

**State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission**  
**Hilton Garden Inn, 805 Amity Road, Conway, AR**  
**April 18, 2019**

**Commissioners Present**

Jim Shamburger, Chair  
Kalene Griffith, Vice Chair  
Austin Albers  
Bill Barnes  
John Gill  
Ron Gossage

Shash Goyal  
Eric Jackson  
Bob Knight  
Montine McNulty  
Cindy Smith  
Mike Wilson

**Absent**

Jeff Baskin  
Mike Gibson  
Weston Lewey

Ness Sechrest  
Randy Wolfinbarger

**Department Staff Present**

Cynthia Dunlap, Interim Executive Director  
Grady Spann, Director, State Parks  
Jim Dailey, Tourism Director  
Shea Lewis, Deputy Director, State Parks  
Kristine Puckett, Deputy Director, Tourism  
Theresa Helliwell, Agency Controller  
Joy Barlogie, Research & Development  
Manager  
Kris Richardson, ADPT Executive Assistant  
Randy Roberson, Planning & Development  
Manager

Joe Jacobs, Marketing and Revenue Manager  
Kelly Farrell, Program Services Manager  
Marcel Hanzlik, Region 3 Supervisor  
Jeff King, Project Manager  
Angela Brown, Administrative Analyst  
Jessica Ledbetter, Sales Manager  
Kayla Hardage, Welcome Center  
Administrator  
LaJeana Carroll, Executive Assistant, Parks  
Division  
Justin Dorsey, Stadium Manager

**CJRW**

Darin Gray  
Jennifer Morgan  
Dalaney Thomas

Chris Ho  
Keegan Wright  
Brandi Childress

**Miles Media**

Susie Kardas

### **Guests**

Terry Horton  
Scott Sudduth  
Enrique Fuentesvilla  
Miguel Fuentesvilla

### **Call to Order**

Chair Jim Shamburger called the meeting to order at 8:32 am on Thursday, April 18, 2019.  
Kris Richardson called roll.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Jim Shamburger requested approval of the agenda.

**Shash Goyal moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mike Wilson seconded and the motion carried.**

### **Presentation of Minutes from Previous Meeting**

Jim Shamburger requested approval of the minutes from the April meeting.

**Mike Wilson moved to approve the minutes from the April 18 meeting. Austin Albers seconded and the motion carried.**

### **Recognition of Guests**

Jim Shamburger welcomed Commissioners and guests to Conway and thanked Woolly Hollow State Park staff for the tour and hospitality and Operations Trail Crew for the trail building demonstration on Wednesday evening.

### **ADPT FINANCIAL REPORT**

Theresa Helliwell presented the FY 2019 Year-to-Date financial report for the Nine (9) month period ending March 31, 2019.

FY 2019 Year-to-Date Expenditures were:

- Department Total - \$84,570,826 a decrease of -0.10%
- Parks Division (including Construction and Grants) - \$67,930,796
- Tourism Division - \$11,465,746
- Keep Arkansas Beautiful - \$317,388

- Administration Division - \$2,910,669
- War Memorial - \$1,946,227

FY 2019 Year-to-Date Revenues were:

- Parks Division Operating Revenue - \$18,984,722 a decrease of 4.87%
- War Memorial Operating Revenue - \$1,188,829 a decrease of 23.86%
- 1/8% Tax Revenues - \$25,121,518 an increase of 2.34%
- 2% Gross Tax collections - \$12,852,742 an increase of 2.61%
- Grocery Store Wine Revenue - \$16,473 a decrease of 94.94%

\* Please Note: percentages (%) are in comparison to the same period in the prior fiscal year

**Kalene Griffith moved to approve the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism Financial Report as presented. Shash Goyal seconded and the motion carried.**

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **Legislative Session Update**

