

MINUTES

**State Parks, Recreation & Travel Commission
Hobbs State Park-Conservation Area
Rogers, Arkansas
April 16, 2009**

Commissioners Present

Danny Ford, Chairman	Montine McNulty, Vice-Chairman
Steve Arrison	Bob Knight
Bill Barnes	Mike Mills
Jay Bunyard	Tom Schueck
Jim Gaston	Ness Sechrest
Darin Gray	Jim Shamburger
Debbie Haak	Cindy Smith

Commissioners Absent

Billy Lindsey

Department Staff Present

Richard W. Davies, Executive Director
Gloria Robins, Executive Assistant
Cynthia Dunlap, Director of Administration
Greg Butts, State Parks Director
Joe David Rice, Tourism Director
Nancy Clark, Assistant Tourism Director
Mac Balkman, State Parks Operations Manager
Stan Graves, State Parks Planning & Development Manager
Joseph Jacobs, State Parks Marketing & Revenue Manager
Joan Ellison, State Parks Information Officer
Jon Brown, Region I Supervisor
Donna Perrin, Tourism Development Manager
Joanne Hinson, Research & Information Services Manager
Kris Richardson, Administrative Assistant
Dottie Boyles, Administrative Assistant

Guests

Terry Cook, Harrison A&P Commission
Tom Galyon, Rogers Chamber of Commerce
Kalene Griffith, Bentonville A&P Commission
Marilyn Heifner, Executive Director, Fayetteville A & P Commission
Meryl Koeth, Van Buren A&P Commission
Claude Legris, Director, Fort Smith Convention & Visitors Bureau
Bob Purvis, Eureka Springs Convention & Visitors Bureau
Wade Williams, Williams Law Firm

CJRW

Wayne Woods
Shelby Woods
Karen Mullikin

Aristotle

Marla Johnson-Norris
Jonathan Eudy
Dina Pruitt

Call to Order

Chairman Danny Ford called the meeting to order at 8:37 a.m. on April 16, 2009.

Mark Clippinger, Superintendent, Hobbs State Park-Conservation Area welcomed the State Parks, Recreation, and Travel Commission (SPRTC) and introduced staff to the Commission:

Jay Schneider, Assistant Superintendent
Terry Chase, Chase Studio, Exhibit Designer
Jennifer Sauls, PASC
Natalie Casey, Park Interpreter
Steve Chyrchel, Park Interpreter
Fred Sutton, Park Ranger
Bob Pitts, Maintenance Technician
Gerald Bridges, Maintenance Supervisor
Al Knox, Trails Maintenance Supervisor
Kent McGuinness, Milestone Construction

Mark Clippinger provided a brief overview of the park. Hobbs State Park-Conservation Area is Arkansas's largest state park in land area and covers over 12,000 acres along the southern shore of Beaver Lake. The park offers interpretive programs; soon-to-be new visitor environmental education center (VEC); four hiking trails; all-weather public

firing range, regulated seasonal hunting; and undeveloped access to the lake. This park is managed jointly by ASP, the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. The new VEC is 17,500 square feet with an estimated construction of \$ 4.5 million and an interpretive exhibit gallery estimated at \$800,000. Located in the heart of numerous schools, the goal is to provide the areas of Rogers, Springdale, Bentonville, Eureka Springs, and Huntsville an array of educational opportunities.

Executive Director Richard Davies stated the property for the park was acquired in 1979 from the family of Roscoe Hobbs. The land was being held in a trust in St Louis, Missouri when one heir was persuaded to sell to The Nature Conservancy for approximately \$279 per acre, with the other heirs soon to follow. Governor Clinton, at the time, secured funding from the Legislature to reimburse The Nature Conservancy, to complete the transaction, resulting in an excellent conservation, nature based recreation project for Northwest Arkansas.

Roll Call

Chairman Danny Ford called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Thursday, April 16, 2009. Gloria Robins called the roll. Chairman Ford welcomed two new commissioners to the Commission. Cindy Smith from McGhee owns a gift shop and commented she will be a strong voice for the Delta. Tom Schueck from Little Rock and owns Lexicon, a heavy steel construction company that operates abroad and in the U.S.

