

CITY OF JACKSONVILLE, ARKANSAS
Advertising and Promotion Commission



A & P Commission
Regularly Scheduled Meeting
March 25, 2013

CALL TO ORDER:

The Jacksonville A & P Commission met in the regular meeting place of the Commission on Monday, March 25, 2013. Chairman Houchen called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Ray Patel, Andy Patel, and Jim Hurley; Aldermen Reddie Ray and Kenny Elliott, and the Honorable Tommy Swaim answered roll call. Chairman Houchen also answered roll call and declared a quorum. Present (7), Absent (0)

Others present for the meeting included: City Attorney Robert Bamburg, Recording Secretary Nikki Wilmoth, Mayor Gary Fletcher, former Alderman Bob Stroud, Finance Director Cheryl Erkel, Parks and Recreation Assistant Director Kevin House, Sells Agency CEO Mike Sells, Sells Agency Account Executive Kristen Burgeis, Sells Agency Public Relations Account Executive Katheryn Heller, Jack Danielson, and Warren Dupree. There were no members of the press present.

MINUTES:

Commissioner Andy Patel moved, seconded by Alderman Reddie Ray to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2012 and December 17, 2012 meetings as presented. Motion Carried.

FINANCIALS:

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel presented the financial report for February, noting total assets of \$750,386.00, which includes \$402,257.00 in investments. She further noted \$138,192.00 in accounts payables. She reported \$62,524.00 in revenues and \$19,241.00 in expenditures, leaving an excess of \$43,283.00 in revenues over expenditures. She related that revenues received in February were for January sales. She noted January hotel/motel gross receipts of \$167,893.00, which is a decline of 33% compared to last year. She stated that when the report was generated, Cranbury Inn had not remitted payment, which may be a contributing factor in the low numbers. She further noted January prepared food tax gross receipts of \$3,035,122.00, which is a 4% decrease from last year. She stated that at the time of the report, there were nine businesses that had not reported, but they have since remitted payment and will be reflected on the next report. She reported overall gross receipts of \$3,203,015.00, which is an overall decrease of 6% compared to last year.

Chairman Houchen stated and Finance Director Erkel confirmed, that if all the vendors had reported timely, revenues would be about even when compared to last year. She stated that hotel/motel revenues are low but could not offer a reason as to why they have declined. She pointed out that hotel/motel revenues have been declining for a while.

Alderman Reddie Ray moved, seconded by Commissioner Andy Patel to approve the February financial report as presented. Motion Carried.

SELLS AGENCY REPORT:

CEO Mike Sells asked if there was anything that the Agency could do to help improve hotel/motel revenues.

Commissioner Andy Patel stated that the hotels are not doing well and have steadily declined due to a lack of business. He related that people are not traveling and they have not been receiving business from the LRAFB, possibly due to budget cuts. He stated that they are trying to get the business without having to significantly cut their rates.

Chairman Houchen noted that prepared food tax revenues have not declined however, he stated the need to get something in Jacksonville that will make people want to stay in Jacksonville. He related that there haven't been many events that would give people a reason to stay in Jacksonville as opposed to staying in Little Rock or North Little Rock. He stated that regarding the LRAFB, he could not say definitely that the decrease was due to budget cuts, noting that there are only four hotels in Jacksonville that the Department of Defense has approved for personnel to stay in.

In response to a question from CEO Sells, Commissioner Andy Patel replied that hotel/motel revenues are declining on a daily basis. He stated that with the weather, there have been no indoor or outdoor tournaments to bring in business.

Chairman Houchen stated that with the exception of Little Rock, who always has events ongoing, other cities are experiencing a decline in hotel/motel revenues at this time. He further stated that Jacksonville is fortunate that the prepared food tax revenues have overcome the gap that has been created by the decline in hotel/motel revenues.

It was surmised that with the completion of the shooting range, the possibility of training classes at the public safety building, and increased activity at the ball fields due to warmer weather, revenues should increase.

In response to a question from Alderman Elliott, Parks and Recreation Assistant Director Kevin House replied that more tournaments are booked this year over last year. He related that there was a 56 team tournament last weekend.

Chairman Houchen acknowledged that hotels are not doing well right now however, there were five months last year where the hotel/motel revenues were greater than the previous year. He stated this is not an overall continuing decline since there were some months that revenues were greater than what was reported the previous year. He further stated that before making the decision that this is a trend, everyone should realize that December and January are usually are lower.

