

## MINUTES

### State Parks, Recreation & Travel Commission Magnolia, Arkansas August 18-19, 2005

#### Commissioners Present

Jane Christenson, Chairman  
Bill Barnes  
Polly Crews  
Billy Lindsey, Thursday only  
Mike Mills, Thursday only  
Montine McNulty

Jim Shamburger, Vice Chairman  
Danny Ford, Thursday only  
Wade Williams  
Jay Bunyard  
Debbie Haak  
Ness Sechrest

#### Commissioners Absent

Steve Arrison

Jim Gaston

#### Department Staff Present

Richard W. Davies, Executive Director  
Larry Cargile, Central Administration Director  
Greg Butts, State Parks Director  
Joe David Rice, Tourism Director  
Nancy Clark, Asst. Tourism Director  
Stan Graves, Manager, Planning & Development  
Mac Balkman, Manager, Operations  
Joan Ellison, Public Relations Officer  
Donna Perrin, Manager, Tourism Development  
Jana Greenbaum, Communications Manager  
Melinda Hawes, Group Travel Manager  
Jon Brown, Region I Supervisor  
Marcel Hanzlik, Region III Supervisor  
Jim Cannon, Region IV Supervisor  
Charles McLemore, Director, Research Information Services  
Pam Beasley, Director, Arkansas Museum of Natural Resources  
Jim Gann, Superintendent, Logoly State Park  
Chris Snodgrass, Superintendent, DeGray Lake Resort State Park  
Paula Majors, Superintendent, Millwood State Park  
Joe Buckley, Superintendent, Old Washington Historic State Park  
Gloria Robins, Executive Assistant  
Sandy Burch, Administrative Assistant

**Agency Staff Present**

Shelby Woods            Wayne Woods            Karen Mullikin

**Aristotle**

Marla Johnson Norris            Jonathan Eudy            Paige Watson

**Guests Present**

Dr. David Rankin, President, SAU  
Terry Cook, Harrison CVB  
Barry Travis, Little Rock CVB  
Laurie Green, Little Rock CVB  
Dan O'Byrne, Little Rock CVB  
Ben Beaumont, Little Rock CVB  
Leslie Kent, ReSource One  
Julia Wilson, Banner News  
Gary Jones, Jones Productions

**Call to Order**

Chairman Christenson called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m. and Gloria Robins called the roll.

**Approval of the Agenda**

**Bill Barnes moved to approve the agenda. Danny Ford seconded and the motion carried.**

**Presentation of Minutes from Previous Meeting**

**Montine McNulty moved to approve the Minutes. Jim Shamburger seconded and the motion carried.**

**Recognition of Guests**

Chairman Christenson recognized and welcomed guests in attendance.

### **Financial Report**

Larry Cargile presented a financial report for the month ended July 31, 2005, the first month of Fiscal Year 2006. The expenditures were: Parks Division, \$4,992,020, including construction and grants; Tourism Division, \$1,096,419; Keep Arkansas Beautiful, \$15,887; Administration Division, \$206,175; and History Commission, \$181,179. Expenditures for the Department totaled \$6,491,680. The Parks Division July operating revenue was \$2,197,660, an increase of 8% over July, 2004.

**Ness Sechrest moved to approve the financial report. Billy Lindsey seconded and the motion carried.**

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

#### **SAU President, David Rankin**

Richard Davies introduced Dr. David Rankin, President of Southern Arkansas University. Dr. Rankin welcomed everyone to the campus and expressed appreciation for the work the Commission does for the State of Arkansas. Dr. Rankin gave an overview of the campus, the City of Magnolia, Columbia County, and the surrounding area -- reporting on growth, employment, and economic health.

#### **Staff Appreciation Dinner**

Richard Davies said the annual Staff Appreciation Dinner will be held on Thursday, September 15<sup>th</sup> at DeGray Lake Resort State Park.

**Ness Sechrest moved to approve Commission sponsorship of the Staff Appreciation Dinner at DeGray Lake Resort State Park on September 15, 2005. Jim Shamburger seconded and the motion carried.**

#### **Entertainers Hall of Fame Banquet – September 30**

Richard Davies said that on September 30<sup>th</sup> the Arkansas Entertainers Hall of Fame Banquet, Induction and performances will be held in Pine Bluff at the Convention Center.