Approval of Agenda

Montine McNulty moved to approve the agenda as presented. Bob Knight seconded and the motion carried.

Presentation of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Steve Arrison moved to approve the Minutes for the February 2009 meeting. Debbie Haak seconded and the motion carried.

Recognition of Guests

Chairman Danny Ford welcomed guests Tom Galyon, Rogers Chamber of Commerce and thanked him for the tour of Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art and dinner at the Museum of Native American Artifacts, commenting both were great and very enjoyable. Chairman Ford also welcomed the other guests attending the meeting.

Financial Report

Cynthia Dunlap presented the financial report for the fiscal year-to-date period ended March 31, 2009. Expenditures were: Parks Division, \$52,800,676; Tourism Division, \$10,760,630; Keep Arkansas Beautiful, \$404,303; Administration Division, \$2,238,515; and History Commission, \$1,212,035. Expenditures for the Department totaled \$67,416,159, which included construction and grants. Fiscal year-to-date operating revenue for the Parks Division totaled \$15,803,057, an increase of 0.4% over last year's total.

Ness Sechrest moved to approve the March Financial Report as presented. Debbie Haak seconded and the motion carried.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Richard W. Davies thanked the Commissioners for hosting the Staff Appreciation and Service Awards Dinner at Petit Jean State Park on May 21, 2009. He also reminded the Commission of Oaklawn's Grand opening VIP Celebration on May 20 at 4:30 p.m.

Mr. Davies reported on status of bills at the end of the session dealing with Parks and Tourism, Government Operations, and the Tourism Industry. Mr. Davies noted Parks and Tourism follows more bills than other agencies due to the diversity from tourism to park operations, personnel and retirement issues. He thanked Gloria Robins and Gale Law for three months of constant efforts following the bills. Davies also thanked Montine McNulty for her hard work. He reported there will no longer be biennial budgets or appropriations but biennial professional services and vendor contracts are allowed. Next year the legislative session will be a financial session only and will require a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote to place non-budget items on the agenda.

Mr. Davies reported that the exhibit "Badges, Bandits and Bars: Arkansas Law & Justice" will open at the Old State House Museum in Little Rock on Friday, April 23. Tony Perrin, a regional supervisor for Arkansas State Parks, is a guest curator for the exhibit, which is a history of law and order in Arkansas with an emphasis on the criminal justice system and the state's effort to reform its prisons.

PARKS DIVISION

Arkansas State Parks (ASP) FY 2010 Internet Budget

Dina Pruitt with Aristotle and Joe Jacobs with ASP presented the ASP FY10 internet budget to include updates and maintenance of the trails database, social marketing optimization, a continuation of search engine optimization for www.arkansasstateparks.com and e-newsletter hosting improvements. The plan will add new categories, photos, portable document formats (PDFs), and search items which will be easier for users to access and share information. Joe Jacobs stated he maintains the Facebook Web site, and the goal is for the 4,000 “Facebook friends” to do the sharing of information with friends, increasing ASP’s presence. Staff is currently updating several Web sites and provided a preview of DeGray and Queen Wilhelmina sites. Jacobs commented staff will enhance the Calendar of Events with zip codes, by park assisting with how and what people can find easily. Ms. Pruitt reported statistics show a slight slow down in internet traffic overall, however reported an 8% increase in year to date internet visits and increase of 19% in pay per click for ASP, primarily due to content. Jim Shamburger questioned if there was an increase in actual bookings, to which Jacobs replied, yes with the online reservations increasing exponentially. Jacobs reported the proposed budget is a 5% increase over the current budget.

Budget Summary

ArkanasaStateParks.com Web site maintenance and Updates	\$ 41,640.00
Individual Parks Sites and Micro-Sites	\$ 56,000.00
Internet Marketing & Reporting	\$ 50,037.00
Kiosks	\$ 30,000.00
Website & Enews Hosting and Domain Renewals	<u>\$ 13,663.00</u>
State Parks FY 2009 Sub Total	\$ 191,340.00
5% Contingency	<u>\$ 9,567.00</u>
Grand Total	\$ 200,907.00

Steve Arrison moved to approve the FY 2010 Internet Budget Arkansas for State Parks totaling \$200,907. Montine McNulty seconded and the motion carried.