CEO Sells stated that if there is anything that the Agency could do to please let them know because they want to see the revenues increase as well. He related that a hotel booking site could be added to the website to generate more traffic to the area hotels. He explained that if a person goes onto the website to find information on Jacksonville and there is no booking agent on the site, the person will utilize a site such as Expedia to book a room. He further explained that Expedia will show the person featured hotels over area hotels. He related that there are enough hotels that are close to Jacksonville that the person doing the search would probably get a hotel in Little Rock or North Little Rock at the top of the page instead of Jacksonville hotels. He stated that if you can present a booking agent that lists the area hotels, it does not give the person a reason to leave your website and they are more likely to book a room from the website versus utilizing another website. He related that even though the hotels have their websites listed on the webpage, consumers are leery about booking a room directly through the hotel's website.

It was noted that booking agent cost is approximately \$8,500.00 with a small yearly maintenance fee. CEO Sells stated that they could present an updated proposal at the next meeting.

CEO Sells presented the Commission with a list of completed projects that included the FestiVille logo, the new billboard on Hwy 67/167, the poster and flier for the Heritage Bike Tour, magazine ads in various Civil War related publications, and the production of a radio commercial for the Vietnam Veterans' Day event.

He reviewed the website statistical report, noting that the report reflects traffic from January 1 through March 22, 2013. He related that when compared to last year during the same time period, visits increased 32%, unique visitors have increased approximately 40%, the time on site is up almost 30%, and page views are up 42%. He stated that during this time frame, there has been no digital marketing through Facebook or any other digital advertising device to drive traffic to the website. He related that these results are people who are going online and keying in catch phrases the top two being "Dupree Park" and "places to eat in Jacksonville". He noted that 56% of the traffic came from search engines.

He introduced Kathryn Heller, who is the new public relations account executive at the Agency, relating that she came from the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies where her background is a good mesh for Jacksonville. He pointed out that she has experience in public and media relations, as well as event marketing and planning. He stated that she will be presenting the public relations' report. The Commissioners welcomed Ms. Heller to Jacksonville.

Sells Agency Account Executive Kristen Burgeis presented the 2013 media plan, pointing out that promotions for FestiVille will begin the two weeks prior to the FestiVille in June with both radio and print media. She related that there is also a summer television campaign planned with an updated commercial utilizing some of the footage shown at the Air Show that will be converted into a thirty second television commercial. She explained they were in the process of re-editing so the commercial could begin running in May through late July. She noted that the military history Facebook ads would begin running this week and continue through the end of November. She stated that there are ads running in four publications related to military history that will continue due to the upcoming Sesquicentennial in September. She related that the baseball/softball radio ads would begin running the end of May through July to remind people when they are coming to Jacksonville for a tournament, there are great places to eat and stay. She noted that the Hwy 67/167 billboard contact is in place until February 2014.

Commissioner Hurley questioned if anyone has looked into having someone do a live remote from the ball fields.

Ms. Burgeis replied that they have looked into it recently regarding another event, noting the willingness of radio stations to work with them. She acknowledged that they have not looked into a live remote for the ball tournaments. She noted that at this point 103.7 is the best bet however, they are more than willing to look at other radio stations and will check into it.

Discussion ensued regarding whether a live remote has been done in the past and what tournament would be best to have a live remote. It was determined that Memorial Day would be the best time to schedule it.

In response to a question from Commissioner Andy Patel, Chairman Houchen replied that the billboard wrap would be changed to promote FestiVille and then a determination would be made as to what to do after that. It was noted that each new billboard wraps costs \$650.00.

In response to a question from Commissioner Andy Patel, discussion ensued regarding the recent Governor's Conference on Tourism. CEO Sells related the opportunity through the State of Arkansas' Parks and Tourism website to advertise Jacksonville businesses by putting together package deals.

Public Relations Account Executive Katheryn Heller presented the public relations report, noting media alerts for the following: "Pitch, Hit, and Run", "Heritage Bike Tour", "Reed's Bridge Clean-up Day", and both of the Easter egg hunts. She pointed out the list of upcoming promotional events, requesting that if there other events not listed to please inform Recording Secretary Wilmoth who will forward the information to her to be added.

Alderman Ray commented that he has already seen advertisements for farmer's markets in other cities.

Ms. Heller noted that Little Rock has a year-round farmer's market.

In response to a question from Commissioner Andy Patel, Ms. Heller replied that she sends media alerts to the Jacksonville papers, event based media outlets in Little Rock and depending on the event, may reach out to Cabot or surrounding area media outlets. She added that she also makes sure that the information is included in online calendars. She noted that she is already working on media for FestiVille, explaining that since it is a larger event it will be distributed statewide.

