

State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission
Pine Bluff Convention Center, 500 East 8th Ave, Pine Bluff, AR
8:30 am, June 20, 2019

Commissioners Present

Jim Shamburger, Chair
Kalene Griffith, Vice Chair
Austin Albers
Bill Barnes
Jeff Baskin
John Gill
Ron Gossage
Shash Goyal

Eric Jackson
Bob Knight
Weston Lewey
Montine McNulty
Ness Sechrest
Cindy Smith
Mike Wilson
Randy Wolfinbarger

Absent

Mike Gibson

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
Kim Williams, Director, Great River Road
Kris Richardson, ADPT Executive Assistant
Randy Roberson, Planning & Development
Manager
Joe Jacobs, Marketing and Revenue Manager
Marcel Hanzlik, Region 3 Supervisor
Jeff King, Project Manager

Jessica Ledbetter, Sales Manager
Kayla Hardage, Welcome Center
Administrator
LaJeana Carroll, Executive Assistant, Parks
Division
Bridget McLemore, Tourism Administrative
Specialist II
Leigha Jones, Tourism Development
Consultant
Melissa Conley, Travel Writer
Chad Fougousse, Chief Ranger
Mark Camp, Director, Keep Arkansas
Beautiful
Vanessa Rogers-White, Keep Arkansas
Beautiful

CJRW

Darin Gray
Jennifer Morgan

Delaney Thompson
Keegan Wright

Miles Media

Susie Kardas

Guests

Karen Pryor, Eureka Springs City Advertising & Promotion Commission
Sheri Story, Pine Bluff A&P Commission
Joe David Rice, Former Tourism Director, Retired
Scott Suddath, North Little Rock CVB
Gray Jones, Jones Video
Stacy Hurst, incoming Secretary of Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism

Call to Order

Chair Jim Shamburger called the meeting to order at 8:30 am on Thursday, June 20, 2019.
Kris Richardson called roll.

Approval of Agenda

Jim Shamburger requested approval of the agenda.

Austin Albers moved to approve the agenda as presented. Kalene Griffith seconded and the motion carried.

Presentation of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Jim Shamburger requested approval of the minutes from previous meetings.

Eric Jackson moved to approve the minutes from the May 16 meeting and the special June 3 meeting. Weston Lewey seconded, and the motion carried.

Recognition of Guests

Jim Shamburger welcomed Commissioners and guests to Pine Bluff and thanked Pine Bluff A&P director Sheri Story and Explore Pine Bluff for the BBQ dinner and hospitality and the Rock Me Baby Bus Tour led by Jimmy Cunningham. Thank you to Mayor Washington for welcoming the Commissioners and staff to Pine Bluff. The chairman also mentioned that while in Pine Bluff

make time to visit the Arkansas Entertainers Hall of Fame. Chairman Shamburger welcomed Stacy Hurst, incoming Secretary Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism.

Cindy Smith recommended visiting the Arkansas Railroad Museum located in Pine Bluff. Gary Jones with Jones Video was in attendance to film the meeting for a documentary on Parks and Tourism.

ADPT FINANCIAL REPORT

Theresa Helliwell presented the FY 2019 Year-to-Date financial report for the 11 month period ending May 31, 2019.

FY 2019 Year-to-Date Expenditures were:

- Department Total - \$106,552,473 an increase of 2.94%
- Parks Division (including Construction and Grants) - \$84,806,393
- Tourism Division - \$15,625,207
- Keep Arkansas Beautiful - \$417,233
- Administration Division - \$3,485,439
- War Memorial - \$2,218,201

FY 2019 Year-to-Date Revenues were:

- Parks Division Operating Revenue - \$23,988,759 a decrease of 4.44%
- War Memorial Operating Revenue - \$1,238,574 a decrease of 22.93%
- 1/8% Tax Revenues - \$30,796,982 an increase of 2.48%
- 2% Gross Tax collections - \$15,419,723 an increase of 3.02%
- Grocery Store Wine Revenue - \$24,225 a decrease of 93.24%

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

Ness Sechrest moved to approve the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism Financial Report as presented. Bob Knight seconded and the motion carried.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Arkansas Backstories

Joe David Rice presented his work "Arkansas Backstories," these short stories and essays highlight the lesser-known aspects of Arkansas.