#### **Legislative Dinner – September 22**

Richard Davies said that the Joint Performance Review Committee of the General Assembly will be meeting in Heber Springs on September 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Tourism Development Foundation will be sponsoring dinner on Thursday evening September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Because of the large number of legislators who will be in attendance, Mr. Davies urged Commissioners to attend. On Friday morning, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, ADPT will be on the agenda to give an update on tourism and state parks.

### **U.S. Cultural & Heritage Tourism Summit (USCHTS)**

Richard Davies said the USCHTS had written to the governors of each state requesting that three people from each state be nominated to attend the summit. Governor Huckabee nominated Richard Davies, Joe David Rice and Cathy Matthews to represent Arkansas at the meeting in Washington D.C. October 5-8, 2005.

### **Arkansas Products on Website**

Richard Davies said the Tourism Foundation was working with *Wildwear* in Little Rock to make Arkansas products available for purchase on Arkansas.com. The Foundation has the copy right on *Arkansas the Natural State* logo. Mr. Davies said the foundation will receive seven percent of the sales and it would be monitored on the honor system. The Foundation would be in control of what type of merchandise the logo would be applied. *Wildwear's* site will be on-line within the next few weeks. Aristotle is working on putting a link on Arkansas.com.

## **PARKS DIVISION**

### **Proposed CY2006 Fees & Rates**

Greg Butts proposed the following additional changes and revisions for the CY2006 fees and rates:

- A \$2.00 Chaperone fee for the Diamond Springs Water Park at Crater of Diamonds State Park.
- Junior (16 and under) golf rates at DeGray Lake Resort State Park  
18 holes: \$14.50 weekend/ \$10.50 weekday  
9 holes: \$11.50 weekend/ \$7.50 weekday
- Devil's Den State Park Cabins  
3 bdrm., 2 bath w/1-person spa tub \$170  
3 bdrm., 1.5 bath w/2-person spa tub \$160  
3 bdrm., 1 bath w/2-person spa tub \$150
- Ozark Folk Center  
1-day Family craft or music pass \$25  
1-day Family craft and music pass \$40  
3-day Family craft and music pass \$100  
Season passes do not include discounts for Celebrity Concerts

**Montine moved to approve changes and additions to the proposed Arkansas State Parks' CY2006 fees and rates as presented. Jay Bunyard seconded and the motion carried.**

Greg Butts said he wanted to revisit the proposal to provide reciprocal senior discounts to out-of-state campers. The Parks Committee will meet prior to the next meeting to develop a final recommendation prior to the public meeting on September 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Arkansas Broadcasters Association – Fall 2005 TV & Radio Spots**

Joan Ellison said the grant partnership program with the Arkansas Broadcasters Association began in 1987. Since that time, \$13 million has been contributed in television and radio advertising. Ms. Ellison played three new 60-second radio spots: *Think of and Remember*, *Arkansas State Parks Web Site*, and *Mt. Magazine State Park*.

Regarding the *Mt. Magazine State Park* spot, Bill Barnes suggested there be more emphasis on the breath-taking, panoramic views. Also, instead of stating there are 13 cabins, say, “offering 1, 2, and 3-bedroom cabins with hot tubs and fireplaces.” People are more interested in the number of bedrooms than how many cabins are available and it would be good to include the fact that the cabins have hot tubs and fireplaces. Ms. Ellison said the spot originally began that way but the text had to be cut back due to the voice talent trying to set the mood along with fitting the text within the allotted time. Ms. Ellison said she will cut from the front of the spot and pull in the wording. Jim Shamburger said it does not need to be said in the spots how many rooms are available. The ad spots just need to say there is a magnificent lodge with guest rooms, conference facilities, and cabins with breath-taking views. Mr. Shamburger said in the text distributed it mentions balconies but that was not included in the ad played. Mr. Barnes said that is an important thing people remember – that’s why guests rent the rooms. Ms. Ellison said she would make those changes. Wade Williams said the word “really” was used six times in the spot about the website. Ms. Ellison said she wanted a young voice and he was allowed to talk his way in the spot. Jay Bunyard said it didn’t bother him much. If written for the newspaper, the word “really” is used too many times; however, for the 60-second radio ad, its fine. Polly Crews said in a future spot the facts, such as how many rooms and cabins are available, could be included. Greg Butts said there will be another ad in the spring and an opportunity to create a new radio spot. Ms. Ellison played the three 30-second television spots to continue running through fall: *Our State Parks*, *It’s All for You*, and *Make Memories* (Ozark Folk Center). Jay Bunyard said there is a need for ads in Spanish.

