a tourism attraction feasibility study for a sports complex. The completion date for this study is April 14, 2011.

The first statewide Arkansas Agritourism Conference will be held February 18-19, 2011 at the Holiday Inn Airport Conference Center in Little Rock. It is hosted by the Arkansas Agritourism Initiative. The keynote speaker will be Walt Coleman.

Communications Section

Dena Woerner reported on *Arkansas the State of Fishing*. The national media event took place November 15-23, 2010 and included travel writers, trade publications, photographers, and fishing companies from around the country. Ms. Woerner thanked Commissioners Jim Gaston, Bob Knight, and Bill Barnes for their help. The event generated national media and exposure for Arkansas.

Group Travel Section

The Monthly Tracking Report indicated there were 74 inquires for November 2010 compared to 51 inquires for November 2009. The December tracking report indicated 34 inquires for 2010 compared to 22 for December 2009. The majority of inquiries were received from tradeshow for the month of October; magazine leads for motorcoach, focusing on the Civil War; and the Civil War website.

Joe David Rice announced Renee Robison has been nominated for the Silver Cup Award for the Arkansas Hospitality Association's Central Arkansas Chapter. The banquet and award ceremony scheduled for January 20 was postponed until February 3 due to icy weather in Little Rock.

Internet-Related Items

There were 246,063 visitor sessions during the month of December, an increase of 5 percent over December 2009, and 54,722 links to industry partners. The Arkansas.com website placed number five among all 50 state tourism sites and number one amid the contiguous state sites. The *Hot Deals and Packages* iPhone application had 2,399 downloads from March 1, 2010 through January 9, 2011, with 809 visits in December and 5,602 page views. During December 2010, there were 16,033 visits from mobile devices to *Arkansas.com*, by way of 14 operating systems, an increase of 3 percent over November 2010.

Jonathan Eudy explained that Aristotle has built five landing pages, with different videos, in response to five unique Quick Response (QR) codes created for the print campaign. Each QR code has been assigned a different web address for tracking purposes.

A mobile version of the form used to sign up to receive a free Vacation Kit has been developed so the user does not have to leave the mobile site in order to request a kit. Links were also created to help navigate to the new mobile *Hot Deals and Packages* site and *VisitMyArkansas* blogs.

The *2011 Arkansas Tour Guide* has been updated on Arkansas.com.

Advertising/Marketing

The Spring/Summer 2011 Online Campaign Media and Creative was presented. The overall campaign was approved at the September 2010 meeting; however several recommendations for changes were suggested. They include adding new websites and deleting less visited sites. Banner ads will promote every region of the state. Updates include motorcycle, outdoor fishing, and multicultural ads. The total media and production expense for the campaign is \$773,685.00.

Steve Arrison moved to accept the Spring/Summer 2011 Online Campaign Media and Creative Recommendations for \$773,685.00. Jay Bunyard seconded and the motion carried.

Miscellaneous

Chairman Bob Knight announced that the Advertising and State Parks Committees, and the Village Creek State Park Sub-Committee will remain the same. Darin Gray, Cindy Smith, and Ness Sechrest will also continue to serve as Chairs of their Committees.

PARKS

ANCRC FY12 Grant Request

Greg Butts presented the FY12 Arkansas Natural & Cultural Resources Council (ANCRC) grant recommendations for approval. He advised there were a variety of projects and categories on three lists presented for Commission's review: a) ANCRC FY12 Grant Request – Proposed Projects; b) Proposed CIP A-75 Projects FY11- FY13; and c) General Improvement Funding (GIF) projects approved by SPRTC in September and sent to DFA for Governor Beebe's consideration. Richard Davies noted due to limited funding and the uncertainty of ANCRC and GIF funding levels, some projects may appear on more than one list. Mr. Butts reported that ASP has been successful in ANCRC grants since 1988. With possible projections of \$12 million for ANCRC FY12 divided between all eligible state agencies, the competition for funding is great.

Montine McNulty moved to approve recommendations for the Arkansas Natural & Cultural Resources Council FY12 grant request. Mike Mills seconded and the motion carried.

A-75 Capital Improvement of Project Priorities

Greg Butts presented the A-75 Capital Improvement Project (CIP) Priorities for FY11-FY13 recommendations for approval, reiterating some projects appear on multiple fund source lists. He noted the Energy Audit and Conservation Measures request of \$100,000 is requested to get the task underway. As reported previously, a 2009 Governor's Executive Order is for state agencies to reduce energy consumption 20% by June 30, 2014 and 30% by June 30, 2017. The base line data for utility use has been completed and the second task is a system wide audit of 900 buildings heat and air systems, a huge task. A company will be hired to provide energy conservation recommendations. Mr. Butts fielded questions regarding the proposed projects. He stated there is a house generator at Bull Shoals Dam creating a surplus of power and advised he will contact US Army Corps of Engineer to explore any surplus power that ASP could utilize for the park's visitor center.