Cynthia Dunlap provided a legislative session update on the Arkansas 92<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly. She stated that Grady Spann, Shea Lewis, Kevin Carr, Jeff King, and Kris Richardson did an excellent job tracking legislature and keeping staff apprised of issues affecting the agency. Dunlap summarized that HB 1368 exempts the state from Daylight Savings time failed, HB 1390 prohibits school districts from setting a date to begin the school year that is earlier than the third Monday in August, recommended for study. ACT 397/HB 1415 creates a committee to advise the Department of Emergency Management on the creation of uniform standard for safety measures at public events passed. ACT 671/HB 1744 creates a study of ATV trail expansion, including the use of ATVs in state parks, by Agriculture, Forestry and Economic Development Committee passed. ACT 914/HB 1706 increases the dollar amounts of annual public employee career service recognition payments passed. ACT 1028/HB 1928 Amends the Freedom of Information Act to require all open public meetings to be at least audio-recorded, and for the audio, video, or recorded broadcast to be maintained for one year in a format that may be reproduced upon request passed. ACT 910/HB 1763 Transformation and Efficiencies Act of 2019 passed, establishing the Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism (ADPHT). Several bills regarding appropriations for Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism for 2019-2020 operations passed.

State agencies have not received notification about the appointment of secretaries. Executive Directors received a transformation survey and have submitted the requested documents to the Transformation Team. Discussion ensued.

Kris Richardson and others from ADPT are working to revise the Freedom of Information (FOI) webpage on the ADPT website.

Cynthia Dunlap noted she toured the Arkansas Welcome Center in El Dorado with the Welcome Center team and visited Moro Bay State Park and stayed in one of the cabins recently. Dunlap also accompanied Tourism staff to the King Biscuit Blues Festival unveiling lineup and introduction of a new festival the Delta Roots Country Festival scheduled for April 27, 2019.

## **PARKS DIVISION**

### **Directors Report**

Grady Spann remarked he was pleased to share Woolly Hollow State Park with the Commissioners and stated the importance of the park staff seeing the Commissioners in the parks.

### **Delta Heritage Trail State Park**

Grady Spann presented an overview of the Delta Heritage Trail (DHT) project that began in 2002. Over the 26 years of this project the trail has been extended to cover 34.95 miles of trail and six trail heads have been constructed. The remaining phases VI to XII will complete the trail and are the most challenging with two major river crossings at Benzal Bridge and Yancopin Bridge. Once complete, the DHT will cover 84.46 miles from Lexa to Arkansas City with the future possibilities of connections to the Big River Trail, Helena, and Lake Village. ASP commissioned Alta Planning Design to conduct an economic impact study showing the potential of the completed trail, the total estimated benefits of the completed trail are \$26,188,000. Discussion followed.

### **War Memorial Stadium Update**

Justin Dorsey reported during the slower usage time at War Memorial Stadium (WMS) this past winter, staff remodeled the money count room and concession stands. Digital menu boards have been installed and are easily customizable for events. WMS hosts a variety of events including football, soccer, lacrosse, wedding receptions, meetings, events, and festivals. The stadium is in the final stage of completing a contract with a major league football team and the first game will be in mid-May. The stadium is in talks with University of Central Arkansas vs. University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff regarding the establishment of a classic football game that is

tentatively scheduled to be played at WMS for the next six years, beginning in 2021. Discussion ensued.

Jeff King presented an update of stadium facility improvements at WMS. Phase 1 field turf replacement was recently completed with a final cost of \$412,311.88 included a change order to correct draining issues. Phase 2 includes renovating the visiting team locker room, official locker room, and establishing a new command center. King stated the Wi-Fi connectivity update was completed last year before the Ole Miss football game. ADPT is pursuing an assessment of the stadium audio speakers and equipment. ADPT is working with local law enforcement agencies to evaluate plans for traffic improvements. Darin Mitchell has mapped out the parking areas available for the Razorback Foundation scholarship lots. The parking lots have not been updated in many years and there are some discrepancies in the numbers of spaces available and the number of parking passes issued, WMS and ADPT are working on a list of recommended changes to the University of Arkansas Razorback Foundation. The total for project improvements completed and underway is \$1,749,142. Discussion ensued.

### **Miscellaneous**

Grady Spann reported the article "OFC offers spring break class" (Stone Country Leader, March 6, 2019) Ozark Folk Center State Park and many of the other parks around the state offered spring break classes and activities.

Spann commented on the article "Local performers in Music Awards final" (Stone County Leader, March 6, 2019) local performers at OFC Mary Parker, Twang and Keith Symanowitz were recognized and nominated to the final round of voting for the 2019 Arkansas Country Music Awards. Twang has been recognized nationally and is a local Music Roots Program grown artist.

Spann reported the article "10 best scenic views in Arkansas to enjoy this spring" (Garcia, Kicker 102.5 March 21, 2019) six state parks were listed, Arkansas has a lot to offer outdoor enthusiasts.