**Ness Sechrest moved to approve continuing the three 30-second television spots through fall and the three new 30-second radio spots with the changes requested in the *Mt. Magazine State Park* ad. Danny Ford seconded and the motion carried.**

### **Old Washington Historic State Park – Request for Utility ROW**

Stan Graves said a request had been received to install an underground power line through a tract of land at Old Washington Historic State Park in order to provide service to an adjacent landowner. Mr. Graves requested approval for a Right-of-Way Easement.

**Jay Bunyard moved to approve a 15' x 199' Right-of-Way utility easement at Old Washington Historic State Park for the installation of underground electrical service to an adjacent landowner. Montine McNulty seconded and the motion carried.**

### **Mt. Magazine State Park – Construction Update**

Following up from the discussion at the July meeting about the exposed ductwork in the lodge restaurant and hearth room, Greg Butts said, Ken Sims with Sims, Grisham & Blair Architects, and Ed Tinsley with TME, Inc. would address the basis for the design of the HVAC system and aesthetic solutions. Ed Tinsley, mechanical engineer for the project, described three different heating and cooling systems and listed the advantages and disadvantages of each. The overhead ductwork system was chosen because of superior acoustics, high ventilation effectiveness, superior thermal comfort, quietness of operation and low cost. A disadvantage of the system chosen is appearance. Ken Sims showed a photograph of the ductwork for the system that had been chosen for the lodge after it had been painted. Mr. Sims said it had always been the intention that it be painted. The first photograph the Commissioners had seen during the July meeting was prior to the ductwork being painted. Mr. Sims said another option is to build a “U” shaped wood tray; however it may call even more attention to the ductwork. The contractor could build a small section so everyone could see how that option would look. Or faux painting could be done to the ductwork to make it appear more like the logs that are used throughout the building. Stan Graves said there are a couple people in the state who are very good at faux painting. One of those painters will be going to the park the following week to look at the ductwork to see if he could paint it to match the ceiling. Greg Butts asked about the placement of the lighting fixtures. Mr. Sims said there will be four fixtures that are five feet in diameter. The placement and appearance of the fixtures were described.

Wade Williams said he did not feel any of the Commissioners had any concern about the type of heating and cooling system chosen. The only issue is that the ductwork can be seen. There was so much emphasis on how the lodge should look. The Commissioners wanted the lodge to have a rustic look and now there is ductwork running through the middle of the architectural features of three major public areas. Mr. Williams said he never saw any drawings that showed the ductwork at the ceiling. Why wasn't the ductwork installed in a manner that it did not show? Mike Mills said the lodge he built has a ceiling exactly like the one at Mt. Magazine and all the ductwork was installed above the ceiling. It looks like the ductwork was designed after the lodge structure at Mt. Magazine was built. Mr. Williams asked if the