State Parks ABA Summer 2009 Radio and TV Spots

Greg Butts reported that ASP has had a grant partnership agreement with ABA since 1988, paying \$75,000 to ABA to provide a minimum of four to one match for radio and TV spots. ABA provides participating members free air time and space while ASP pays for production of TV and radio spots. Butts advised ABA has contributed more than what the grant partnership requires, which is very appreciated by ASP. The Arkansas Broadcasters Association 2009 summer radio and television spots were presented to the Commission:

TV Spot (30-second spot)

TV Cut # 1: "Arkansas's State Parks ... So Close and So Much To Do"

Radio Spots (60-second spots)

Radio Cut # 1: "Arkansas's State Parks... So Close and So Much To Do"

Radio Cut #2: "Historic Washington"

Mike Mills moved to approve the Summer 2009 ABA Radio and TV Spots: TV Spot (30-second spot) TV Cut # 1: "Arkansas's State Parks ... So Close and So Much To Do"; Radio Spots (60-second spots) Radio Cut # 1: "Arkansas's State Parks... So Close and So Much To Do"; Radio Cut #2: "Historic Washington". Bob Knight seconded and the motion carried.

Ozark Folk Center State Park

Greg Butts reported the Stone County Muzzleloaders request to name the rifle range the Jack Wesley Thomas Memorial Rifle Range will be postponed to a later date. The Ozark Folk Center Cultural Commission (OFCCC) next meeting will be October and the request will return to the SPRTC with a recommendation from the OFCCC at a subsequent date.

Delta Heritage Trail State Park

Stan Graves requested a use permit from Kentucky Date Line to cross the Delta Heritage Trail in two locations as part of a project to connect fiber optic cable to a number of schools in the Great River School Coop. The proposed crossings will be done by attaching cable to existing power utility poles where other utilities are currently located. Both crossings are located in Phillips County serving Oneida and Elaine.

Mike Mills moved to approve the request for use permit at the Delta Heritage Trail for Kentucky Data Link, Inc as follows: a portion of E ½, Sec 9, Township 3 South, Range 3 East located one mile South of Oneida, Arkansas in the vicinity of the intersection of State Highway 85 & CR 352; and a portion of S ½, Sec 24, and N ½ Sec 25, Township 4 South, Range 2 East located one mile north of Elaine, Arkansas in the vicinity of the intersection of State Highway 44 & CR 472, in Phillips County, Arkansas. Debbie Haak seconded and the motion carried.

Powhatan Historic State Park – Request for removal of mobile home from inventory

Stan Graves requested the removal of mobile home structure #62.40, AASIS 120006735 from inventory. This structure is located in the town's historic area adjacent to the Black River.

Mike Mills moved to approve the request for removal of a mobile home structure (# 62.40, AASIS 120006735) from inventory at Powhatan Historic State Park. Ness Sechrest seconded and the motion carried.

Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park – Request for removal of three structures from inventory

Stan Graves requested removal of three structures from inventory: Residential structure # 42.39, AASIS 120001880, Garage # 45.41, AASIS 120002196, and Well House #45.40, AASIS 120002388.

Mike Mills moved to approve the request of removal of three structures at Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park from inventory as follows: Residential structure # 42.39, AASIS 120001880, Garage # 45.41, AASIS 120002196, and Well House #45.40, AASIS 120002388. Jay Bunyard seconded and the motion carried.

Commission of Certificate

Greg Butts requested a Commission Certificate of Appreciation for Harry Harnish, park interpreter for Devil's Den State Park, who is retiring after 30 years

of service. Mr. Harnish has officially announced his retirement effective June 15, 2009 at the close of Bat-O-Rama XX, one of the most popular programs at the park created and led by Harnish.