Spann mentioned the article "After pool at state park closed last summer for the first time in 50 years, officials weigh plan to fix it" (Magnolia Banner News, March 26, 2019) ASP is working to have the pool repairs completed to be reopened this summer. ASP has received a report from the Department of Health regarding additional issues unrelated to the current project that will have to be corrected prior to the pool opening.

Spann mentioned the article "Human skull found near Arkansas state park identified as hiker missing since 2017" (Rddad, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, March 28, 2019) human remains were found on private property about a half mile outside Devil's Den State Park. The park staff led an extensive effort to locate the hiker in 2017.

Spann reported the article "Statewide poll shows 98 percent support for protection of drinking water sources, 80 percent support for Arkansas Game and Fish Commission" (Newton County Times, March 29, 2019) the statewide poll about conservation interest and priorities in the state. The article mentions the results of the statewide poll, but also includes information about Amendment 75 the 1/8 cent tax for conservation; ASP receives 45 percent of the funds collected for conservation.

Spann mentioned the article "Bluegrass event this week" (Stone County Leader, March 14, 2019) this event is held each spring break at the Ozark Folk Center State Park. This three-day event is typically a sold out event with proceeds going to support the Music Roots Program. The program is offered in the Mountain View School District for students in grades four through twelve who receive an acoustic instrument and hour weekly instruction at no cost to the students or their families.

Spann reported the Travel Treasures section "Folk Festival showcase Ozark Mountain Traditions Ozark Folk Center" and "Spring events blossom at Petit Jean State Park" (AAA Southern Traveler, March/April 2019) highlighted the Folk Festival at Ozark Folk Center State Park and spring events at Petit Jean State Park.

Spann highlighted the article "Petit Jean visitor center concept event set" (Times Record, March 5, 2019) ASP working with local community getting ready for the new visitor center at Petit Jean.

Spann highlighted article "Catherine starts year with new super" Rasmussen, Sentinel-Record, March 21, 2019) Cheryl Vincent was promoted to Superintendent at Lake Catherine State Park and doing a great job.

### **Parks Committee Report**

Eric Jackson summarized the April 17 Parks Committee meeting, reporting park revenues were up six percent. This was the best January and February ever recorded and the second best March reported. The only negative is the change of reservations system this summer back to Maestro, which will involve retraining in the parks.

The Hiring Cap is affecting the parks as they have vacant positions they cannot fill at this time and park staff struggle to serve guests.

Jackson noted the most interesting topic was the deep dive into the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) priority funding, which tracks the funding and prioritizing the 450 projects in the parks.

The Hobbs State Park - Conservation Area (Hobbs) firing range has suffered some damage that is causing potential safety issues and will need to be repaired.

The Monument Trails dedication at Hobbs will be held in June and the Mount Nebo State Park (Nebo) trail will be opening soon.

The Law Enforcement Officers (LEO) report included 382 incidents reported in the first quarter of 2019.

### **Petit Jean State Park – Statue Approval Request**

Randy Roberson reported ASP will soon construct a new visitor center in place of the existing Hardison Hall and Recreation Pavilion. The existing Hardison Hall was named in honor of Dr. Thomas W. Hardison who was instrumental in the formation of the ASP system and establishment of Petit Jean State Park. With removal of the existing hall and dedicatory plaques, local citizenry and staff have been seeking appropriate alternate means of recognizing Dr. Hardison's important role in the formation of the ASP system. Staff has proposed fabrication and placement of a bronze statue with associated base and dedicatory plaque in association with construction of the new visitor center. ASP ask that the Commission approve the placement of a bronze statue adjacent to the new visitor center in order to continue honoring Dr. Hardison's important role in the formation of the ASP system and the establishment of Petit Jean State Park.

**Bill Barnes moved to approve the placement of a bronze statue of Dr. Thomas W. Hardison, along with dedicatory plaque, adjacent to the new Petit Jean State Park Visitor Center, in recognition of his instrumental role in the formation of the Arkansas State Park system and establishment of Petit Jean State Park. John Gill seconded and the motion carried.**

### **Petit Jean State Park Visitor Center Update**

Shea Lewis reported a recent presentation to the Petit Jean Mountain Community on the Petit Jean State Park Visitor Center covering the redesign, the building layout, and exhibit area. Discussion ensued.