Debbie Haak moved to approve staff recommendations for the A-75 CIP Priorities FY11-FY13. Danny Ford seconded and the motion carried.

Land Acquisition Approval

Greg Butts advised receipt of favorable advice from the Governor's Office, the Department of Finance and Administration and the Arkansas Legislative Council, and requested final approval for property acquisitions at Historic Washington State Park, Lake Frierson State Park, and Mt. Nebo State Park.

Steve Arrison moved for final approval for the acquisition of properties adjacent to Historic Washington, Lake Frierson, and Mt. Nebo State Parks, described as:

Historic Washington Properties:

All of Blocks 6, 25, 79, 80, 81, 82; Lot3, Block 1; Lots 3 and 4, Block48; Lots 1, 2, 4, Block 27; Lot 4 and the East ½ of Lot 1, Block 15; Lots 1, 2, and the South ½ of Lot 4, Block 7; All lying in the original Town of Washington, Hempstead County, Arkansas, containing 7.673 acres, more or less.

Lake Frierson Property:

The Southeast Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 36, Township 16 North, Range 3 East; AND that part of the Northwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 36, Township 16

**North, Range 3 East, Greene County, Arkansas, described as follows:
Beginning at a point where the North Line of said NW/4 SE/4 of said Section,
Township, and Range intersects with the west line of State Highway 141, run
thence West on said North line 255 feet; run thence South 160 feet; run
thence East 65 feet to the West line of State Highway 141, thence in a
Northeasterly direction along said State Highway 141 to the point of
beginning, containing 10.41 acres, more or less.**

**Mount Nebo Properties:
Lots 2, 3, and the North ½ of Lot 4, Block 1; Lot 29, Block 2; Mount Nebo
Bench Addition, Yell County, Arkansas, containing 3.13 acres, more or less.**

Montine McNulty seconded and the motion carried.

Pinnacle Mountain

Greg Butts advised he received a proposal for a new recreation opportunity for visitors at Pinnacle Mountain State Park. Buddy Burnside, horseback concessionaire who owns Chief Whitehorse Trail Rides, has to relocate his business. Mr. Burnside has over 22 years experience as an owner and operator of a horseback trail ride business. After reviewing park locations, Mr. Butts suggested Pinnacle Mountain as a suitable location. With approximately 500,000 visitors annually, Pinnacle Mountain should be a successful location for the proposal. With the same conditions and stipulations as the horse concessionaire at Lake Catherine and DeGray, Mr. Burnside can be open by March 1, 2011.

**Debbie Haak moved to approve establishing a horseback riding
concession with Mr. Burnside at Pinnacle Mountain State Park to provide a
new recreation opportunity for visitors and generate revenue for the park.
The Concession and Operating Agreements terms and conditions in
DeGray's and Lake Catherine's will be utilized. Mike Mills seconded and
the motion carried.**

Mt. Nebo – Access Use Permit (Cornwell)

Stave Graves reported that ASP traded properties with Gilbert Cornwell, a private landowner with property adjacent to Mt. Nebo State Park, in 1988. Mr. Cornwell has now requested permission to access his land through ASP's property. While the lots he traded to ASP had access to utilities; the lots he received did not. Mr. Cornwell would like to construct a

residence on his property. Graves advised that ASP recommends allowing Mr. Cornwell to enter into the Use Permit Agreement, comprised of a strip of land 75 feet long x 20 feet wide.

Mike Mills moved to approve an Access Use Permit for Gilbert Cornwell allowing access to his land through Arkansas State Park's property at Mt. Nebo State Park described as:

A twenty (20) foot wide strip of land lying ten (10) feet on each side of a center line which begins at a point ten (10) feet west of the Southwest Corner of Lot Eight (8), Block One (1), Original Town of Mount Nebo, Yell County, Arkansas, and runs thence North for seventy-five (75) feet.

Montine McNulty seconded and the motion carried.

Petit Jean – Donation to Establish Memorial Bench

Greg Butts advised of a request to establish a memorial bench at Stouts Point at Petit Jean State Park, by Billy Franks, Jr. in honor of his late father. Mr. Franks' family would pay for the bench and commemorative plaque for the family member. Park staff is in agreement with the request.

As ASP receives many requests, Mr. Butts inquired if the Commission would like to approve each request for a bench memorial. Discussion ensued regarding memorials with the Commission noting it is not necessary to approve each request but would like to be advised of any newly placed memorial benches. Anything other than memorial benches would require Commission approval.

Jim Gaston moved to grant the request of Billy Franks, Jr. to establish a memorial bench at Petit Jean State Park in honor of his late father. In future, memorial bench requests may be approved by the State Parks Director and does not require approval from the State Parks, Recreation, and Travel Commission. Debbie Haak seconded and the motion carried.