Keep Arkansas Beautiful

Mark Camp presented the new mascot, Otto the Otter, for Keep Arkansas Beautiful (KAB). Materials, publications, and recently designed classroom resources are available to teachers across the state to encourage environmental education to supplement existing nature and science curriculum.

Miscellaneous

Cynthia Dunlap remarked Tourism sent a letter to the Governor supporting July as Lake Appreciation Month declaration.

Incoming Secretary Stacy Hurst remarked the transformation will be official on July 1, 2019 and Hurst will be one of 15 secretaries appointed by Governor Asa Hutchison to lead new departments in the transformation. She has passion for natural and cultural resources and appreciates the work the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission (SPRTC) has done and she is looking forward to partnering with the Commission.

PARKS DIVISION

Viasat Concession Agreement

Grady Spann stated Viasat, Incorporated is a sponsor for the National Association of State Parks Director's Conference, however this proposed concession agreement is not connected with the conference.

Jeff King reported for the past few years Arkansas State Parks (ASP) has worked to provide communication improvements at Devil's Den and Village Creek State Parks. Cell phone reception is not available in most of the park. During the proof of concept 2-year agreement, Viasat will provide the equipment and ASP will provide the location and electricity, the revenue cost share will have a 90 (Viasat)/10 (ASP) percent split. All park visitors can use the WiFi free of charge to check the weather, current news, and access the campground reservation site. Other access will be available as a pay for use program ranging from \$9 per day to \$30 per a week. Discussion ensued.

John Gill moved to approve the proof of concept concession agreement between Arkansas State Parks and Viasat, Incorporated for the installation on equipment to support WiFi at Devil's Den State Park and Village Creek State Park for a period of two years. The terms of the agreement consist of Viasat, Inc. providing the equipment and Arkansas State Parks providing the locations and electricity to power the equipment, a

revenue cost share split of 90 percent for Viasat, Inc. and 10 percent for Arkansas State Parks. Montine McNulty seconded and the motion carried.

National Association of State Park Directors (NASPD) Conference Update

Shea Lewis reported only 76 days remaining until the conference kicks off. ASP team is moving into the final planning phase. ASP has received \$144,000 in gross receipts primarily from the exhibitors and sponsors, working through the National Association State Parks Directors. Staff is working on the minute by minute scheduling for the conference, finalizing the speakers and travel arrangements.

Hobbs State Park-Conservation Area; Monument Trails

Grady Spann reported the first Monument Trail dedication held on June 7, 2019, at Hobbs State Park-Conservation Area. The Friday dedication was attended by 85 people and over 300 people attended the bike events held on Saturday, June 8, 2019. The trail was built by the partnership of Arkansas Parks and Recreation Foundation with support from the Walton Family Foundation. Special thanks to Commissioners Jim Shamburger, Kalene Griffith, John Gill and Ron Gossage for their support in attending the Friday dedication. Spann stated ASP is excited to showcase the monument bike trails in September. ASP is partnering with local communities and volunteers to help maintain the miles of trails.

Parks Director Miscellaneous

Jeff King presented the CIP dashboard, which was created as a tool to better track ASP projects. The dashboard provides a snapshot of the current projects across the state.

Parks Committee Meeting

Eric Jackson summarized the June 19, 2019 Parks Committee meeting; parks are in their peak seasons and parks have been affected by the recent flooding. Park staff were called to assist with a search and rescue near Mena, Arkansas, that generated national publicity. Over 400 construction and major maintenance projects ongoing around the state, while only staffed at about 90%. The Human Resource cap is affecting the parks as they have vacant positions they cannot fill at this time and park staff struggle to serve their guests. Positive developments include the first Monument Trail was dedicated at Hobbs State Park – Conservation Area and the Hampson Archeological Museum State Park museum purchase has been completed, Ozark Folk Center State Park and Village Creek State Parks cabin renovations are almost complete. An additional state park property was accepted on to the National Historic Registry, this brings the total to 152 properties listed on the registry within 25 state parks.