Debbie Haak moved to approve the request of a Certificate of Appreciation for Harry Harnish, for his 30 years of service and contributions. Montine McNulty seconded and the motion carried.

CIP Quarterly Report

Stan Graves referred the Commission to the CIP Quarterly Report for updates, project status and stated there are currently 32 Methods of Finance (MOFs) open, with an estimated \$ 75 million committed in MOFs. Mr. Graves noted that three MOFs in the amount of \$387,895 were closed this quarter.

Fees and Rates

Chairman Danny Ford opened the floor for public comment for a revised proposed Policy Directive 2000 for Arkansas State Parks. No public comments and/or responses were received at the Commission meeting or via the ASP Director's office as advertised. Mr. Butts reviewed the revised PD 2000 Bull Shoals – White River for final comments from the Commission.

Jim Gaston moved to approve the revised PD 2000 for Bull Shoals – White River State Park Bull Shoals Dam Powerhouse Audio Equipment Rental and Transportation Fee of \$ 4.00 per person and \$ 12.00 per family. Montine McNulty seconded and the motion carried.

Pet Policy for State Park Cabins

Chairman Danny Ford opened the floor for public comment for a revised proposed Policy Directive 3155 for Arkansas State Parks. No public comments and/or responses were received at the Commission meeting or via the ASP Director's office as advertised. Mr. Butts reviewed PD 3155 Pet Policy for State Park Cabins for final comments from the Commission.

Mike Mills moved to approve PD 3155 Pet Policy for State Park Cabins allowing one dog-friendly cabin per 10 cabins in state parks, with requirement of a pet carrier when pets are left unattended. Debbie Haak seconded and the motion carried with one no vote cast by Bill Barnes.

Boating Restrictions in State Parks

Chairman Danny Ford opened the floor for public comment for a revised proposed Policy Directive 3210 for Arkansas State Parks. No public comments and/or responses were received at the Commission meeting or via the ASP Director's office as advertised. Mr. Butts reviewed revised PD 3210 Boating Restrictions in State Parks for final comments from the Commission.

Bill Barnes moved to approve revised PD 3210 Boating Restrictions in state parks. Montine McNulty seconded and the motion carried.

Miscellaneous

In response to the proposed re-location of the museum at Hampson Archeological Museum State Park, Stan Graves advised a consultant has been hired to create a plan for a new building to house the 7,500 artifacts as the current building does not meet museum standards. Greg Butts commented he wants to have a definite plan before accepting a donation of property, to which the Steve Wilson family agrees.

Greg Butts invited the Commission to attend the formal dedication of Hobbs State Park-Conservation Area's Visitor Center scheduled on May 27, 2009 at 11:00 a.m. Governor Beebe and Senator Dale Bumpers have been invited to speak.

Greg Butts reported a major diamond find at Crater of Diamonds. Glenn Worthington of Springdale found a 2.04-carat yellow diamond dubbed the "Easter Sunrise Diamond" on April, 9, 2009 at Crater of Diamonds State Park.

Greg Butts made reference to the current economic climate in other state parks across the country and noted the majority are not in as good financial condition as Arkansas State Parks.

Greg Butts gave an update on Village Creek Resort (VCR) and reported that Brandt Enderly has selected an outstanding Arkansas construction company for the construction of the cart barn, clubhouse and infrastructure. The second nine holes are to open this weekend. VCR has a large AT&T golf tournament scheduled for this fall. Butts commented VCR expects the last nine holes to open in September. Stan Graves will be monitoring the progress. A brief history of VCR was provided to the new Commissioners. Mr. Butts noted VCR is now Playscapes. In regards to a question of the number of players so far, Joe Jacobs reported January and February results are soft, and he is currently waiting for the March report.

TOURISM DIVISION

Proposed Fee Schedule: CJRW Contract

Joe David Rice reported on CJRW's Proposed Fee Schedule. Legislation allows the Department to have its own rules in choosing an advertising agency. Every two years, the staff looks at the performance of the agency with the option to extend the contract for another two years or put it on the street for public bids. The proposed rates will go into effect on July 1, 2009 for a two-year period. The following table lists the proposed rates per hour.

