

North Little Rock Advertising & Promotion Commission  
MINUTES  
April 14, 2008

ATTENDEES

Rob Best, Chairman  
Richard Lindsey, Vice Chairman  
Alderman Neil Bryant, Commissioner  
Alderman Charlie Hight, Commissioner

Karen Trevino, Executive Director  
Summer Toyne, Admin. Assistant  
Jason Carter, NLR City Attorney  
Mark Abernathy, CARI

The North Little Rock Advertising & Promotion Commission met at 4:00 p.m. at the North Little Rock Visitor Information Center in Burns Park. Chairman Rob Best called the meeting to order. Manoj Patel and Charlie Jamison were out with excused absences. Jason Carter and Mark Abernathy attended as guests. Alderman Charlie Hight made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Richard Lindsey seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Karen Trevino presented the Hotel Tax Report stating that the year-to-date numbers were up 2.14% and the February month-to-date numbers were up 5.74%. The year 2007 ended with an 3.87% increase for hotel receipts. The Restaurant Report showed a decrease for the year-to-date figures of .18%. The month-to-date numbers increased 1.99% for the month of February. The year 2007 ended with an increase of 1.77% in restaurant receipts. Ms. Trevino noted that several restaurants were behind in remitting tax collections which always affects the numbers. She also distributed a report of restaurant collections for downtown NLR since 1999. There had been a steady increase each year of the collections for that area. This was important to note since the Visitors Bureau has been actively involved in the past two years to assist in the promotion of that area.

Ms. Trevino presented the Balance Sheet stating the CD's were in good standing but cash was low as it is typically this time of the year. She also presented the Income Statement for the month of February and March. There were no concerns with income or expenses at this time. The "Advertising" category included expenses for ads in the Group Travel Planet, AR Amateur Softball Association Brochure, TripInfo, Southeast Publication's KOA directory, AR Times' NCAA Special edition, AR Business' Tourism Issue and NCAA Issue. The "Sales Tools" category included expenses for the AT&T yellow pages directory, the monthly "Happenings", NLR Chamber map ad, sales profile sheets, business cards, AIMM Spanish brochures, design of two VB print ads, and the Dining & Coupon Book. The "Affiliations" category included expenses for NASC, Leadership Arkansas, AR Sports Hall of Fame, South Central Motorcoach Assn, and Travel Industry of America. The "Marketplaces/Conferences" category included expenses for Governor's Conference on Tourism, Bank Travel, American Bus Association, AR Society of Association Executives, AR Festival Assn, Southeast Tourism Society, Travel and Tourism Research Assn., National Assn. of Sports Commissions, and Travel South USA. The "Special Promotions/Public Relations" category included expenses for Super Sprint Triathlon sponsorship, Three Legged Dawg sponsorship, Dawg Days Off Road Triathlon sponsorship, AR Sports Hall of Fame banquet, Argenta labels & powerpoint presentation, AIMM brochures, ASAE, Arthritis Walk sponsorship, NCAA expenses, AR Downtown Economic Development Summit, promotional water, wayfinding signs, AR State Soccer Assn American Cup sponsor, ADC and staff planning meetings, American Trails National Trails Symposium, UALR, AR State Police Assn ad, banner, Golden Gloves, welcome bags, Kids Directory ads, St. Patricks Day Parade sponsorship, FYI Luncheon, brochure delivery service, USSSA Worth Series tournament sponsorship, Argenta brochure production & web development, NLR Parks & Recreation branding. Neil Bryant made a motion to accept the Financial Report as presented. Charlie Hight seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mark Abernathy, representing Consolidated Arkansas Restaurant Industries (CARI) of Central Arkansas, joined the meeting. He came to present CARI's position about how the North Little Rock A & P restaurant tax collections should be spent. He reported that CARI feels the city should fund its parks system through a general sales tax on all items instead of focusing on one industry. CARI has decided to ask the Commission to agree to not spend the bulk of the collections on funding the city's extensive park system. He reported that CARI thinks a greater percentage of the two percent collections should be used for marketing and promoting the city rather than used to support parks. CARI is specifically interested in dealing right now with the two percent collections – not the one percent specifically set aside for parks departments by law.

After some discussion, the question was posed to the City Attorney, Jason Carter, as to whether or not the NLR A & P Commission was following the law in using restaurant tax collections to fund the parks system. Mr. Carter stated that the law specifically states that funding parks is an allowable expense for A & P Commissions. Mr. Abernathy stated that the law does allow that but that the commission was not following the original intent of the law by disseminating funds to parks. Mr. Carter disagreed with that statement and explained the law in greater detail. Ms. Trevino explained that while Little Rock has a convention center to support with its tax, that North Little Rock views Burns Park as its special events facility that serves the same type of service to visitors and residents. Chairman Best mentioned that this Commission takes its responsibility to use the tax collections wisely and efficiently very seriously.

Mr. Abernathy distributed a copy of the transcript from his meeting with the Little Rock Advertising & Promotion Commission on the same subject. (This report is included in the Official Copy of the North Little Rock A & P Commission Packet and Minutes kept at the NLR Visitor Information Center.) Mr. Abernathy mentioned that CARI had hired a new director who would be attending the NLR A & P Commission meetings each month now. Chairman Best thanked Mr. Abernathy for attending the meeting to share CARI's concerns. Mr. Abernathy thanked the Commission for its time and left the meeting. Mr. Carter recommended that he send a letter to Mr. Abernathy asking for a list of the CARI businesses that he represents. Mr. Carter said this is a recommended practice used by the City Council as well. Chairman Best directed Mr. Carter to send the letter with a copy of all correspondence being sent to the A & P Director.

Ms. Trevino then presented the Director's Report for the months of February and March. She explained that the Visitor Information Center month-to-date numbers had increased 70% for February and 33% for March. She went on to say that the leading states of origin were Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, Missouri and Tennessee. She went on to explain the many activities of the Visitors Bureau staff. Alderman Hight made a motion to accept the Director's Report as presented. Richard Lindsey seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The next order of business was the Ongoing Delinquent Tax Report. The recommendations for actions are listed below.

Restaurant	April 2008 Action
Burns Park Soccer	Owes December 2007; Send Notice of Intent to Revoke
Cotija's	Owes August - October, 2007; Send Notice of Proposed Assessment and Demand for Payment
Dad's Donuts	Owes August, 2007 - February, 2008; Send Notice of Proposed Assessment and Demand for Payment
Fisher's Rick & D Café	Owes December 2007 - February, 2008. Send Notice of Intent to Revoke.
L & M Concessions	Owes December 2007; Send Notice of Intent to Revoke
Lindsey's BBQ	Owes December 2007 - February, 2008. Send Notice of Intent to Revoke.
Mom's Restaurant & Catering	Owes December 2007 - February, 2008. Send Notice of Intent to Revoke.
Pat's Kitchen	Owes December 2007. Send Notice of Intent to Revoke.
Price Right Food,	Owes November, 2007. Send Notice of Intent to Revoke
Roadhouse Grill	File Certificate of Indebtedness when bankruptcy cycle is complete
Southern Home Cooking	File Certificate of Indebtedness

Alderman Bryant made a motion to accept the Ongoing Delinquent Tax Report. Alderman Hight seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

With no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

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Rob Best, Chairman