The wet spring has had a negative impact on the financial performance of ASP parks. The Ozark Folk Center State Park visitation is trending the wrong direction, need to work with the local community to turn that around. The Law Enforcement Officers (LEO) report included over 700 incidents reported for Fiscal Year 2019.

John Gill remarked the Clarendon Bridge is still standing, noting this process to save the bridge was started four years ago by Stacy Hurst. The Supreme Court has dismissed the lawsuit and the Arkansas Highway Commission passed a resolution to reevaluate the compatibility determination and determine whether keeping the White River Bridge would be consistent under existing conditions with the Cache River and White River National Wildlife Refuges. The State Parks Committee moved to support a resolution from the SPRTC to reevaluate the compatibility determination and determine whether keeping the White River Bridge would be consistent under existing conditions with the Cache River and White River National Wildlife Refuges. Discussion ensued.

Eric Jackson moved to approve a resolution, to express full support from the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission for Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, Parks Division. Ness Sechrest seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, the Compatibility Determination of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service requiring demolition of the Historic U.S. Hwy 79 White River Bridge at Clarendon has expired,

NOW THEREFORE, the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission requests the Fish and Wildlife Service to re-evaluate the Compatibility Determination and to determine whether keeping the White River Bridge would be consistent under existing conditions with Refuge purposes.

The existing conditions not present when the Compatibility Determination was made over 11 years ago include the following:

- The Cache River and White River National Wildlife Refuges have both adopted Comprehensive Conservation Plans for management of the lands surrounding the Bridge which propose substantial improvements to the Refuges. The improvements have not been implemented by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These improvements were to include establishing wildlife observation and photography facilities, improving foot

traffic, installing interpretive facilities, and hiring additional staff to provide environmental education.

- The Department of Arkansas Heritage and Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism have proposed entering into a cooperative agreement with the Refuge for the development of outdoor recreation, including connecting the Bridge to the U.S. Bike Route System, and addressing the Comprehensive Conservation Plans, thereby relieving the Refuge of that expense.
- The Department of Arkansas Heritage and the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism have proposed paying cost of maintenance of the Bridge and operating it in conjunction with the State Parks System.
- In response to the Refuge needs determined by the Comprehensive Conservation Plans, the City of Clarendon adopted a "Plan for Outdoor Recreation and Wildlife Dependent Public Uses for the Historic Clarendon Bridge." The City Plan is a detailed economic development plan for the region which would include the longest elevated bicycle, pedestrian and nature watching platform in the world. The City Plan includes construction of wildlife observation platforms and photography blinds on the Bridge; installing interpretive kiosks and sign age on the Bridge for environmental education and interpretive programs; keeping the Bridge open year-round for improved foot traffic in flood prone areas; and converting the City's Tourism Information Center into a Refuge Welcome and Information Center, and supplementing the Refuge staff to provide public information about the Refuge.
- The U.S. Coast Guard had indicated its willingness to allow the Bridge to remain in place.
- The 9,000 foot-long (1.7 miles) earthen berm west of the of the Bridge, which impeded flood flows has been removed.
- The portion of Bridge sitting on the Refuge has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- A public support group comprised of citizen taxpayers was formed for the purpose of using the Bridge as an economic engine in the Arkansas Delta. The group has commissioned a Comprehensive Feasibility study for converting the Bridge to pedestrian use.