### **2020 Recreational Trails Program / Transportation Alternative Program Grants**

#### **Recreational Trails Program Resolution**

Randy Roberson presented a Recreational Trails Program Resolution to the State Parks, Recreation and Travel (SPRTC) seeking support of ADPT working in cooperation with Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) for federal funds to build trail options. He stated ASP would like to apply for the Federal-Aid Recreational Trails Fund to develop or improve the Delta Heritage Trail State Park, Rail-to-Trail Corridor from Elaine to Mellwood; Toltec Mounds Archeological State Park, Surface Improvements to the Plum Bayou Trail and Knapp Trail; Lake

Chicot State Park, Woodland Trail Improvements, and; Cossatot River State Park – Natural Area, Pedestrian Walkway Improvements for Highway 278 Bridge Replacement. The above projects are listed in order of priority. A maximum of 80% of the total project costs (up to \$500,000) may be funded from the ARDOT grant programs. A minimum 20% match must be provided by ASP via Amendment 75 funds or a grant from the Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council. The ARDOT grant funds would be provided as a reimbursement of project expenditures.

ASP is required to submit resolutions from the SPRTC expressing their support for the projects and providing assurance that funding will be available to support the projects. In order to meet the application deadlines, ASP requests approval of the resolutions from the SPRTC at the April 2019 meeting.

**Kalene Griffith moved to approve Recreational Trails Program Resolution, to express full support from the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission for the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism to submit a grant application seeking federal grants to build and to improve trails at Delta Heritage Trail State Park, Rail-to-Trail Corridor from Elaine to Mellwood; Toltec Mounds Archeological State Park, Surface Improvements to the Plum Bayou Trail and Knapp Trail; Lake Chicot State Park, Woodland Trail Improvements, and; Cossatot River State Park – Natural Area, Pedestrian Walkway Improvements for Highway 278 Bridge Replacement. Shash Goyal seconded and the motion carried.**

#### **RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS, the Arkansas State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission and the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, State Parks Division (Grantee) understand that Federal-Aid Recreational Trails Funds are available at eighty percent (80%) federal participation and twenty percent (20%) local match to develop or improve the Delta Heritage Trail State Park, Rail-to-Trail Corridor from Elaine to Mellwood, the Toltec Mounds Archeological State Park, Surface Improvements to the Plum Bayou Trail and Knapp Trail, the Lake Chicot State Park, Woodland Trail Improvements, and the Cossatot River State Park – Natural Area, Pedestrian Walkway Improvements for Highway 278 Bridge Replacement; and**

**WHEREAS, Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, State Parks understands that Federal-Aid Funds are available for this project**



**on a reimbursable basis, requiring work to be accomplished and proof of payment prior to actual monetary reimbursement, and**  
**WHEREAS, this project, using federal funding, will be open and available for use by the general public and maintained by the applicant.**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Arkansas State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission, that:**

**Section I: The Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, State Parks Division, will participate in accordance with its designated responsibility, including maintenance of this project.**

**Section II: The Executive Director of the Department of Parks and Tourism or his designees are hereby authorized and directed to execute all appropriate agreements and contracts necessary to expedite the construction of the above stated project.**

**Section III: The Arkansas State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission, pledges its full support and hereby authorizes the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, State Parks Division, to cooperate with the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department to initiate action to implement this project.**

**THIS RESOLUTION adopted by the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission on this 18th day of April, 2019.**

**ARKANSAS STATE PARKS, RECREATION AND TRAVEL COMMISSION**

**/S/ James D. "Jim" Shamburger, Jr, Chair**

**ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND TOURISM**

**/S/ Cynthia Dunlap, Interim Executive Director**

### **Transportation Alternatives Program Grant Resolution**

Randy Roberson presented a Transportation Alternatives Program Grant Resolution to the SPRTC seeking support of ADPT working in cooperation with ARDOT for federal funds to build trail options. He stated ASP would like to apply for the Federal-Aid Transportation Alternatives Program Grant to development or improve the Delta Heritage Trail State Park, Rail-to-Trail Corridor from Elaine to Mellwood; Toltec Mounds Archeological State Park, Surface Improvements to the Plum Bayou Trail and Knapp Trail; Lake Chicot State Park, Woodland Trail Improvements, and; Cossatot River State Park – Natural Area, Pedestrian Walkway Improvements for Highway 278 Bridge Replacement. If awarded grants, ARDOT would reimburse