OLD BUSINESS:

Chairman Houchen announced the need to add an item of business to the agenda, explaining that the need occurred after the original agenda was sent out. He related that the item of business is the discussion and possible additional funding for the shooting range.

Commissioner Andy Patel moved, seconded by Alderman Ray to suspend the rules and place the item of business on the agenda. Motion Carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. \$1,500.00 Reed's Bridge funding request for additional fencing for new property S. Hwy 161 and Dennis Lane

Reed's Bridge Historical Society President Jack Danielson pointed out the property that was recently donated to the Reed's Bridge Historical Society and the City of Jacksonville as an addition to the Battlefield site. He related that in the past, they have used split-rail fencing to designate the property boundaries that are part of the Battlefield and owned by the City. He stated that funds are being requested for additional materials that will be installed with volunteer labor to mark the property. He further stated that the fencing material, which is a special order item from Whit Davis or Ingle Fence Co., must be ordered in \$1,500.00 lumps of rails that will be used to build the fence and mend other fences.

In response to a question from Commissioner Andy Patel, Commissioner Hurley replied that \$12,000.00 was budgeted this year.

Mr. Danielson stated that regarding cash flow, they have received \$500.00 for the Heritage Bike Tour. He noted that the Sesquicentennial Re-enactment will be held in September and the Symposium will be held in May. He further noted that the Battlefield Clean-up Day will be held on April 9th, adding that they did not request funding for that event. He related that they have been utilizing the Sells Agency, through the relationship with the A & P Commission, to advertise their events.

Chairman Houchen questioned if Reed's Bridge spent all of the funds that were allocated last year for fencing.

Mr. Danielson replied that all of the funds were spent, adding that it was approximately \$6,000.00 to \$7,000.00.

Alderman Ray moved to expend \$1,500.00 to the Reed's Bridge Historical Society for fencing.

Commissioner Andy Patel stated that the budget is tight, adding that the Commission has to be careful when approving funding requests. He further stated that he would like to see revenues increase, noting the decline in revenues over the past three months. He related that his hotel revenues are very low when compared to 2012. He stated that if Reed's Bridge spends the \$1,500.00 to build fencing, not like last year when funds were allocated for fencing but not spent, he would be in favor of the expenditure.

Commissioner Andy Patel seconded the motion.

Mr. Danielson stated that all of the funds that were allocated for fencing were spent for fencing materials and has not been spent on anything else.

Commissioner Hurley questioned what difference would be made by fencing the property now versus making a funding request for the 2014 budget.

Mr. Danielson replied that the reason for asking for the funds now is because they have the property now and the property will be included in the Sesquicentennial Re-enactment in September.

Commissioner Hurley questioned what would be done on the recently donated property during the Sesquicentennial Re-enactment.

Mr. Danielson replied that this year, they are making a significant change in the way they will be conducting the Re-enactment. He stated that in the past, they have utilized the open area by the homestead for a little show with cannons, muskets, and uniformed re-enactors.

He further stated that the actual Battle took place from both sides of the Bayou and so this year, they plan to have the Union troops camped on the north side of the Bayou and the Confederate troops camped on the southern side. He related that they had a meeting with Mayor Fletcher, Chief Sipes, Chief Vanderhoof, Kevin House, Kristen Kennon, and others to discuss logistics for that to happen. He stated that the piece of property will give them more frontage on the Highway that they can control and can be used for re-enactor camping or additional parking. He related that they plan to spread the parking out this year. He stated that if the Commission decides to forego funding until later in the year, they can do that, adding that his goal is to have the fencing there before September. He related that they have already started to clear the property to make it more presentable and clean-up that part of town, which will make it a bigger asset for the City. He stated that the fencing can be down now or up to the middle of August.

Commissioner Hurley remarked that it could wait until 2014.

Mr. Danielson stated that it could, explaining that the fencing material is a special order that takes two to three weeks to turn around from the vendor, adding that receiving the funds take two to three weeks for a total of four to six weeks.

Chairman Houchen asked if Alderman Ray or Commissioner Andy Patel would like to amend the motion.

Alderman Ray moved, seconded by Commissioner Andy Patel to amend the motion to table it until the next meeting. Motion Carried.

Mr. Danielson presented a copy of the Heritage Bike Tour flier, relating that it was a complete success. He pointed out that there were riders from Russellville, Hot Springs Village, Conway, Cabot, Lonoke, and all the surrounding communities for a total of 35 riders. He stated that some started in Lonoke but the majority started in Jacksonville and went to Lonoke. He further stated his assumption that they all ate in Jacksonville, visited both museums, and asked when the next ride would be and encourage the continuance of the event. He related that thanks to the Sells Agency, they now have a long-term logo, which will be handlebars and history.