Now, therefore, be it resolved this Resolution was adopted by the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission on this 20th day of June 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

Structure Removals

Randy Roberson reported structures DeGray Lake Resort State Parks fire hose shed (Building No. 14.33/AASIS No. 120005694) is a small 20 square foot structure with one door. The building contains old fire hoses for the lodge. The hoses are in disrepair and have never been used. The hoses and building need to be destroyed and removed from the property. The removal will be part of the lodge siding project and Mobile Home (Building No. 14.68/AASIS No. 120005711) is a 1,280 square foot structure that has been used for several years as a seasonal residence for park staff. It was purchased used in 2002. The mobile home needs a new roof and new sub floors. Repairs to the residence exceeds the current value and operations manager advised the park to remove. The mobile home will be put up for sale/bid. These

Ness Sechrest moved to approve based on the information presented; the Commission finds the following structures at DeGray Lake Resort State Park Lodge fire hose shed east (Building No. 14.33/AASIS No. 120005694) and 1994 Champion singlewide mobile home (Building No. 14.68/AASIS No. 120005711) are obsolete notwithstanding the insured value and approves the removal from Arkansas State Park inventory. Bob Knight seconded and the motion carried.

Property Acquisitions Final Approval

Randy Roberson requested final approval for two property acquisitions accordance with A.C.A. § 22-4-106: Petit Jean State Park Tanyard Springs property and Jacksonport State Park town lot Block 6, Lot 9. Initial approval of these acquisitions has been granted over time by the SPRTC from August 17, 2018 to January 17, 2019. As required by law (ACA 22-4-106), ASP has received favorable advice from Governor Hutchinson on March 3, 2019, Arkansas Legislative Council on May 17, 2019, and the Department of Finance and Administration on May 22, 2019. Roberson requested final approval from the SPRTC.

John Gill moved for final approval of the two property acquisitions as follows:

- **Petit Jean State Park: Arkansas State Parks propose acquisition of 198.4 acres and twelve themed cabins, office/laundry building, and historic Tanyard Springs cabin. Initial approval was granted on January 17, 2019.**
- **Jacksonport State Park: Arkansas State Parks propose acquisition of one incorporated town lot, comprising 0.2 acres of land, located on Block 6, Lot 9 of the Original Town of Jacksonport and adjoining the existing park boundary. Initial approval was granted on August 17, 2018.**

Shash Goyal seconded and the motion carried.

Historic Washington - Lease Amendment; Texarkana College

Randy Roberson reported since 1987, The Texarkana College in Texarkana, Texas has held classes in the art of bladesmithing at Historic Washington State Park (HWSP) utilizing the forges. The lease started between Pioneer Washington Restoration Foundation (PWRF) and continued with the state when PWRF transferred the property to ASP. The college has indicated that they no longer wish to hold classes at HWSP and wishes to terminate the lease at expiration on June 30, 2019.

Roberson stated Chris Thomason, Chancellor of University of Arkansas Community College Hope-Texarkana, has indicated that the college would like to lease the space and continue offering classes on bladesmithing. The college will lease approximately 1,932 square feet of workshop space, 504 square foot of classroom space and the Stephens House consisting of 1,260 square feet at HWSP all on the fractional Block 30 Original Town of Washington, Arkansas.

A new lease term will be for two years from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2021 for the fee of \$1 to U of A Community College Hope-Texarkana. Grady Spann requested permission to continue negotiations for janitorial cost to help offset the expense of the facility. Discussion ensued.

John Gill moved to approve the lease agreement at Historic Washington State Park to University of Arkansas Community College Hope-Texarkana for a period of two years as follows subject to Parks Director modifying the agreement as necessary particularly paragraph 4. (UTILITIES AND SERVICES: It is understood that the rental paid by the LESSEE is for the purposes of reimbursing the LESSOR for providing maintenance and repair of all mechanical and structural systems, janitorial service, utilities, pest control, security, trash removal, grounds maintenance, insurance, and all other expenses normally associated with the maintenance and operation of the lease PREMISES and building): approximately 1,932 square feet of workshop space, 504 square foot of

classroom space and the Stephens House consisting of 1,260 square feet at Historic Washington State Park all on the fractional Block 30 Original Town of Washington, Arkansas. Eric Jackson seconded and the motion carried.