Creative Direction/Supervision	\$70	Photography	\$78
Copy Writing	\$65	Photography Research	\$75
Copy Revisions	\$65	Photography Administration	\$35
Copy Review	\$60	Broadcast Coordination	\$70
Art Concept & Direction	\$70	Broadcast Production	\$70
Art Revisions	\$70	Typography Composition	\$78
Mechanical Art	\$65	Typography Revisions	\$78
Post Production	\$70	Communications Service & Counsel	\$74
A/V Production	\$70	Research Analysis	\$65
Production Supervision	\$60	Public Relations Account Coordination	\$38
Production Coordination	\$60		

Ness Sechrest moved to approve the 2-year extension of the advertising rates. Debbie Haak seconded and the motion carried

Mississippi River Commission: Presentation

Joe David Rice reported on the recent Mississippi River Commission meeting in Vicksburg, Mississippi. Mr. Rice stated that Bill Hobbgood, Chairman of the Ouachita River Valley Association, invited him to make a presentation on the value of recreation and tourism in the region.

2009 Arkansas Governor's Conference on Tourism

Nancy Clark reported on the 35th Annual 2009 Governor's Conference on Tourism. She thanked all the staff at ADPT, CJRW, Aristotle and everyone else involved. There were a total of 637 registrants, including one student. The evaluations are coming in with mostly positive comments. Nancy thanked Claude Legris for all his help. Ms. Clark reported that \$66,000 was raised at the annual auction, which goes toward funding scholarships for students. Next year's conference will be held in Eureka Springs, on March 7-9, 2010.

Steve Arrison asked about the Governor's Conference being moved away from Spring Break. Ms. Clark explained that there are weather issues to be considered in February. However the bids for 2011 and 2012 are for the last week in February or the first week in March.

Tourism Development Section

Donna Perrin reported on the Magnolia Tourism Attraction Feasibility Study, which was completed on March 16th. The City of Magnolia was awarded a \$6,000 matching grant to conduct a \$12,000 tourism attraction feasibility study for Columbia County Equine Arena. Richard Davies explained the purpose of tourism attraction studies to the new commissioners.

The Fall/Winter Arkansas Calendar of Events e-mail notification was sent and forms were mailed in late March. Event sponsors have until April 30 to submit events that will occur between Labor Day weekend and February 28, 2010. The events currently listed may be proofed online at www.arkansas.com/calendar. Ms. Perrin reported that Tourism Development is working with Aristotle on a category index for the Web site as well as graphics for the Home Page.

The agritourism Web Page (www.arkansas.com/agritourism) has numerous photos added. The Web site was introduced at the 2009 Governor's Conference on Tourism.

Group Travel Section Report

Due to a scheduling conflict, Joe David Rice reported on the Group Travel Section Report, in Renee Robison's absence. Inquiries are up over last year with a 401 year-to-date for March 2009 versus 219 year-to-date for March 2008. The Group Travel section is

beginning to see the spring influx of family reunion inquiries for the tour guides, state parks and calendar of events.

Group Travel Staff coordinated and assisted the Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau staff with a very successful Bank Travel Conference held in Little Rock at the Statehouse Convention Center on February 19-21, 2009. Thirty tourism leaders from across the state participated in the event.

Ms. Robison attended Travel South USA which was held in Orlando April 4-8, 2009. A total of 15 tourism leaders attended from all across the state. She also attended the African-American Travel Conference in Milwaukee, WI on April 21-23 and will attend the Missouri Bank Travel Conference in Branson, MO on May 5-6, 2009.

Group Travel is working with the Aristotle staff to update the www.arkansasgrouptour.com Web site, and to develop the online newsletter.

Research and Information Services Section Report

Joanne Hinson reported on the Research Information Services Section for the previous two months. The inquiries for year-to-date are down 10.2% compared to 2008. February and March requests for retirement/relocation information were 308 and 2,037 respectively. The Research and Information Services Section processed 11,074 requests for information during February 2009, a decrease of 8.2% over February 2008. The March inquiry total is 45,250, down 8.5%.