Commissioner Hurley stated that when the Commission approves funding requests, they don't include advertising and promotion costs. The Commission will take care of advertising on an "as needed" basis when things come up not as part of the total funding package.

Mr. Danielson stated that they hoped to expand the event to include t-shirts and sponsorships. He added that they would like to expand the event to 200 riders and eventually ride to Lonoke, Cabot, and Scott but always starting in Jacksonville.

Alderman Ray noted there were a lot of food sponsorships that helped decrease expenditures.

Chairman Houchen thanked Ms. Heller for contacting some of the area bike shops and clubs to promote the event.

2. Discussion and additional funding for the shooting range

Mayor Fletcher explained that last summer a group of citizens went to the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and formed a partnership. At that time, it was projected that the City's portion would be \$1.5 million to get the land and operate the shooting range. At that point, the project was projected to cost \$2 million. He stated that they went out for bids in November 2012 and the bids came in a lot higher at around \$3 million. He related that they went back to the group and made a formal presentation to the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, who in turn upped their commitment to \$2 million from \$1.5 million. He stated that they went back out for bid in February and the bids came in \$2.549 million, after adding architectural fees etc. the bid came in at around \$3.3 million. He related that the City has borrowed \$3 million that was authorized by the City Council, adding that the Commission's commitment at that time was \$500,000.00 to purchase the land. He stated that obviously this project has increased in cost and several things have changed in the interim. He related that originally it was supposed to be a 10 stage shooting range and now it has been expanded to a 14 stage shooting range, pointing out that this will be the largest shooting range in the State, according to Mr. Martin with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. He stated that Mr. Martin is trying to draw regional and/or national tournaments. He related that with 6,000 youths that participate in the Arkansas Youth Shooting Program, there were not enough restroom facilities, so they added two pavilions with restroom facilities that increased the bid an additional \$325,000.00. He stated that the low bidder, StoneBridge, back in November the clubhouse bid was \$970,000.00, three months later the bid increased \$104,000.00. When questioned, StoneBridge stated that since gas was around \$4.00 a gallon at that time, it increased the bid amount. He related that they have a commitment from the County Judge of around \$300,000.00 to complete the parking lot. He continued that they are trying to get this project as close to the \$3 million range as possible, adding that when all is said and done it will be a \$3.5 million project. The in-kind services are roughly \$300,000.00 from the County and \$100,000.00 from the Water and Sewer Commissions. He related that he needs additional funds from the Commission, adding that he understands the Commission cannot commit funding for more than one year. He stated that the biggest commitment will be in the first year because he believes that once the hundreds or thousands of people come to Jacksonville, sales tax revenues will increase and it will be easier to meet obligations in the future. He then stated that he has taken \$127,000.00 out of contingency, adding that they have reviewed the plans numerous times to get down to the \$3 million level. He explained that if you take \$127,000.00 off of the \$3.3 million that leaves \$3.186 million. He further explained that by Ordinance, 50% of the prepared food tax and hotel/motel tax revenues goes to the Parks and Recreation Department, adding that after speaking to Kevin, their budget is going to increase as sales tax revenues increase therefore, he is going to get \$40,000.00 from the Parks budget.

He noted that he has a private donation of \$100,000.00 and \$187,000.00 for a five-year period with give the City roughly \$935,000.00. He noted that the Commission has already allocated \$130,000.00 for this year, stating that he needs an additional \$50,000.00 this year.

Commissioner Hurley clarified that Mayor Fletcher is asking for a commitment of \$180,000.00 for this year and potentially for four additional years.

Chairman Houchen stated that if you take a baseline of what revenues will be this year, plus what revenues can potentially be next year, the future commitment will not be anywhere near the \$180,000.00 that is needed this year. He related that \$130,000.00, originally committed by the Commission, were excess funds from 2012 and were not appropriated for this year. He stated that technically, the Commission would have to cash in a certificate of deposit and use that this year. However, depending on when the City will need the funds, whether it be in the second, third or fourth quarter, the Commission may not need all of the \$50,000.00 depending on the revenue stream. He stated that the additional \$50,000.00 would have to come from a certificate of deposit or additional revenues received on top of the \$130,000.00 already allocated.

The Honorable Tommy Swaim stated that when the Commission was started, with the City Council's approval, the Commission agreed that funds should be set aside for a major project, which is the fund balance. He related that after reviewing figures in the fund balance, he feels the Commission could fund \$100,000.00 at this time instead of \$50,000.00. He related this would show the Commission's commitment to the project and shorten the time that the Commission would be financially obligated.