State Parks; Flood Update

Mike Wilson reported the June Arkansas River flooding affected Pinnacle Mountain State Park (PMSP). Park staff began preparation prior to the flood and anticipating loss of power over the weekend. They closed PMSP on June 1, 2019. PMSP incurred \$2,000 in lost revenue and staff has projected \$15,000 damages that may be reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) including reimbursement for manhours for clean up. Discussion followed.

Wilson reported a second flood event at Devil's Den State Park (DDSP) - a flash flood due to extreme amounts of rainfall. DDSP experienced damage to Lake Devil Dam, road damage, and peddle boats. In addition, the pool was silted in due to a tree clogging a culvert. The marina is still closed due to the flooding damage to the dam gates and the lake is drained down. DDSP incurred \$10,000 in lost revenue and \$20,000 in damages. Washington County was not included in the disaster declaration, ASP will not be reimbursed. Discussion ensued.

Emergency Services Update

Chad Fougousse reported ASP Rangers are trained in search and rescue and participate in the state-wide Child Abduction Response Team. ASP participated in the recent search and rescue from an overdue camper at Queen Wilhelmina State Park. The search and rescue team was mobilized to assist with the lost hiker on the Buckeye Trail in the Cane Creek Wilderness Area. ASP was called to assist on Monday, June 3, 2019 and was part of the team that found and rescued the lost hiker on June 8, 2019.

Fougousse reported ASP emergency services includes 84 law enforcement officers (LEO) around the state that have statewide jurisdiction. ASP's LEO receive extensive training and provide assistance to local communities. During the month of April 2019, ASP staff responded to 95 total incidents including agency assist, vehicle accidents, ejections from the park, search and rescues, and a fatality. During the month of May 2019, staff responded to 132 total incidents including agency assists, arrests, suicide threats, domestic disputes, vehicle accidents, and personal injuries. ASP has three staff complete LEO training and ASP staff responded to an agency assist from Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM) to man a barricade at Barling during the Arkansas River flooding.

TOURISM DIVISION

Director's Report

Jim Dailey introduced Joy Blakenship, executive director of the Arkansas Land of Legends regional tourist association, comprised of Jefferson, Cleveland, Lincoln, and Grant counties. Blakenship expressed her thanks for the funds given to the Land of Legends. She gave an overview of the region's attractions including blues music, the opening of the Pine Bluff Aquatic Center, the upcoming casino resort to be built by the Quapaw Nation, renovation of the Pines Hotel, and the new Jefferson County Library.

Dailey began his report with remarks on travelling team members. Kristine Puckett and Jessica Ledbetter were on a sales mission in China. He also spoke on attending IPW in Anaheim, California, May 29-June 4, 2019, with Kristine Puckett, Leah DiPietro, and Kim Williams. He discussed the Travel South program. Also discussed was the closing of the hog farm near the Buffalo River.

Austin Albers moved that the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission send a message to Governor Hutchinson to thank him for his part in removing the hog farm from the Buffalo River watershed. Bob Knight seconded and the motion passed.

R E S O L U T I O N

- WHEREAS, The Buffalo National River is the first national river in America and a source of pride for our state and nation; and
- WHEREAS, The Buffalo National River is a major driver of tourism in The Natural State, bringing thousands of visitors to Arkansas each year; and
- WHEREAS, The Buffalo National River provides opportunities for floating, hiking wildlife viewing, historical exploration, camping and other outdoor recreation; and
- WHEREAS, The Buffalo National River preserves the natural and cultural history of The Natural State; and
- WHEREAS, The Buffalo National River is one of the premiere wilderness and outdoor locations in the U.S.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Arkansas State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission extends its sincere gratitude and appreciation to Governor Asa

Hutchinson for working to preserve The Buffalo National River for future generations' recreation and enjoyment and

That the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission is pleased to adopt and approve this resolution on this 20th day of June, 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

The American Taekwondo Association's fiftieth anniversary convention will be held in Little Rock July 8 to July 14. The Arkansas Municipal League held a conference during the week of June 10, which Dailey attended. In Fairfield Bay, the Cobblestone Hotel opened. It has 50 rooms, many of which are already committed for meetings and conferences. Dailey proposed this as a potential meeting place. He also spoke on the Civil Rights Trail and Kristine Puckett's appearance in Soiree magazine.

