

**Clark County Strategic Plan
Tourism Sub-Committee Meeting
March 27, 2008**

The Clark County Strategic Plan Tourism Sub-Committee met for a monthly meeting on Thursday, March 27 at the Arkadelphia Recreation Center. The following members were present: Debbie Kluck, Carly Leuton, Jerry Walker, George Babineau, Anita Williams, Dennis Williams, Rick Brumley, Adam LupPlace, Linda Eaves, Fred Phillips, Wesley Kluck and Carrie Roberson.

Co-Chair Linda Eaves welcomed the committee and thanked them for their attendance.

The committee discussed the possibility of utilizing the Clark County Sales Tax for tourism. The tax revenue cannot be used for tourism. The only situation where the tax can be used for tourism is if a manufacturer of tourism products is interested in locating in Clark County. The tax cannot be used for any retail businesses.

The following sub-priority committee reports were given:

Fred reported his committee looked at outdoor recreational opportunities in the plan. The committee would like to begin expanding the trail system in Clark County and establish a linked trail system. The first phase would be a natural surface trail, approximately 12 miles long, adjacent to Skyline Drive. There is a funding opportunity through the Arkansas Trails for Life grant. Fred proposed we apply for a grant through Southern Financial Partners for \$3000 to engage Ken Eastin of Eastin Outdoors to write the grant. Anita Williams made a motion to apply for a grant from SFP for \$3000 to complete the grant proposal and Rick Brumley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Linda reported her committee identified current festivals/events within the county. The goal of the committee is to promote current events and support and improve new events. The committee will create a "catalog" of festivals within Clark County to promote around the state. The committee created an event information form to gather details of existing festivals/events. The committee will use the information to create marketing material. The event information form will be added to the CCSP web-site.

The tourism committee discussed the City of Arkadelphia's facilitation of the reorganization of the Festival of Two Rivers. The reorganization committee voted to have the festival on the 1st weekend in October and voted to call the festival "The Best Dam Festival". The City of Arkadelphia is looking for volunteers to come forward to organize the first event in 2009. Currently, there are 3 volunteers. There is concern from the City of Gurdon regarding the timing of the proposed festival due to it being held in the same month as the Gurdon Forest Festival. The CCSP Tourism Committee intends to support county festivals through organized marketing and promotion.

Representatives from the Caddo Valley A&P Commission gave an overview of the work they are doing on behalf of the city. The tax collected in Caddo Valley is designated for advertising and for park maintenance in Caddo Valley. The tax has been collected for 3 years. The city is running radio advertising in Louisiana and Texas, they have purchased print ads in several publications including the Diamond Lakes Guide and they have purchased billboard space on the interstate. There were 64,000 hotel reservations in Caddo Valley in 2007. Caddo Valley is willing to do its part to support the new welcome center but can't financially support the entire project.

It was announced that AETN will air a special featuring Arkadelphia on tonight's broadcast.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:

Carrie Roberson