The Honorable Tommy Swaim moved, seconded by Commissioner Hurley to approve the additional expenditure of \$100,000.00 for the shooting range project for a total of \$230,000.00. Roll Call: (7) for (0) against, Motion Carried.

3. Recommendation for terms expiring March 31,2013

Chairman Houchen noted that his and Commissioner Ray Patel's terms will be expiring at the end of the month. He then asked the Commission for recommendations.

Alderman Ray moved, seconded by Commissioner Andy Patel to recommend the re-appointments of Chairman Mike Houchen and Commissioner Ray Patel for a term to expire March 31, 2017. Motion Carried.

4. Election of officers

Chairman Houchen noted that presently Commissioner Andy Patel is secretary.

Alderman Ray moved, seconded by Commissioner Hurley to re-appoint the current officers by acclamation. Motion Carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Recording Secretary Wilmoth read the announcements to include the Vietnam Veteran's Day event and the Reed's Bridge Clean-up Day on April 6th.

Mr. Warren Dupree stated that thanks to the funding received by the Commission, they have a large Vietnam Veteran's Day event banner in front of the Firestone location, a new wrap on the City's billboard, and banners at the Museum. He related that they have posters available for display, noting that they are already in area businesses and in City Hall, adding that the printing was donated. He presented a yard sign that was available with a removable date strip. He stated they have a number of items that are for sale in the Museum's gift shop and some give away items complete with the logo. He related that the master of ceremonies will be a highly decorated Vietnam veteran from the National Vietnam Veterans Organization, which is organized through the National Department of Defense. He stated that they have solid commitments for 14 to 16 parade entries; they had 26 entries last year, and are expecting more this year. He added that a large number of veteran's groups have already committed to attend. He related that since funds were not expended for a traveling Vietnam Wall exhibit because of logistical problems, they are providing dinner to Vietnam veterans at no charge.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Houchen adjourned the meeting at 7:48 p.m., next meeting April 15, 2013.

CALL TO ORDER:

The Jacksonville A & P Commission met in the regular meeting place of the Commission on Monday May 20, 2013. Alderman Ray called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. He then delivered the invocation and led a standing audience in the "Pledge of Allegiance".

He noted the resignation of Mike Houchen due to health reasons, explaining that he is acting as interim chair. He wished Mike well and stated that a service plaque would be presented to him within the next couple of months. He related that Mike is the second chairman to have served on the Commission and expressed his appreciation for the time and service that Mike gave the Commission. He stated that Mike has taught him a lot about advertising, adding that he hopes to continue the good job that the previous chairmen have done.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Ray Patel, Andy Patel and Dee Lawrence, Alderman Kenny Elliott, and the Honorable Tommy Swaim answered roll call. Alderman Ray also answered roll call and declared a quorum. Present (6), Absent (1) Commissioner Jim Hurley was absent.

Others present for the meeting included: City Attorney Robert Bamburg, Recording Secretary Nikki Wilmoth, Alderman Bill Howard, Alderman Mary Twitty, Finance Director Cheryl Erkel, Parks and Recreation Director Kevin House, Sells Agency CEO Mike Sells, Sells Agency Account Executive Kristen Burgeis, Sells Agency Public Relations Account Executive Kathryn Heller, Jerry Reichenbach and Rick Kron with The Leader newspaper.

Alderman Ray welcomed newly appointed Commissioner Dee Lawrence to the Commission.

NOMINATION OF CHAIRMAN:

Alderman Ray asked for nominations for chairman.

Alderman Elliott moved, seconded by Commissioner Andy Patel to nominate Alderman Ray as Chairman.

Alderman Elliott moved, seconded by Commissioner Andy Patel that the nominations for Chairman be closed.

Alderman Ray asked Recording Secretary Wilmoth to call roll.

Motions Carried unanimously.

Discussion ensued over whether to elect a vice-chair, it was the consensus of those present not to elect a vice-chair at this time.

MINUTES:

Commissioner Andy Patel moved, seconded by the Honorable Tommy Swaim to approve the minutes of the March 25, 2013 meeting as presented. Motion Carried.

FINANCIALS:

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel presented the financial report for April, noting total assets of \$713,747.00 and accounts payables of \$37,569.00, leaving a fund balance of \$676,177.00.

The Honorable Tommy Swaim asked and Finance Director Erkel replied that these amounts include funds pledged but not expensed. The Honorable Tommy Swaim noted that there were a couple of large expenditures that are budgeted. Finance Director Erkel noted that there is only \$28,258.00 that is not allocated at this time.

