

## North Little Rock Advertising & Promotion Commission

MINUTES  
January 15, 2025

### ATTENDEES

#### COMMISSION MEMBERS

Michael Marion  
Brayan McFadden  
Melody Williford  
Council Member Scott Fowler  
Council Member Debi Ross

#### STAFF

Karen Trevino, President & CEO  
Janis Alexander, COO  
Heather Kouns, Vice President of Strategic Sales  
Chris Kennedy, Administrative Specialist  
Pete Unwer, Events Specialist  
Shelbey Morris, Senior Manager of Sales & Partnerships

#### Guest Attendees

Amy Fields, NLR City Attorney Office

The North Little Rock Advertising and Promotion Commission met at 2:05 p.m. at the North Little Rock A & P Commission Offices at 600 Main Street. Michael Marion called the meeting to order, roll was taken, and a quorum was present. Manjo Patel and Tom Roy had an excused absence.

Marion introduced new commission members, Scott Fowler, and Debi Ross, who both gave a brief biography of their experiences.

Brayan McFadden made a motion to approve the December 2024 meeting minutes, Melody Williford seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Karen Trevino then presented the financial and tax reports for 2024.

- The organization's finances were in good shape, with revenues meeting or exceeding budget in most areas like food service taxes, and the RV park. The lodging tax was below budget and Trevino had adjusted the 2024 expense allocations throughout the year.
- There was discussion around improving the online tax payment system, potentially adding a processing fee for non-online payments, and managing delinquent payments.
- The organization has a healthy reserve fund equal to 6 months of operating expenses.

Melody Williford made a motion to approve the financial report, Scott Fowler seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

Janis Alexander reported on the status of businesses that were past due and explained their efforts to get funds collected. McFadden made a motion to approve the tax report, Melody Williford seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

Pete Unwer made a presentation about the plaza.

- Thirty-two total events were held at the plaza in 2024 with attendance totaling approximately 20,948. The best attended event was the Solar Eclipse.
- The plaza's economic impact was around \$648,047 for 2024.

- Plans are underway to try to increase the number of rentals and events at the plaza, including exploring and adding shade structures.

Trevino spoke about the Winter Circus.

- The circus event has been held in North Little Rock for the past two years. In 2023, NLR Tourism netted about \$4,000 after receiving the \$40,000 upfront money back. However, the circus didn't do as well in 2024 due to the timing between Thanksgiving and Christmas, the abundance of holiday events happening in Central Arkansas, and the economy. NLR Tourism lost around \$14,000 on the event.
- For 2025, we want to move the circus from a three-week run back to two-weeks
- It brings a lot of visibility and media attention to North Little Rock.
- There was discussion about trying to quantify the broader economic impact the circus has on the area, beyond just the direct costs and revenues. This could help justify the investment, even if it does not turn out a profit.

Melody Williford made a motion to approve of providing \$50,000 upfront for the circus for 2025. The amount will be refunded from the proceeds. NLR Tourism will cover security and port-a-potties. The motion was seconded by Debi Ross and passed unanimously.

Heather Kouns made a presentation on The Riverfront RV Park.

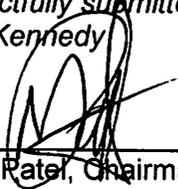
- The RV Park had an extraordinarily strong year, exceeding \$500,000 in total sales revenue for the first time ever.
- They added fourteen new full hookup sites, implemented a new booking platform, and focused on driving occupancy during shoulder seasons.
- Overall RV Park performance was positive, with a 3.5% increase in total nights and a 10.7% increase in economic impact.

Shelbey Morris made a presentation on upcoming sports initiatives.

- A sports feasibility study is underway with the Huddle Up Group to assess the organization's sports and meeting facilities and identify opportunities.
- A new "North Little Rock Partnership Day" is planned to better connect local businesses, attractions, and hotels.

McFadden made a motion to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Scott Fowler. The Motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 3:37pm

*Respectfully submitted by:*  
Chris Kennedy



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Manoj Patel, Chairman