ductwork was shown on the artist renderings that the Commissioners saw. Mr. Sims said the rendering was prepared before any mechanical work had been done. Jim Shamburger asked if there was any consideration to putting in floor diffusers in the pool area. Mr. Tinsley said floor diffusers were considered for all areas. However, the issues were the additional cost of constructing a tunnel and the potential for mold growing in the tunnel. Debbie Haak said having the ductwork showing is not acceptable for a \$36 million project. It has to be made more palatable to the eye. Mr. Mills asked what was above the ceiling. Mr. Sims described the roof deck and insulation – there is not enough space to install ductwork. Bill Barnes said a tray would draw more attention. Ness Sechrest said it might be alright to leave the ductwork where it is if it was faux painted to look like wood. Mr. Graves said also the contractor would construct a length of tray so the Commissioners could see what that would look like. Mr. Williams said he was having a difficult time reconciling that for the money that is being paid to build the lodge, there wasn't more consideration given to the very specific directive about the aesthetics, and how exposed ductwork became acceptable to Mr. Sims, as the architect. Mr. Sims said it seemed to be the only option. A second roof could be built but that did not seem to be a practical approach. Ms. Haak asked how long it would take for the paint to peel. Mr. Tinsley said the ductwork was treated before it was painted. Mr. Williams asked who would bear the cost for the fix, whatever the fix is. Mr. Sims said he supposed we would. Mr. Williams asked who "we" was. Mr. Sims said himself. Danny Ford said he wished the Commissioners had been involved in the selection of the heating and cooling system. Mr. Tinsley said, in hind-sight that would have been best. Richard Davies said he understood the additional cost, but he felt that what Mr. Mills' did at his lodge is what should have been done at the park. Mr. Williams asked what it would take to do that now. Mr. Mills asked about putting the entire ductwork system on top of the current roof. It would be better on the roof than in the restaurant and entry. The worse is if this is a situation that cannot be fixed and we have to live with it. Is there a way to put the ductwork on top of the building? Mr. Tinsley said it could be but it would have to be well insulated and it would present the potential for leaking. Also, the exterior appearance would be compromised if the ductwork was on the roof. Bill Barnes suggested a different way the ductwork could be run into the room along side the current log beams, and encased to create a larger, artificial beam. Mr. Tinsley said the additional cost of the sheet metal work would be staggering. Also, because of the reduced diameter of the duct, more ductwork would be required. Mr. Barnes' suggestion is feasible but very expensive. Mr. Mills said that suggestion would reduce the problem but it would still look like an afterthought design. Polly Crews said the Commissioners are very unhappy with the ductwork. What can be done? Mr. Sims said options on what could be done needed to be brought back to the Commission. Mr. Barnes said he did not believe a tray is an option. All of the Commissioners agreed. Mr. Shamburger said if the ductwork was faux painted to look like logs, and when the light fixtures are installed, the ductwork may not be as noticeable as it is currently. Mr. Shamburger said he wished it had been done differently, but the best option now may be to faux paint the ductwork. Mr. Barnes said he agreed to a point but that the ductwork needs to be hidden in such a way that it looks like it is part of the beams. Chairman Christenson said the Parks Committee will look at options Mr. Sims will provide, and make a

recommendation to the full commission. To summarize the Commission's direction to Mr. Sims, the options to look at are either a secondary ceiling with the ductwork inside it, redesign the ductwork so it looks like the beams in the ceiling, put the ductwork outside but make it aesthetically pleasing from the outside, or faux paint the ductwork to make it look like logs.

### **Storm Damage Update**

Jon Brown reported on recent storms and the resulting damage at parks in Region I. At Devil's Den there was a storm on Monday, June 13<sup>th</sup>. Straight line winds downed approximately 200 trees and roof damage to cabin #6. On Saturday, July 23<sup>rd</sup> a micro-burst went through Prairie Grove Battlefield and destroyed 120 trees. No structures were damaged by the storm. Superintendent Ed Smith reported that 40 volunteers from the community and the local telephone company cleared the park of downed trees, etc. Greg Butts said staff would take out an ad in the local newspaper thanking the community for its help in cleaning up the storm damage at the park. Jim Cannon, Region IV Supervisor, reported that on Sunday, August 14<sup>th</sup> there was a small but strong storm at Crater of Diamonds. Park Superintendent Tom Stolarz's residence sustained damage from a downed tree. Mr. Cannon estimated that the cost to repair the damage will be between \$5,000 and \$7,000. At Lake Catherine, lightning struck a seasonal residence on July 21<sup>st</sup>. Park staff and the Lake Hamilton Fire Department were able to extinguish the fire and save the building, though there was extensive fire and water damage. Total damage was over \$49,000. After the insurance policy deductible and depreciation, our cost to repair the structure will be \$18,080.

### **Miscellaneous**

Greg Butts called the Commissioners' attention to an article about the Talimena scenic drive in *Oklahoma State Trooper* that mentioned Queen Wilhelmina State Park, and coverage of Crater of Diamonds State Park in *Rural Arkansas* magazine.