Toltec – Removal of Structure from Inventory

Stan Graves requested permission to remove a deteriorated substandard residence built in 1970 from Toltec Mounds inventory. The residence is located within the archeological site and its removal was planned upon completion of the new residence.

Mike Mills moved to approve removal of a residence (Building # 54.01/AASIS # 120006472) from Toltec Archeological Mounds State Park's inventory. Jay Bunyard seconded and the motion carried.

Bull Shoals – Removal of Structure from Inventory

Stan Graves requested permission to remove a substandard deteriorated public restroom facility from Bull Shoals inventory, built circa 1955.

Mike Mills moved to approve removal of a public restroom facility (Building # 6.07/AASIS # 120005533) from the Bull Shoals-White River State Park's inventory. Jay Bunyard seconded and the motion carried.

Alcohol Laws Research

Greg Butts responded to the November 2010 SPRTC meeting request in regards to selling native beer and wine in ASP gift shops and stores. Mr. Butts and Joe Jacobs met with an Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) attorney and learned there are 43 different alcohol permits. He reported the noteworthy points from the meeting from ABC Attorney, Don Bennett. For the locations that voted wet that desire liquor by the drink (mixed drinks) they must vote on it six months later. He spoke with clerks from Logan (Mountain Township) and Clark Counties and they reported no knowledge of pursuing this option. Mr. Butts advised he will request the United States Forest Service (USFS) to amend our permit to sell mixed drinks at Mount Magazine Lodge and feels it would be agreeable. However according to ABC rules, it will have to remain a private club if the citizens in the Mountain Township don't desire approval of the sale of liquor by the drink (i.e. mixed drinks). If ASP gave up the club permit at Mount Magazine Lodge, with the Mountain Township now wet, ASP could sell just beer and wine, buy the product at wholesale prices, advertise beer and wine and have the product delivered versus the park staff driving to a retailer. With the customer demand for "spirituous" liquors (mixed drinks) Mr. Butts recommended keeping the club license at Mount Magazine.

Based on the election results in Clark County, ASP can proceed with a combination license request to sell beer and wine at DeGray's restaurant and conference center. This license would allow ASP to buy from wholesalers who would deliver the product to the park. Four years after voting a jurisdiction wet, a measure to turn it back dry can be placed on the ballot for consideration. This doesn't pertain to clubs but it did happen to the Mountain Township, where Mount Magazine is located, that initially was wet, turned dry and now wet again.

Attorney Bennett's opinion is that ASP's gift shops and stores do not qualify for the selling of native wines and beers. These ASP facilities do not meet the inventory requirements for human consumable products as noted in the permits.

Discussion ensued regarding the sale of alcohol in other ASP locations, i.e. marinas, golf courses. The sale of alcohol at marinas was not recommended. The sale of alcohol at the DeGray Golf Course would not be permitted due its location in Hot Spring County, which is dry. After further discussion, ASP staff will continue to monitor legislative changes and wet/dry changes that could affect state parks.

Mike Mills moved for Arkansas State Parks to proceed with the license request to sell beer and wine at DeGray Lake Resort State Park in the restaurant and conference facilities, thus allowing buying from wholesalers. Jim Gaston seconded and the motion carried.

Hobbs – Visitor Center Silver LEED Certification

Stan Graves reported the Hobbs Visitor Center has been awarded a LEED (Leadership in Energy Environmental Design) Silver certification from the United States Green Building Council (USGBC), which ASP is proud to receive.

CIP Quarterly Report

Stan Graves reported \$53.7 million in Methods of Finance (MOF) currently underway. He reported \$125.7 million in projects underway or completed for A-75 projects. Mr. Graves noted that the Crater of Diamonds Visitor Center restoration has been completed, with the new exhibits expected to be completed by April 2011.

Miscellaneous

Greg Butts reported that the Edwards Weapons Museum of Historic Washington State Park was noted as the “Best Kept Secret” by a recent Ouachita Life publication.

The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette’s “Taking Root – Master Naturalist Branch Out After Their Training” is an excellent volunteer program with retired teachers and others conducting classroom and programs in the parks, resulting in outstanding volunteers doing great things and connecting to park visitors.

The Northeast Arkansas Regional Archives (NEARA) facility is near completion and ready to open soon. The grand opening and dedication is scheduled for March 3, 2011. Commissioners and staff are invited to attend.

After a short season in 2010, he reported the new ropes course at the Ozark Folk Center is receiving great reviews. Watch for the new season to open March 1, 2011.

Mr. Butts proudly reported Kelly Farrell, Field Naturalist and Program Services Assistant for ASP, is the recipient of the National Association for Interpretation (NAI) Master Interpretive Manager Award for 2010. The award was presented at NAI's national workshop in Las Vegas in November 2010.

The State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission adjourned at 11:30 on January 20, 2010 in the 1914 Schoolhouse at Historic Washington State Park in Washington, Arkansas.