The Research staff members completed statistics for the 2008-2009 Annual Report in February, and it was distributed March 16 at the Governor's Conference on Tourism. The Fall/Winter Conversion Study mail survey and Fall/Winter Conversion Study questionnaires are being processed.

Arkansas Welcome Center visitation was 32,721 in February, down 4.2% from February 2008. March visitation was 65,437, an increase of 11.4%. Year-to-Date, Welcome Center visitation is up 5.4%.

The original Lake Village Welcome Center building will be demolished and removed, once the staff moves into the new facility. The media has been really excited about the new change as well as the community. There is still a lot that has to be done with the hope that everything will be finished at the same time.

The West Memphis Welcome Center will be moved eventually, to make up for all the traffic it's missing because of cars traveling on different highways/interstates in the area.

Communications Section Report

Joe David Rice reported on the Communications Section Report in Dena Woerner's absence. Ms. Woerner and Travel Writer Kimberly Williams were in the field with a film crew visiting Arkansas to film a 90-second documentary on rice farming, agriculture and rice production in the U.S. with a side focus on agritourism. The group is NPI: Japanese Public Broadcasting Network Documentary: "Filling the Stomach of the World." Filming will take place from April 16-May 7 along the Mississippi River from New Orleans to Arkansas.

Internet-Related Items

Jonathan Eudy reported on Internet-Related Items. For stats, "All 50 state tourism sites," Arkansas came in second behind Virginia and ahead of Michigan with 7.3% of the market share. Visitor Sessions were at 585,740 for March 2009, an increase of 18% since last year. Unique Visitors are up 6.2% from last year. For Media Downloads, Motorcycle Adventures, Let's Ride 2008 was downloaded 9,586 times. Total Media Downloads was 25,667 for the month of March. As far as Tracking, Printer Friendly Pages for 2009 were at 28,999. Send to a Friend were 384 for the month of March. Exit Link to Members Web sites was 100,513. Keyword Buys Total Impressions were 1,094,845, Click-Through was 26,240 with a cost of \$14,116.87. Cost-Per-Click was \$0.54, with 365 inquiries. The Budget Balance is \$51,845.99. Social Networking is up, with 2,971 profile views on the MySpace page, 1,810 friends and 1,140 blog views. For Hitwise, Arkansas.com was ranked #2 of the 50 State Tourism Sites. In the Travel Category Arkansas.com is in the top 3 percentile. Arkansas ranked #2 in the "All 50 Tourism Sites" in March 2009. Arkansas ranked #1 in the Contiguous State Tourism Sites in March 2009, with 37% of the market share. In Paid vs. Organic Search, Arkansas.com is #2 with only 1% paid traffic and 99% organic. As far as Production, Aristotle inserted new seasonal homepage images for Spring/Summer on the Web site. The Governor's Conference presentations on Industry Web sites and a photo gallery from the conference were posted on the Web site. Last year, Aristotle installed a terabyte to house all the photos and information and recently purchased another terabyte. New content for National Tourism Week was posted on the Web site. A Content Management System was created for the Web site; as well as a new Tracking Programming for the Spring/Summer CJRW banner ad campaign. Aristotle completed programming and tracking of 2009 conversion study. The hard drives for the photo archive were updated.

Marla Johnson-Norris reported on trends with social networking Web sites such as Facebook.com, MySpace.com and Twitter.com. These are all highly trafficked Web sites. Twitter.com is a major player in social networking, getting huge media exposure by breaking news stories before major television media. Twitter.com is full of great search applications and was very early in the use of cell phones as an internet tool. If there are weather issues, Twitter.com is very useful to report breaking news. It is a good tool for PR/media connections as well as a reputation and trend check. Twitter.com could be more personal or

interesting and a lot of the information pulled up is not newsworthy. Twitter.com is not search friendly.

Marketing/Advertising Items

Media Coverage of the 2009 Governor's Conference on Tourism

Karen Mullikin played several samples of media coverage tidbits from the 2009 Governor's Conference on Tourism, including a segment Joe David Rice's interview with Roby Brock for his "Talk Business" program in Central Arkansas.