Wade Williams asked about the possibility of having a managing company operate the lodge at Mt. Magazine. Mr. Butts said it is an issue of how much the company would charge and that they would be managing our employees, and how that would fit in with the requirements of the bond program. Richard Davies said the original thought was to have a concession agreement but the bond attorney said a bonded facility cannot be leased. Mr. Williams asked if that was something we should look into. Mr. Butts said he was not convinced that is the best approach because of the cost involved. We would spend 6% to 10% of gross income from the restaurant and lodge to a manager. Bill Barnes asked if some kind of a management agreement could be offered to the private sector. Mr. Davies said, according to the bond attorney, it is very clear that we cannot lease to a private entity a building constructed with public bonds. Billy Lindsey asked if it could be done once the bonds are retired. Mr. Davies said he did not think it could be done.

Jim Shamburger asked for an update on the lodge and golf course project at Village Creek State Park. Mr. Butts said he had met recently with representatives of Wellington International and with Pete Hoover of Williams, Anderson Law Firm. Wellington is looking at the sale of taxable bonds through the Cross County Community Facilities board. Cross County will have to hold an election to approve the sale of the bonds. There is an option that Wellington would sell bonds for the construction of the golf course and the lodge complex. With that approach the Arkansas Department of Finance Administration (ADFA) could acquire \$7 million for the golf course and through a loan agreement, provide the funds to Arkansas State Parks for construction of the course. The other option is for ADFA to finance directly to us. We are proceeding with the natural resources survey. Wellington has contracted for the cultural resource survey and that should be finalized in the next few weeks. Mr. Davies said he thought we would be working with new participants. We also need to make sure no sensitive plants or animals, or archeological remains will be harmed by the construction of the golf course. Wade Williams asked if it would be appropriate for new participants to meet the Commission. Mr. Davies said he had asked specifically for that. Earl Worsham is no longer involved. Brandt Enderly is one of the lead figures with the Carter Plantation in Louisiana and the Carter Plantation may also be equity for the bond for this project.

## **TOURISM DIVISION**

### **Report from Educational Seminar for Travel Officials (ESTO)**

Joe David Rice said he, Nancy Clark and Charles McLemore had just returned from an ESTO meeting that was held in Cour 'de Lane, Idaho. During the seminar Virginia was recognized for a special promotion campaign slogan, *Virginia is for Dog Lovers*, and a poll was taken regarding heritage tourism. The results of that poll showed there has been an 85% decrease in attendance at heritage attractions. Mr. Rice said that Kentucky has instituted a new 1% hotel tax, Pennsylvania is paying bloggers to post comments on the Internet, and Missouri's tourism budget was cut by \$4.6 million. Mr. Rice was elected Vice-Chair of the National Council of State Tourism Directors.

### **Clinton Presidential Center & Park**

Joe David Rice introduced Skip Rutherford, President of the William J. Clinton Presidential Foundation, to provide an update on the Clinton Presidential Center. Mr. Rutherford said the 1,200 square foot Clinton Museum Store's gross revenues for nine months were \$1.94 million and it is expected that the net revenues will be \$1 million. The store has become a destination, in its own right, and has become an important revenue stream. In the nine months since the Clinton Presidential Center opened, there have been more than 410,000 visitors – the annual goal was 300,000. Approximately 55% of the adult visitors have been from out-of-state and 124 of the world's 192 foreign countries have been represented. Mr. Rutherford said there is an opportunity to open new markets. Besides the direct flights to Little Rock from nine out of

the top ten tourism destinations, 41 million vehicles drive by on I-30 annually. Of the 41 million vehicles, between 4 and 5 million are first time passers by. That is an extraordinary new market for Arkansas. The Little Rock CVB has a kiosk in the Library. The hits on that kiosk are more than at any other location – it has become a new visitor center. There is an enormous interest in what else is there to do in Arkansas by visitors to the Library. Mr. Rutherford said it was a good decision to locate the Library within walking distance of the Little Rock Convention Center. Many visitors to the Library are due to the strong convention business in Little Rock. During the month of October there are 40 after-hours special events scheduled at the Library. Many of those are directly related to conventions. Mr. Rutherford said the Library staff spends a lot of time meeting with travel writers from around the country. Copies of articles that had been written were distributed to the Commissioners. The Clinton Library is generating activity that is benefiting the entire state. Mr. Rutherford listed several organizations that would be holding their conventions in Little Rock in 2006, and discussed the opportunities to promote tourism in the state.