Commissioner Andy Patel pointed out that it looks like two certificates of deposit matured in February, requesting an update. Finance Director Erkel explained that it does not appear that the information has been updated within the report. She stated that she would have to check her records, adding that usually when certificates of deposit mature in February, they are usually rolled over for the length of time of the original certificate of deposit. She related that the majority of the certificates of deposits are with Centennial Bank, adding that she believes that there are two at First Arkansas Bank & Trust. She explained that quotes are obtained from each bank and the certificates of deposit are purchased based on the best rate received.

She reported \$202,970.00 in revenues and \$89,856.00 in expenditures, leaving an excess of \$113,114.00 in revenues over expenditures. She pointed out that gross receipts are the amounts that vendors report and not the amounts received by the Commission. She noted March hotel/motel gross receipts of \$244,687.00, which is a decline of 22% compared to last year. She reported March prepared food tax gross receipts of \$3,427,040.00, which is a 4% decrease from last year. She noted overall gross receipts of \$3,671,727.00, which is an overall decrease of 5% compared to last year. She stated that at the time of the report, there was one hotel that had not remitted payment, which has since been received. With that remittance, hotel/motel gross receipts increased to \$272,678.00, which would be a decrease of 19% instead of 22% when compared to last year. She related that regarding prepared food tax gross receipts, all vendors have remitted payment with the exception of two. She stated that a collection letter was mailed out to the outstanding vendors. She noted updated prepared food tax gross receipts of \$3,519,732.00, which is a decrease of 3% instead of 4% when compared to last year. Overall gross revenues decreased 4% instead of 5%.

Commissioner Andy Patel stated, and Finance Director Erkel confirmed that hotel/motel revenues have continued to decrease without business from the Little Rock Air Force Base.

The Honorable Tommy Swaim questioned if the budget would need to be revised due to declining revenues. Finance Director Erkel replied that she would research the budget and address the Commission at the next meeting.

The Honorable Tommy Swaim moved, seconded by Alderman Elliott to approve the April financial report as presented. Motion Carried.

SELLS AGENCY REPORT:

CEO Mike Sells asked if there is an anticipated opening date for the shooting range.

Parks and Recreation Director Kevin House replied that August 31st is the projected opening date.

Alderman Ray announced that Kevin House is the new Parks and Recreation director, stating that he is glad to have him on board.

CEO Sells stated that with that information, he would be coming back next month with some very specific information and timeline for how to get a hotel booking agent on the website before the shooting range opens. He related that when the shooting range opens, they anticipate additional traffic to the website and there needs to be a way for them to book a hotel room in Jacksonville without utilizing Travelocity or Expedia or leaving our website. He questioned if it would be helpful to have a working group outside of the Commission to look at and discuss possible ways that promotion and advertising could help the hotels with Base business having declined. He explained that at the Commission meetings, there is only so much discussion and planning that can be done, adding that they would be open to a working group that could report back to the Commission. He stated that he didn't want to leave any stone unturned that could help to improve hotel/motel revenues.

Alderman Ray stated that it was a good idea, relating that there was a shooting tournament last week at Remington with 800 junior high and high school students participating, which will be a big draw for Jacksonville.

Discussion ensued with CEO Sells stating that it would be a small group that can do more concentrated planning.

Alderman Ray stated that only one Commissioner would need to serve. Commissioner Andy Patel offered to serve.

Sells Agency Account Executive Kristen Burgeis related that a radio spot was produced for the Vietnam Veteran's Day event that was held in April, which ran for two weeks prior to the event along with a live remote. She further related that the Civil War Symposium was held in May, noting that posters, flyers, and a program were produced for the event, which was held at the Jacksonville Museum of Military History. She added that the FestiVille wrap is up on the Commission's billboard and a wrap is in production for the City's billboard. She stated that the generic wrap will be installed after FestiVille is over. She related that a baseball/softball radio spot was just completed that will run starting today until the end of June that advertises all the other activities to do while in Jacksonville for a tournament such as visiting the Military Museum, Splash Zone, shopping, and restaurants. She noted that the spot will air on The Buzz 103.7 during the morning and afternoon drive times.

She recalled that at the last meeting, the Commission discussed the possibility of doing a live remote at one of the tournaments and Director House had indicated that the Wally Hall Memorial Tournament of Champions, held on Memorial Day weekend, would have the largest turnout. She stated that they have been working on talking points and getting the live remote set-up.

