

**MINUTES OF MEETING
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE (GAC)**

Woodlands Lobby, 1101 Desoto Blvd.
Friday, July 12, 2019, 9:00 AM

ATTENDANCE

Committee Members Present

Pamela Avila
Greg Jones
Jerry Yeric
David Whitlow
Curt Malone
Jim Zahnd
David Childs

Committee Members Absent

Ex-Officio Members Present

Bob Shoemaker

Ex-Officio Members Absent

None

POA Liaisons

Mike Medica – Board Liaison
Lesley Nalley – POA CEO

Other POA Board Members

None

Justices of the Peace

Keith Keck, Saline County
Larry Raney, Garland County

School District Liaisons

Melissa Speers, Jessieville
Dr. Michael Murphy, FLSD (absent)

HSV Chamber of Commerce Liaison

Nathan Hunnicut, Executive Director (absent)

Press

Lewis Delavan, Village Voice

Others Present

Maxine Klein – HSV Resident
Cheri Nelson – HSV Resident
Kevin Sexton – HSVPOA – Speaker
Dr. Ross – CHI St. Vincent - Speaker

OPENING OF MEETING

Call to Order: Chair Pam Avila called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM.

Agenda: The agenda was approved as submitted.

Minutes: The minutes of the June 7, 2019 meeting were approved.

Introductions: Guests – Maxine Klein, HSV Resident; Cheri Nelson, HSV Resident

**KEVIN SEXTON – HSVPOA DIRECTOR OF TOURISM AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS - GUEST
SPEAKER**

- Spent last 14 years in Arkansas state government – tourism and economic development

- Discussed flagship program – Discovery Package
 - Personal contact by residents has the greatest effect on visitors. “The best sales people we have in the Village are you, the residents,” Sexton says. The member host program now has 24 trained members to greet Discovery visitors and lead them around the Village.
 - Discovery packages include 3 days, 2 nights for an individual or couple.
 - Goals of the Discovery program are to provide welcoming experiences, with the hope of attracting new property owners and residents.
- Noted that Arkansas government supports retirement and relocation. Examples include paying for the Village’s booth at the Chicago show last winter. The state’s support frees up the POA budget to pursue other markets.
- Building a regional relationship with Hot Springs and Benton is a key effort.

DR. DOUG ROSS - PRESIDENT, CHI ST. VINCENT HOT SPRINGS - GUEST SPEAKER

- Noted Dr. Ross - St. Vincent Hot Springs is the only Level 2 Trauma Center in southwest Arkansas, also serving patients from northeast Texas and eastern Oklahoma.
- Objective federal government data shows that St. Vincent Hot Springs provides the highest quality and safety ratings for medical care in central Arkansas and Garland County, he said. Also, the Hot Springs campus is one of a handful in Arkansas offering accredited cancer care, and one of only two offering accredited hip and knee replacement.
- Further noted Dr. Ross - Examples of St. Vincent’s commitment the Village include expanding available services in the Village, which includes having 2 new physicians with regular days in the Village to provide new local services, including general surgery, bariatric surgery and neurology. “We are committed to Hot Springs Village and to providing care to this community,” he said.
- Existing services will remain, including imaging services and physical therapy in the center on DeSoto Boulevard and senior services at McAuley Senior Center on North Highway 7. A new cardiologist coming to Hot Springs next year may have time scheduled in the Village as well.
- CHI merged with Dignity Health early this year to help ensure the Catholic hospitals can continue to deliver their core values. The merged system is CommonSpirit Health, and it becomes the nation’s largest nonprofit health-care provider, with more than 151,000 employees. One in 4 Americans will receive care this year care in a Common Spirit facility, Ross said. Its size provides leverage for CommonSpirit to cowork with the federal government for more efficient models of delivering health care, Dr. Ross said.

POA REPORTS

Mike Medica – POA Board Liaison

- No report
- Reminded GAC that they’ll need to do report to Board in August

Lesley Nalley – POA CEO

- Noted potential broadband provider interested in Village, Discussions proceed but will take a long time for anything to happen
- TJ’s Market addressing grocery needs of east side of Village

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

- Announced 2 potential new GAC members – Mike Hood and Walter (Bob) Pettey, POA Board should approve at the July Board meeting.
- Welcomed David Childs as new GAC member

GAC SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

Special Report on Census Meeting – Jim Zahnd and Curt Malone

- Submitted in writing, attached to Minutes
- Asked to revisit Agenda to approve sub-committee charter, motion made and carried.
- Charter approved by GAC

Hot Springs and Garland County – Jerry Yeric

- Submitted in writing, attached to Minutes

Tri-Lakes – David Whitlow

- Submitted in writing, attached to Minutes

J.P. COMMENTS

J.P. Report Garland County – Larry Raney

- Discussed request of big box stores to change appraised values, and the potential negative impact on the county revenue.

J.P. Report Saline County – Keith Keck

- Requested GAC host Saline County Quorum Court in March-April timeframe (3rd Monday of each month).
- Metro Plan – submitted in writing, attached to Minutes

SCHOOLS

Melissa Speers - Superintendent of Schools/Fountain Lake

- Working on last minute hires.
- Test scores for student achievement showed growth; still not where they want to be, but #11 across state in growth.
- Fountain Lake has petitioned law enforcement commission to have own law enforcement agency on campus.

Old Business

No old business

New Business

- Leslie Nalley had requested that the GAC work with the 50th Anniversary Committee to bring state political officials to the April celebration. Bob Shoemaker, representing the Committee, asked to wait for a few more meetings of that committee until they can provide information.