Spring/Summer 2009 Publicity Update

See Arkansas First Update

Karen Mullikin reported that the See Arkansas First campaign is up and running. See Arkansas First is an in-state publicity program to encourage Arkansans to travel within the state on their vacations. Last year, CJRW began a campaign with River City R.V. The Arkansas Broadcasters Association has been very instrumental in this program. The R.V. travels all around the state and twice a week, goes to different locations throughout the state and works with local radio stations and broadcasts from those locations. This year it will run from April through May and pick it up again in September and October, to address both spring and fall travel. So far this year, they've been to Magnolia, Hot Springs, Ashdown, DeQueen, Batesville and Mountain View. The spring schedules Heber Springs, Eureka Springs, Wynne, Camden and Riverfest in Little Rock. The give-a-ways at this program are part of the appeal. Lewis and Clark donated a camping package for a give-a-way. Also North Little Rock Honda donated a TRX 420 Rancher 4 x 4 with a retail value of over \$5,000.00. Other partners include Coca-Cola, Petit Jean Meats and The Passion Play. State Parks staff helped put this together. At Riverfest this year, the R.V. will be parked near the KSSN 96 FM booth all 3 days to raise awareness about Arkansas vacations, do interviews and give-a-way prizes.

Welcome to Arkansas Program

Karen Mullikin reported that the Welcome to Arkansas Program is underway. This is a hospitality training program for the industry, aimed at cross-selling and helping frontline employees understand how to send vacationers to different areas around the state. The program is incentive-based for the community. The kickoff of the program was at the 2009 Governor's Conference last month, where a workshop was put together, with a turnout of over 60 people. Scott Sudduth with the Arkansas Hospitality Association is coordinating a series of meetings across the state to help promote the program. Kristine Puckett will be training people around the state to promote as well.

Key Cards for lodging properties across the state with Arkansas themed pictures on them have been very popular. 5 different properties have ordered them so far.

Geiger

Karen Mullikin reported on the Geiger tours. CJRW hires Geiger, a public relations firm from Florida, to bring travel writers into Arkansas. A copy of the most recent Geiger report was given to the Commission. Geiger is planning another tour during the first weekend in May 2009. Cumulative media value totals \$224,970.51. This amount is what Parks & Tourism would have paid had it purchased this same amount of editorial coverage in the form of paid advertising.

Focus Groups

Karen Mullikin reported on a focus group project for research. Members of the CJRW team and Joanne Hinson will travel to St. Louis, Kansas City and Dallas to test our 2009 Spring/Summer television and print campaign against Arkansas's touch states' campaigns. The groups will also be shown spec. advertisement ideas for developing the 2010 advertising campaign.

Spring/Summer 2009 Co-op Advertising Report

Karen Mullikin reported that the tourism industry members saved almost \$150,000 by participating in the Spring/Summer Co-op advertising. In the co-op program, the state buys a page of advertising in print media and industry members buy portions of the other pages.

Miscellaneous (CJRW)

Wayne Woods reported on the newspaper insert, which has been produced for over 15 years. For 2009, the insert will be distributed in 20 markets in 6 states.

Shelby Woods reported on the grand opening of Oaklawn on May 20, 2009. The Commission will all receive an invitation.

Miscellaneous

Joe David Rice distributed several handouts from newspapers and articles concerning tourism.

Richard Davies reported that next month's meeting will be at Petit Jean and it will be a 2-night stay, as the Staff Appreciation and Service Awards Dinner will be included in the meeting.

Montine McNulty mentioned a new book out, *Sell with Confidence* by Paul Vitale. The Bill Clinton birth house will be placed under National Parks jurisdiction and The Trail of Tears will be added to the Nation Trails System.

Former Commissioner Wade Williams Recognized

Chairman Danny Ford presented a Commission of Certificate to Wade Williams, former SPRTC Commissioner, for his outstanding service to the SPRTC.

The State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m. on April 16, 2009 at Hobbs State Park Conservation Area.