Richard Davies inquired about the bridge. Mr. Rutherford said it was in the design phase. An issue is how to exit on the North Little Rock side. Polly Crews asked if there was space available in the Library for a kiosk with information about the entire state. Mr. Rutherford said he would look into it. Mr. Rutherford said the number of recreational vehicles (RV) that would visit the Library was totally underestimated. When an RV comes into the parking lot, there isn't any place for them to stop, resulting in criticism for the oversight. Billy Lindsey asked if he had a way to rectify the situation. Mr. Rutherford said the Library parking area was not designed to provide an area for the RV parking. He said there are some options and he will be back to discuss them with the Commission.

Dan O'Byrne said tax collections for the first six months of 2005 over 2004 are up approximately 13%. Tax collections in Little Rock will exceed \$8 million this year. Rooms rented in the first six months of 2005 are up \$9.8 million over the same period last year – that is a 21% increase in room revenue. Room nights are 95,000 more in 2005 over 2004 – 526 more occupied rooms every night of the year for the first six months (up 15%).

### **Natural State Golf Trail Update**

Montine McNulty said five additional courses applied that will be accepted. Jim Shamburger said Joe David Rice had been working with the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) on trail signage. There have been good reports from *Fairways Golf* as well as golfers on the courses. Hotels offering packages have been pleased with the results. The five courses that have applied to be on the trail are Glenwood, Eagle Crest, Eagle Mountain, Tannenbaum and Mountain Ranch. Greg Butts asked if there were a target maximum number of courses. Mr. Shamburger said there isn't a target, but the maximum number of courses will be between 15 and 20.

### **Tourism Development Section**

Donna Perrin reported that an application for the first deadline for the Arkansas Tourism Attraction Feasibility Study Matching Grant Program was received from the City of Maumelle. They are requesting a \$15,000 grant for a \$30,000 study for a World War II Bunker project and a Wetland Nature Center. The approval committee granted Maumelle an \$11,294 grant which leaves a balance of \$11,294 for the next grant application period.

Ms. Perrin also said that the Tourism Division staff had participated in the Community Development Institute program held at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway to make communities aware of the assistance the Department of Parks & Tourism can provide for them.

### **Group Travel Section**

Melinda Hawes reported on the recent National Motorcoach Network tradeshow. It was small but helped showcase Arkansas. Because of the small size of the event, Ms. Hawes said she was able to have more personal conversations with the operators who attended. The tentative schedule for FY2006 group travel tradeshow was distributed to the Commissioners. Ms. Hawes said she did not anticipate anything being removed from the list but did anticipate there would be some shows added.

### **Research & Information Services Section**

#### **Signage Update**

Charles McLemore said he had been working on both the golf and winery signage with the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD). Courses on the Golf Trail must participate in the AHTD signing program. Jim Shamburger said once the Committee approved a course, a letter would be sent to the AHTD saying the course had been approved and then signs would be installed. Mr. McLemore said he had also been working with AHTD on the winery trail signs. Richard Davies asked if the wineries had funds that had been appropriated to pay for signs. Joe David Rice said that was correct. Mr. McLemore said more information would be provided at the September meeting. Debbie Haak asked about the design for the signs. Mr. Rice said it would be a glass and a cluster of grapes. Ms. Haak asked why it was a glass and not a bottle. Mr. Rice said the design was the one everyone agreed on including MADD. Mr. Davies said he thought it had been agreed to by everyone.

### **Fishing Tournaments Partnerships Proposed Guidelines**

The following draft of criteria for fishing tournament partnerships was distributed to the commissioners:

This document outlines criteria for communities to apply for co-op partnerships with the Arkansas Department of Parks & Tourism for proposed fishing tournaments intended to generate awareness and positive media coverage. It is offered as a guide only, and projects will be considered and approved on a case-by-case basis. Criteria shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. The tournament must be officially sanctioned by a recognized national fishing association.
2. A project plan for the tournament containing the community's specific request must be submitted to the Arkansas State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission via the Tourism Director for approval no later than six months prior to its planned implementation.
3. Tournament program elements must include the potential for significant regional and national publicity, therefore increasing awareness and positive media coverage for Arkansas tourism.
4. The tournament must have the support of private businesses and organizations (e.g., tourism attractions, lodging facilities, and other service providers). It should also be supported by volunteers from the community who are committed to the project's success.
5. The tournament program must contain elements designed to boost visitation to the destination, including local entertainment venues and other tourism attractions and businesses.
6. The Parks & Tourism portion of the budget may not exceed 3% of the total prize money being offered in the tournament, and the prizes must total at least \$500,000. State funds will come from the annual advertising budget.
7. Within two months of the project's completion, the Commission must receive a thorough written report (through the Tourism Director) detailing the publicity received, its value and the economic impact of the tournament.