- Suggestion to put together a “schematic” of Arkansas/county governmental structure for new Village residents.

REMINDERS AND CALENDAR

The next GAC meeting will be Friday, August 2, 2019, at 9:00 AM, Ouachita Events Building, Ponce de Leon Center.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 10:40am.

Committee Reports – July 12, 2019

MetroPlan – Keith Keck

MetroPlan conducted the initial meeting for the new Regional Advisory Committee on Thursday, July 11.

Two items highlighted by ARDoT were the expected \$95M being made available by the legislative branch for highway system preservation work and the 2020 Constitutional Amendment to permanently authorize the current sales tax for highway projects beyond 2023. This tax provided approximately \$205M for the state and \$43M each to cities and counties.

Census Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee – Jim Zahnd

- Perimeters for establishing the Village’s census tract boundaries have been established.
- The sub-committee charter for establishing the Census Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee is being drafted and will hopefully be ready for approval by the POA Board of Directors at its July 17 meeting.
- The U.S. Census Bureau has been informed of the Village’s intent to participate in the 2020 Census Community Partnership and Engagement Program through this committee and an a staff liaison to be designated.

Hot Springs – Jerry Yeric

A new chapter of the International Mountain Bicycling Association has been formed to serve Hot Springs and the surrounding Ouachita Mountains area of Arkansas. Trail Advocacy Coalition of the Ouachitas, or TACO, was established in response to the need for a local group dedicated to the care of local trails.

A Hot Springs company considered the world's leading supplier of baseball accessories and training gear was recognized for its accomplishments with the Medium Manufacturer Exporter Award during the Governor's Award for Excellence in Global Trade event in Little Rock.

The Arkansas Racing Commission gave approval for sports betting to start at Oaklawn Racing Casino Resort on July 1.

A joint city-county resolution the Hot Springs Board of Directors considered seeking transparency in sales tax collections the state revenue agency remits to local governments. The formal statement aims to undo a provision in the state tax code described by the city as a "statutory wall of confidentiality" that frustrates its ability to develop accurate revenue forecasts. Sales tax collections are the primary revenue sources for the city's general, police and fire funds.

Hot Springs Board of Directors approved Cravens Drive for the new entrance to Oaklawn Racing Casino Resort. Cravens Drive is named after William Cravens, Oaklawn said. According to the company's media guide, Cravens has been Oaklawn's director of finance and a member of its board since 1977.

A disappointing March for collections of the city's 1 percent general fund sales tax gave way to a record-setting April, according to a report the Hot Springs Finance Department. Officials said the \$1,300,352 collected in April is the most the tax has raised in a single month, beating the previous April by 22.93 percent, or \$211,221.

The Downtown Business District Parking Advisory Committee was shown technology-based solutions to parking problems, an approach expected to convert many of the free spaces downtown into metered parking.

The Hot Springs Board of Directors put the fate of the Majestic Baseball Park Complex to the citizens, calling for a special election Sept. 10. They are asking city voters to authorize up to \$8.5 million of debt for revitalization of the city's former baseball showplace. Bonds would be issued on behalf of the Hot Springs Advertising and Promotion Commission, with the 3 percent sales tax the commission levies on prepared food and lodging inside the city securing the debt.

Some members of the Hot Springs Board of Directors balked at looser property maintenance code regulations last month, questioning why restrictions on grass height and parking should be relaxed. The ordinance would have amended maximum grass height from 6 to 10 inches and repealed the prohibition on parking vehicles in front or side yards adjacent to a street. It was removed from the agenda.

The Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts was recently recognized as one of the nation's top-performing public high schools in the latest Jay Mathews "Public Elites" rankings list for the fourth consecutive year. Unlike other ranking systems, Mathews list does not use test scores as the basis for his ratings. Instead, his list uses the ratio of advanced placement, international baccalaureate or Cambridge tests given a school each year divided by the number of seniors who graduated that year.

Garland County – Jerry Yeric

The automotive technology program at National Park College was awarded a \$12,989 Education and Training grant from the Arkansas Motor Vehicle Commission.

The \$1.53 million courtroom at the Garland County Detention Center has become a regular venue for criminal proceedings, warranting its inclusion in the \$17,000 upgrade to the court reporting system for the county's four circuit court divisions.

The appropriation from the circuit courts automation and cost funds approved earlier this month by the Garland County Quorum Court will upgrade court reporting system hardware and software in the four circuit courtrooms at the county courthouse and county courts building and the detention center courtroom.

Tri-Lakes Metropolitan Planning Organization Report – David Whitlow

The Policy Board of the Tri-Lakes MPO did not meet since the last Governmental Affairs Committee. Their next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 25th at the offices of the West Central Arkansas Planning and Development District (WCAPDD) in Hot Springs.

The following items concerning highways and transportation should be of interest to GAC members and residents of Hot Springs Village:

- 1) Demolition of the shopping center at the eastern end of the Highway 270 widening project has begun. The project has not yet been bid due to right-of-way issues. Twelve of the 80 required easements have not been obtained. Bidding is expected to take place later this year.
- 2) Maintenance work on the King Expressway began June 7th. The project includes milling, repaving, drainage and bridge work between Central Avenue and Airport Road. The work is expected to take 60 to 90 days. It will be accomplished at night between the hours of 8:00 PM and 6:30 AM.

Saline County – Curt Malone

No written report submitted

Broadband – Greg Jones

No written report submitted

Website – Pam Avila

No written report submitted