She then stated that someone from The Buzz 103.7 would be on site for two hours, explaining that the talking points would cover the season opening of Splash Zone, the great hotels, the variety of foods and other attractions that Jacksonville offers. She related that the disc jockey will start promoting the talking points this week and will be at Dupree Park from 11 a.m. to 1p.m.

In response to a question from Alderman Elliott, Director House replied that there were approximately 80 teams scheduled to compete in the event.

Sells Agency Public Relations Account Executive Kathryn Heller presented the public relations report which included recently completed media alerts for Reed's Bridge Clean-Up Day, Hershey Track & Field games, and the Farmers' Market. She related that she will be working on media alerts for Splash Zone events and focusing heavily on FestiVille promotion.

Alderman Ray stated that he would like to work towards acquiring a Christmas light display, noting that Alderman Robinson had once approached the Commission regarding a display.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. \$1,500.00 Reed's Bridge funding request for additional fencing for property on S. Hwy 161 and Dennis Lane

Alderman Ray removed the item from the agenda, noting that Jack Danielson was not present. He related that he spoke with Tommy Dupree who requested the item of business not be addressed at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Fallen Heroes Memorial Garden presentation

Alderman Mary Twitty thanked the Commission for allowing her the opportunity to address the Commission. She related that the Fallen Heroes Memorial Garden is located at the Jacksonville Police Department and Fire Department Training Facility at 1400 Marshall Road. She stated that it is a memorial in honor of Captain Donald Jones and other fire and police officers who were killed in the line of duty. She further stated that they are hoping not to add any additional names to the memorial. She related that there will be a waterfall with a memorial wall surrounded by a bench, flowers, and a walkway with a plaque placed in the garden with the names of the individuals who have donated to the garden. She noted that Captain Donald Jones was killed in the line of duty while engaged in firefighting duties on March 19, 2012. She further noted that he started his career with the Jacksonville Fire Department on December 24, 1980 and served for 31 years. She related that she, Parks Commissioner and Alderman Barbara Mashburn, and Valerie Perry, got together and thought that it would be really great to tell the Jacksonville police officers and firemen that they are appreciated.

She presented a sketch of the garden, explaining that Parks personnel have already put down grass and they do have concrete. She related that as of today, they have a little over \$13,000.00 to work with and estimated that the project would cost \$40-45,000.00 to complete. She pointed out that it is a big project, expressing her belief that it can be completed. She noted fund raising and advertising accomplishments, adding that it is their intention to do more.

She then asked the Commission to consider making a donation to make their dreams and Captain Donny Jones' family's dreams come true. She related that they are going to put the fountain in but they do not yet have the funds to put the water in. The pyramids will have the Police Department emblem on one side and the Fire Department emblem on the other side along with park benches, flowers and trees. She stated that there will be a podium that will tell about the garden, there will be two podiums going into the garden, and any donations over \$1,000.00 or more the names will go on top of that. Any donations less than \$1,000.00, the names will go on the four sides of the podiums. She explained they are selling bricks for \$100.00, that have three lines on them that will go on the circle of honor around the fountain.

Alderman Ray questioned and Alderman Twitty replied that there is no time limit because they do not want to leave anyone out. She explained that they have enough funds collected to get the project started.

Alderman Ray suggested that the Commission consider expending funds for the memorial. It was the consensus of the Commission to discuss the item of business at the next meeting.

Commissioner Andy Patel stated that he would like to make a personal contribution of \$1,000.00 towards the memorial.

Alderman Ray requested that the Commission consider contributing \$10,000.00 to this project.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Recording Secretary Wilmoth read the announcements to include the "School's Out" Celebration and a Movie on May 24th, Splash Zone season opening on May 25th, and the Mr. and Miss Pool Side Cutie Contest on June 8th.

Mr. Jerry Reichenbach expressed concerns regarding the appointment of Dee Lawrence to the Commission and her affiliation with Wendy's, noting that Commissioner Hurley is also employed by Wendy's.

Alderman Elliott told Mr. Reichenbach that he needed to address his concerns to Mayor Fletcher since he made the recommendation regarding the appointment of Commissioner Lawrence to the City Council.

City Attorney Robert Bamberg informed Mr. Reichenbach that Commissioner Lawrence was appointed by the City Council.

Mr. Reichenbach reiterated that there are two members from the same business organization.

City Attorney Bamburg stated that the same business organization is in the business that the Commission is made up of, adding that this meeting is not the place to address the issue.

Alderman Elliott informed Mr. Reichenbach that he needs to address his concerns with Mayor Fletcher and the City Council who approved the appointment.