Leigha Jones and Melissa Conley presented a report on the Atlanta Food and Wine Festival. Jones and Conley attended the Atlanta Food and Wine Festival representing Arkansas. Twelve other southern states were represented. They participated in tasting and one-on-one events. Arkansas had a large group in attendance and was well-branded with Arkansas T-shirts. The group consisted of a joint sponsorship with Tourism, the Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Bentonville Convention and Visitors Bureau. Nine chefs and three distillers/brewers also attended.

Research and Development

Joy Barlogie gave the Research and Development report. She spoke on the partnerships with U.S. Travel Association, D.K. Shifflet and Associates, Wild Alchemy, Arrivalist, and SMARI (Strategic Marketing and Research Insights). She is waiting on actual numbers to give the annual report rather than using estimates. U.S. Travel Association is an economic impact partner. D.K. Shifflet and Associates tracks visitor volume and its numbers are historically geared towards seniors. SMARI looks at advertising and website effectiveness through focus groups. Wild Alchemy has a non-traditional focus and works more with niche groups. Arrivalist follows a tourist from website visit to state visit, helping to determine when a person makes the decision to travel to Arkansas. This data will eventually drill down to the county and city levels.

Welcome Centers

Kayla Hardage gave the Welcome Centers report. Hardage spoke on National Travel and Tourism Week's recognition in The Press and Journal publication in Aberdeen, Scotland. The Press and Journal featured an article about the Scottish tourists honored during National Travel and Tourism Week.

Hardage also spoke about the closure of the Van Buren/Fort Smith Welcome Center due to flooding. There were hopes of the center opening by June 24. Employees of the Van Buren/Fort Smith Welcome Center helped with the Red Cross and other recovery efforts.

Communications/Great River Road

Kim Williams gave the Communications and Great River Road reports. Leah DiPietro was in Philadelphia for the Public Relations Society of America, Travel and Tourism Section Conference from June 16 to June 19.

The Mississippi River Country held its California Sales Mission, which focused on marketing the Mississippi River to Japan. On National Barbecue Day, Mariana Mayor Jimmy Williams welcomed Australian journalists Sarah Hower and Max Brearley and gave them a tour of Arkansas's only James Beard award-winning restaurant in the state, Jones Bar-B-Q Diner. In May, Kim Williams also attended IPW in California.

Williams also spoke on flooding in Pendleton, where the Arkansas and Mississippi rivers converge. The Mississippi River was not expected to crest in Helena until June 22. It was also reported that Rick Hale of Arkansas City said the number of visitors to the state was up due to alligator sightings.

Williams advised that Dr. Ruth Hawkins, director of Arkansas State University Heritage Sites, will retire end of June 2019, noting her years of outstanding service to the state.

Cindy Smith moved to adopt a resolution honoring Dr. Ruth Hawkins on her retirement in June 2019. Bob Knight seconded and the motion carried.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Arkansas Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission salutes Dr. Ruth A. Hawkins on her June 30, 2019 retirement as Director of Arkansas State University Heritage Sites.

WHEREAS, her retirement is a bittersweet moment in the life of Arkansas and her people.

WHEREAS, the Commission finds it difficult to comprehend how one person can have such an enormous and everlasting impact on Arkansas.

WHEREAS, the list of her achievements covers pages. She has been honored with *two* life-time achievement awards and five tourism awards. She has offered 17 scholarly presentations throughout the United States and written numerous articles on preserving Arkansas heritage. The list of heritage sites which she has preserved for future Arkansas generations is phenomenal and represents her untiring dedication to preservation of the heritage of Arkansas people. The list is exhaustive:

- Historic Dyess Colony,
- Johnny Cash Boyhood Home,
- Lakeport Plantation in Lake Village,
- Southern Tenant Farmers Museum in Tyrnza,
- Hemingway-Pfeiffer Museum and Educational Center in Piggott,
- Crawley's Ridge Parkway National Scenic Byway, Arkansas' first national scenic byway,
- Arkansas Great River Road National Scenic Byway.