Charles McLemore said the development of the draft criteria was a group project. Joe David Rice said Steve Arrison has asked that we develop a policy to keep our support of the tournaments under control.

**Bill Barnes moved to approve the draft of criteria for fishing tournament partnerships as presented. Jim Shamburger seconded and the motion carried.**

Jim Shamburger asked about a large amateur tournament that does not meet the prize money or national sponsorship criteria but draws 2,500 people from across the country. Mr. McLemore said in that case, the sponsor could come to the Commission for support as a special one-time event.

### **Welcome Centers: Status Report**

Charles McLemore said staff was looking at holding the Corning Welcome Center dedication in October however; the parking areas and landscaping may not be completed until early 2006. Regardless, staff would still prefer to hold the grand opening and dedication in October. Staff has occupied the building for two months.

Ness Sechrest asked if the land near Ingram Blvd. had been considered for the West Memphis Welcome Center. Joe David Rice said there had not yet been a firm decision made. Mr. Rice described potential locations for the new Center. The AHTD engineers are looking at safety and congestion issues. The engineers said they would prefer keeping the existing Welcome Center in its present location and building a satellite Welcome Center on I-55 at Marion where the AHTD owns land. Mr. Sechrest said that would work. Billy Lindsey said that if a satellite center were opened, there would need to be consideration on where the money would come from to staff it. Richard Davies said it would likely come from the 2% Tourism Tax revenues.

### **Inquiry Report**

Charles McLemore said there was an increase of 33.8% in requests for information in July 2005 over July 2004. Staff is currently preparing the 18,000 piece spring 2005 conversion study mail-out. Eighteen advertising markets will be evaluated.

### **Marketing/Advertising Items**

#### **Fall 2005 Radio Campaign: Media & creative Recommendations**

Greg Harrison reported on the in-state radio partnership with the Arkansas Broadcasters Association and the decision that the best use of budget dollars was to run the radio spots in rural areas of the state. The recommendation is to run a three-week campaign from September 5 through 25. A list of participating radio stations was distributed. Mr. Harrison said each of the stations had agreed to match advertising spending at a three for one level. Karen Mullikin said there are five Spanish radio stations included in the partnership. The spots will be run in Spanish on those stations. Ms. Mullikin played the three 30-second spots that were recommended.

**Ness Sechrest moved to approve the three 30-second radio spots for a total of \$25,192. Debbie Haak seconded and the motion carried.**

### **Fall/Winter 2005-2006 Television Schedules**

Greg Harrison outlined the schedule of the 2005 fall/winter television campaign. An average of 82.8% of adults aged 25-54 will be reached by the spots an average of 5.6 times over the three-week period September 5 through 25. Karen Mullikin said the total amount of \$481,276 had been approved by the Commission in May. Wade Williams asked if the schedule is something that should be approved by the Advertising Committee. Joe David Rice said this was routine and staff had worked closely with CJRW to develop the schedule.

**Montine McNulty moved to approve the 2005 fall/winter television campaign as presented. Ness Sechrest seconded and the motion carried.**

### **Post-Buy Analysis on Spring/Summer 2005 Television Campaign**

Greg Harrison said when a television schedule is put together; the buys are all based on estimated ratings. Once the schedule actually runs, a post buy analysis is made. A summary of the analysis was distributed to the Commissioners.

### **Communications Section**

#### **Ivory-Billed Woodpecker Recovery Team: Communications Group**

Jana Greenbaum said National Public Radio (NPR) in Chicago did a story on Brinkley and the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker. NPR gave permission to post it on the Arkansas.com website. Richard Davies said staff received calls from across the country when NPR aired the story. Ms. Greenbaum showed the Commissioners banners that showed artwork of the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker that was done by Larry Chandler of Jonesboro. Mr. Chandler gave ADPT ten of the banners at no charge. The banners are priced at \$150 each.