ARDOT 80% of project amount. Roberson requested SPRTC express their support by approving the resolutions, to be submitted with grant application

**Kalene Griffith moved to approve Transportation Alternatives Program Grant Resolution, to express full support from the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission for the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism to submit a grant application seeking federal grants to build or improve trails at Delta Heritage Trail State Park, Rail-to-Trail Corridor from Elaine to Mellwood; Toltec Mounds Archeological State Park, Surface Improvements to the Plum Bayou Trail and Knapp Trail; Lake Chicot State Park, Woodland Trail Improvements, and; Cossatot River State Park – Natural Area, Pedestrian Walkway Improvements for Highway 278 Bridge Replacement. Shash Goyal seconded and the motion carried**

#### **RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS, the Arkansas State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission and the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, State Parks Division (Grantee) understand that Federal–Aid Transportation Alternatives Program Funds are available at eighty percent (80%) federal participation and twenty percent (20%) local match to develop or improve the Delta Heritage Trail State Park, Rail-to-Trail Corridor from Elaine to Mellwood, the Toltec Mounds Archeological State Park, Surface Improvements to the Plum Bayou Trail and Knapp Trail, the Lake Chicot State Park, Woodland Trail Improvements, and the Cossatot River State Park – Natural Area, Pedestrian Walkway Improvements for Highway 278 Bridge Replacement, and;**

**WHEREAS, the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, State Parks Division, understands that Federal-Aid Funds are available for this project on a reimbursable basis, requiring work to be accomplished and proof of payment prior to actual monetary reimbursement; and**

**WHEREAS, this project, using federal funding, will be open and available for use by the general public and maintained by the applicant.**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Arkansas State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission, that:**

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**ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND TOURISM**

**/S/ Cynthia Dunlap, Interim Executive Director**

### **South Arkansas Arboretum – Renewal of Operating Agreement**

Randy Roberson requested approval for the ASP cooperative operating agreement with the South Arkansas Community College (SACC) in El Dorado and a lease agreement between El Dorado School District and Arkansas State Parks for South Arkansas Arboretum State Park since 1994. These agreements allow SACC to operate the arboretum under the State Parks umbrella on land that is owned by the school district at no cost to ASP. SACC has opted to renew the operation agreement for three years. Likewise, El Dorado School District has agreed to renew the lease agreement for another five years. ASP would like to see this agreement continued. Based upon that understanding Park staff request to seek approval to renew these agreements in its present form for an additional three-year term for the First Agreement Amendment - 05/22/2019 -05/21/2022 and five-year term on the Lease Agreement-05/27/2019-05/26/2024. Staff recommends granting the Use Permit Agreement. Discussion ensued.

**John Gill moved to approve the Operating Agreement with the South Arkansas Community College (SACC) in El Dorado for three years and a lease agreement between El Dorado School District and Arkansas State Parks for South Arkansas Arboretum State Park for five years. Bill Barnes seconded and the motion carried.**

**CIP Quarterly Report /Amendment 75**

Randy Roberson reported the CIP quarterly report reflects 44 methods of finance are open for the 240 projects underway with \$68,455,155 funds remaining; with nine methods of finance closed and 12 projects completed and \$2,732,868 expended. The Amendment 75 expenditures to date shows \$165,874,159 in projects completed with \$28,607,270 in projects currently underway.

**Advertising Budget & Website Analytics**

Jennifer Morgan shared the proposed ASP Fiscal Year 20 marketing budget. CJRW has realigned how the budget will be spent, with an increase in ASP overall marketing. OFC marketing budget has been reduced to cover the redesign the state parks guide and creating a new passport/ field guide companion piece. Video, television, and radio marketing will be increased, the website budget was reduced with the bulk of building of the new website being completed. CJRW suggested print marketing be reduced to 39 percent and digital marketing be increased to 45 percent. Discussion ensued.