WHEREAS, Dr. Ruth has served on more boards and commissions than space permits for listing, including Chair, Arkansas History Commission; Director of ASU Museum; Director of ASU Public Relations and Development where she boasted the University's fund-raising program from less than \$100,000 to more than \$2 Million annually; and as Vice President for Institutional Advancement lead ASU's first capital campaign raising \$25 Million.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED while the Ole Miss Ph.D. is retiring, the Commission encourages Dr. Hawkins to enjoy her retirement by continuing to move Arkansas history forward.

That the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission is pleased to adopt and approve this resolution on the 20th day of June 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

Arkansas Flood Recovery Update

Joy Barlogie gave an update on the flooding response since the June 3 special committee meeting. Positive messaging was immediately implemented. Outreach and curating of positive stories were emphasized. Weekly conference calls determining how to move forward were held. Two new initiatives, the Tourism Information Network and the Tourism Cares campaign were implemented as well.

Fiscal Year 2020 Strategic Plan and Budget Recommendations

Jennifer Morgan presented the fiscal year 2020 marketing and advertising plan. This plan includes generating travel, enhancing the image of the state, and growing the two-percent tourism tax. Morgan mentioned data partners will be Nielsen, eMarketer, SMARI, U.S. Travel Association, D.K. Shifflet, Mediamark Research and Intelligence, Longwoods International, Telmar, and other sources. Dalaney Thomas noted that the full details of the plan are on Box. Thomas continued, speaking on the "Come Find Your Arkansas" campaign and its success balancing people and place in messaging. It was recommended that the Arkansas Road Trip campaign be continued. In 2017, there were a projected 136 million road trips, almost \$50 billion in spending, and "high value" tourists. For the fiscal year 2020's Arkansas Road Trip, new bloggers have been found: Idle Theory Bus Bloggers. They are well-versed in writing and photography, have 153,000 followers, average around 4,000 likes per post with an average of 60 comments per post. They have 10,000 average story views and 10 to 15 average frames, with 70 percent of followers watching until the end of the story. They live in their Volkswagen bus, Sunshine. For the in-state campaign, Thomas emphasized "staycations" to encourage three-day weekend travel by Arkansans. Arkansas ranks high in unused time off.

Jennifer Morgan spoke on the media recommendations. The Fall/Winter 2019 strategy would budget for \$2,700,000 to maximize awareness of Arkansas's marketing message, generate travel to Arkansas, and drive traffic to Arkansas.com. Also, it will focus on generating reach for target audiences and niche audiences. The media mix will break down as 46.3 percent digital, 37.4 percent television, 9 percent magazine, 6.4 percent radio, and 0.8 percent outdoors. There will be a focus on diversity marketing as well, with public relations niche opportunities in historical sites and trails (such as the Arkansas Civil Rights Trail), ancestry tourism, family reunions, famous minorities, and events. The group sales campaign will work to reach target audiences with group tour planners, meeting planners, and sports events planners.

Dalaney Thomas focused on the international campaign. Content development with global distribution will include Travel South, Brand U.S.A., and Miles Partnership. Trade and tour operator relationships will be with Five A Marketing in the United Kingdom and Travel South U.S.A., having markets of focus as Australia, Canada, China, Germany, and the United Kingdom. Thomas also spoke about industry outreach. Industry outreach will focus on media and technology training, presentations and reports, Governor's Conference support, and social media coordination and support. Partners in tourism will include Arkansas Economic Development Commission, P. Allen Smith Garden Home, Rural Arkansas Radio Network, Arkansas State University, and the Arkansas Golf Trail.