#### **City Listings Update: Arkansas.com**

Jana Greenbaum said one of the most popular areas on the Arkansas.com website is the City Listings section. There are 67 cities listed in that section that include photographs of attractions, lodging, dining and places of interest.

#### **New Features: Arkansas.com**

Jonathan Eudy reported on additions that had been made on Arkansas.com to the Natural State Golf Trail, the Interactive Map Viewer, the On-line Trip Planner and new features on the Arkansas Kids website. Richard Davies asked if there could be a link on the Natural State Golf Trail site to the courses that participate. Mr. Eudy said it would be added.

Marla Johnson Norris discussed strategic planning, on-line promotion, landing pages, e-mail fulfillment and tracking, search engine optimization, the place-holder mini sites, reunions, and ongoing strategy to maximize every page on the site to ensure they are doing the best job possible.

The mini-sites will be limited to four and staff wants to be sure funds are available to do them well. The new *Reunions* site will be a planning tool for planning a reunion in Arkansas and will list all the resources cities have to offer.

**Jim Shamburger moved to approve the Aristotle proposal as presented. Wade Williams seconded and the motion carried.**

Ms. Norris said the *Hot Deals and Packages* section was working very well. However, it is time that it be evaluated. The results of an industry survey were distributed. Out of 133 that responded, 101 are in the lodging business. Ms. Norris discussed the results of the survey. Bill Barnes said that within one day of posting a package, a reservation was made. More reservation nights have been made from this one source than anything else he has done. Ms. Norris said decisions have to be made about what kind of deals can be posted, how long they can remain on the site, and how many packages a company can post. More high-quality packages are needed on the site. A discussion followed on what constituted a "hot deal." Mr. Barnes said it is critical that packages be honored. Richard Davies said there had not been any complaints about them not being honored as advertised. Mr. Barnes said packages are each unique and he would not like to see staff develop guidelines for packages. Jim Shamburger said the number of hits on a package needs to be monitored so the site does not get cluttered. Ms. Norris discussed the potential of making coupons available. Mr. Shamburger said attractions and restaurants may like coupons, but the lodging industry does not.

**Ness Sechrest moved to approve Aristotle using the results of the industry survey on hot deals and packages to further develop the site and how it is promoted. Jim Shamburger seconded and the motion carried.**

Ms. Norris mentioned that Bojana Gojkovic who has worked on the Parks and Tourism account was leaving Aristotle and moving to Florida.

**Ness Sechrest moved to approve a Certificate of Appreciation for Bojana Gojkovic acknowledging her contributions to the Department of Parks & Tourism. Wade Williams seconded and the motion carried.**

### **Recent Familiarization Tours**

Jana Greenbaum reported on an article that was run in *Tulsa World* in August and another article will be run this fall on Little Rock and the Clinton Library. Ms. Greenbaum reported on other travel writers who had visited recently and will have articles running in *Ride* and *Elite* magazines.

### **Trip to Pocahontas**

Jana Greenbaum said the city of Pocahontas is getting ready to kick off its centennial celebrations in October with an old fashioned social. For many years the city was the gateway to Arkansas via the Southwest Trail. Mr. Greenbaum discussed the many interests and attractions in Pocahontas.

### **Miscellaneous**

Wade Williams asked if it would make sense to schedule the Advertising Committee meeting for major issues at a time when it would be more effective. Richard Davies said he had discussed that with Aristotle and CJRW and that a standard schedule could be developed. The question is how far out before a commission meeting does a committee meeting need to be scheduled. Joe David Rice suggested the development of an annual calendar. Shelby Woods said creative needs to be far enough along for a committee to make a judgment, but it can't be so far along that things can't be changed. Mr. Davies asked if two-weeks out is fair. Wade Williams asked if the committee meetings could be scheduled the same time as commission meetings because it allows everyone to be in attendance - schedule the committee meeting for the month preceding when a presentation would be made to the full commission. Mr. Woods said they would do the best they could. Jim Shamburger said he thinks the committee should discuss more strategy and less detail. Montine McNulty said she did not want to see the commissioners have to attend three-day meetings. Mr. Davies said it would only be once or twice a year. Chairman Christenson directed staff to develop a calendar for Advertising Committee meetings for 2006.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m. at the SAU Reynolds Building in Magnolia, Arkansas on August 19, 2005