**John Gill moved to approve the Arkansas State Parks FY 2019 advertising plan presented by CJRW as follows:**

**Arkansas State Parks Proposed FY20 Marketing Budget**

<b>Arkansas State Parks Media</b>	\$356,893.72
Google Ad Campaign	\$12,000.00
<b>The Lodges of Arkansas State Parks Media</b>	\$284,394.44
Paid Facebook/Instagram Ads	\$6,000.00
Google Ad Campaign	\$6,000.00
<b>Ozark Folk Center State Park Media</b>	\$44,763.77
Ozark Highlands Radio Promotion (Public Broadcasting)	\$6,780.00
<b>Arkansas Press Association (Production &amp; Commission)</b>	\$15,000.00
<b>2020 State Parks Guidebook (300,000)</b>	\$165,000.00
Arkansas State Parks -- Passport/Field Guide (100,000)	\$45,000.00
<b>Brochures/Collateral</b>	\$35,000.00
<b>Print/Online Banner Production</b>	\$38,168.07

<b>Video/Television/Radio Production</b>	\$150,000.00
<b>Website</b>	\$225,000.00
Site Management, Development Requests, Hosting, Server Maintenance, Licensing Fees	
<b>Contingency</b>	\$10,000.00
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$1,400,000.00</b>

**Kalene Griffith seconded and the motion carried.**

Susie Kardas reported that the website showed a 61% increase in website traffic, 45% increase in booking, 56% increase in the number of times the state park guide was viewed, and 30% increase in the number of newsletters requested. Discussion ensued.

**ASP Interpretation Quarterly Report**

Kelly Farrell reported between the months of January to March of 2019, 7,662 programs were given to 96,270 people, these programs included 904 programs for schools with 34,264 attendees. The programs consisted of day camps, daily programs, daily spring break, weekend programs, explorers, and workshops. Farrell acknowledged Robin Gabe and her efforts compiling the numbers for this report. Program Services recruited staff in January and completed the hiring process in February prior to spring break. Discussion followed.

**TOURISM DIVISION**

**Director's Report**

Jim Dailey gave a review of the recent Welcome Center visits he and Kristine Puckett have made; he noted that Park Superintendent Paul Butler gave a good tour of Moro Bay State Park. Dailey also noted the online road trip campaign has received over 11,000 entries. He informed the assembled that Tammy Boyce will be on maternity leave for the next three months. In her stead, Allision Gee will be his assistant.

Dailey announced he will be attending the American Trails conference in the following weeks. Arkansas Tourism is currently working with the State Parks on the National Association of State Park Directors Conference in September. He related that he spoke with Robert Moore, Arkansas Department of Transportation Commissioner, and it was recommended that no additional signage be added for the Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum.

Kristine Puckett shared the new motorcycling and biking guides and the Water & Woods publication.

### **Communications**

Leah DiPietro introduced new team members Melissa Conley and Colton Faull. She distributed the 2019 media kits.

DiPietro explained the new process for media monitoring, which will now track if clips originated from an Arkansas Tourism press release, visiting media outlet, or some other guest of the division. Going forward, media monitoring may potentially include advertising or PR value statistics.

National Travel and Tourism Week will be May 5-11, with the Little Rock Rally on Tuesday, May 7, 2019. Tourism will be active on social media while the Welcome Centers will have activities throughout the week. Media has been invited for Friday, May 10, 2019, at 9:00 am.

### **Research**

Joy Barlogie gave an update on the annual report. She spoke about the change to the production date to accommodate reporting actual numbers instead of projections. Due to the federal government shutdown earlier in the year, obtaining that information has been delayed to July/August. She has worked with Commissioners and industry leaders to ensure this new format will work; it appeared to be well-supported.

ArkTank has been, by all accounts, a success. Innovate Arkansas has already made commitments to partner with Arkansas Tourism next year. This year's winner, Cory Boelkins, visited with staff and Commissioners about ideas to develop his business.

### **Sales**

Jessica Ledbetter announced she is taking a new step in working with the international market. She facilitated training for northwest Arkansas lodging properties on how to become a receptive for foreign tour operators. She is looking at fly-drive opportunities. John Gill commended Ledbetter for looking at international travel through the eyes of an international traveler.

### **Advertising**

Chris Ho from CJRW spoke on website analytics and conversions. Website statistics indicate traffic is up. Also, partner referral was up in March. In terms of guides, orders are up, while guides viewed online are down; it is recommended that follow-up communications with individuals viewing guides online should be done. Subscription to the newsletter is up. Total

conversion rates are up. CJRW has sent travel guides to people in specific zip codes to align distribution of the guide with campaigns.

**Adjournment**

The State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission adjourned at 12:33 pm on April 18, 2019, at the Hilton Garden Inn, 805 Amity Road, Conway, AR.