Jennifer Morgan delivered the plan for publications. The Arkansas Travel Guide will be expanded to be longer and more editorial. Travel guide direct mailing will include 150,000 select consumers in cable television markets, with a March 15 drop date. Other publications to continue would be the Arkansas Motorcycling Guide, the Water and Woods Guide, and the Arkansas Cycling Guide. As a technology optimization tool, CrowdRiff is a new cooperative opportunity.

Dalaney Thomas continued with national public relations. National public relations will focus on relocation, regional and national media outreach, satellite media tour, MAT releases, and study tours. Influencers of national public relations would be foodies, millennials, female mountain bikers, and motorcyclists. The relocation aspect would focus on creating increased awareness of Arkansas's low cost of living and desirable quality of life, increased traffic to Arkansas.com, re-engaging past visitors who did not convert on the site, and further diversifying advertising platforms through Google search and display, remarketing, YouTube, Bing, Facebook, and Instagram. Jennifer Morgan emphasized the research partnerships with SMARI, U.S. Travel Association, D.K. Shifflet and Associates, Arrivalist, and Wild Alchemy.

Thomas further emphasized social media outreach through Arkansas Tourism, Arkansas motorcycling, Arkansas Welcome Centers, paid content on Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and Reddit, and targeting markets and demographics dependent on subject matter. Promotions would include the road trip giveaway, Barkansas, and staycations.

Susie Kardas spoke about the optimization and development of Arkansas.com. Strategies would include enhancing featured and paid content, enhancing the display of city pages, increasing content for major initiatives, and industry communication improvements.

Jennifer Morgan detailed the fiscal year 2020 budget summary as follows:

Creative Production	\$950,000
Diversity Marketing	\$150,000
Expenses	\$20,000
Group Sales	\$228,160
Industry Outreach	\$102,000
International Marketing	\$425,873
Paid Media Fall/Winter	\$2,700,000
Paid Media Spring/Summer	\$4,800,000
Paid Media Digital Search	\$630,000
Paid Media Bonus Media/Analysis	\$159,060
Partnerships	\$400,554
Publications and Digital Co-Op Marketing	\$1,210, 512
Public Relations	\$300,000
Research	\$234,668
Relocation	\$898,619
Social Media	\$358,000
Strategic Account Planning	\$35,000
Website	\$586,736
Contingency	\$129,764
TOTAL BUDGET	\$14,318,973

This would be an increase of \$977,000 over fiscal year 2019, with a \$700,000 increase in direct media spending. The budget for Arkansas.com, however, is lower due to some of it being reported under social media.

Austin Albers motioned to approve the FY 20 Strategic Plan in the amount of \$14,318,973. Kalene Griffith seconded and the motion passed.

Keegan Wright and Susie Kardas gave an update on Arkansas.com. May was a good month.

Stacy Hurst mentioned the possibility of a commission retreat in October; dates are to be discussed at the next meeting.

Jim Shamburger thanked Cynthia Dunlap for her job as interim director.

John Gill moved to adopt a resolution to thank Cynthia Dunlap for her service as interim director. Kalene Griffith seconded and the motion passed.

R E S O L U T I O N

- WHEREAS, the Arkansas State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission expresses appreciation for Cynthia Dunlap's leadership as interim executive director of the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism during a time of significant change in state government; and
- WHEREAS, she stepped into a vacuum during a legislative session in a period of uncertainty and anxiety and was there when someone was needed to steady the ship; and
- WHEREAS, she was a solid rock if you will, providing exactly what the agency needed; and
- WHEREAS, you have served well the people of Arkansas and led in an important chapter of Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism history.
Thank you Cynthia!

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Arkansas State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission is pleased to adopt and approve this resolution on this 20th day of June, 2019.

ARKANSAS STATE PARKS, RECREATION AND TRAVEL COMMISSION

/s/ James D. "Jim" Shamburger, Jr., Chair

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND TOURISM

/s/ Jim Dailey, Tourism Director

/s/ Grady Spann, State Parks Director

Adjournment

The State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission meeting was adjourned at 1:04 pm in the Pine Bluff Convention Center, Pine Bluff, AR.