ADJOURNMENT:

Alderman Ray adjourned the meeting at 7:08 p.m., next meeting June 17, 2013.

CALL TO ORDER:

The Jacksonville A & P Commission met in the regular meeting place of the Commission on Monday, June 17, 2013. Chairman & Alderman Ray called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. He then delivered the invocation and led a standing audience in the "Pledge of Allegiance".

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Ray Patel, Dee Lawrence, Jim Hurley, and Alderman Kenny Elliott answered roll call. Chairman & Alderman Ray also answered roll call and declared a quorum. Present (5), Absent (2) Commissioner Andy Patel and the Honorable Tommy Swaim were absent.

Others present for the meeting included: Recording Secretary Nikki Wilmoth, Alderman Barbara Mashburn, Finance Director Cheryl Erkel, Parks and Recreation Director Kevin House, Sells Agency CEO Mike Sells, Sells Agency Public Relations Account Executive Kathryn Heller, and Rick Kron with The Leader newspaper.

MINUTES:

Alderman Elliott moved, seconded by Commissioner Ray Patel to approve the minutes of the May 20, 2013 meeting as presented. Motion Carried.

FINANCIALS:

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel presented the financial report for May, noting total assets of \$668,734.00, and accounts payables of \$34,968.00. She related that there is \$262,350.00 in cash, pointing out that in June or July \$230,000.00 would be expensed for the shooting range. She explained that there are three certificates of deposit that will be maturing in June, August, and September with those funds going to the shooting range. She related other forthcoming expenditures of approximately \$10,000.00 for FestiVille advertising, \$3,100.00 for the Boys and Girls Club banquet, \$3,100.00 for the Boys and Girls Club after school program, \$10,000.00 for the Jacksonville Museum of Military History quarterly support, and a recently paid \$43,000.00 Sells Agency invoice. The quarterly amount due to the Parks and Recreation Department is not included.

She reported \$273,016.00 in revenues and \$103,640.00 in expenditures, leaving an excess of \$169,376.00 in revenues over expenditures. She related that she did an estimate, taking the total amount budgeted and multiplying it by five months, noting that revenues are presently 76% of the budgeted amount for five months and expenditures are approximately 60%. She stated that revenues are still exceeding expenditures even though it is not the 100% that was budgeted. She suggested reviewing the budget in August or September to see if there is a need to amend it prior to budgeting for 2014.

She noted May hotel/motel gross receipts of \$203,396.00, which is a decline of 19% compared to last year. She related that there is one hotel that did not remit payment until the beginning of June that decreased the amount of decline from 19% to 16%. She reported prepared food tax gross receipts of \$3,286,957.00, which is a 2% decrease from last year. She stated that there were some businesses that did not remit payment until June for the month of April, explaining that when those amounts were factored in, there was no change. She noted overall gross receipts of \$3,490,353.00, which is an overall decrease of 4% compared to last year. She cited the recent closure of Hunans, Quiznos, and Hastings which will affect revenues. She stated that there is one business that has not remitted payment for March or April, explaining that a collection letter has been sent.

Commissioner Hurley moved, seconded by Alderman Elliott to approve the May financial report as presented. Motion Carried.

SELLS AGENCY REPORT:

CEO Mike Sells related ongoing progress regarding the hotel/motel working group to improve revenues. He presented the updated Jackrabbit booking agent quote for the website, noting that the proposal has been corrected to reflect the correct website and client information. He explained that the area hotels would be tied into the booking agent, a potential visitor would enter their check-in and check-out dates and the availability of the hotels would be listed along with the price for each. He stated that it works differently from an online travel site because there are no commissions involved, explaining that for the hotels/motels it is a direct book. If a hotel/motel in town does not have a website with the ability to do direct bookings, it is available and built into the proposal.

Commissioner Hurley read from the proposal "a three-year exclusive partnership", questioning if the Commission would be required to sign a three-year contract.

CEO Sells confirmed that the Commission would be required to sign a contract.

Commissioner Hurley stated if that were the case, given the budgetary constraints and until the Commission can see where the sales are trending and where the revenues will be, would they give the Commission a three-month trial to see how much business would be generated before signing a long-term contract.

CEO Sells stated that he would inquire.

It was noted that over a three-year period, the cost would be over \$12,000.00.

Commissioner Hurley stated that he was not inclined to spend that kind of money unless he could see that there would be some benefit. He further stated that if Jackrabbit wants the Commission to sign a three-year contract, they should provide a free trial offer and show the Commission that the numbers work. He stated that he researched Jackrabbit, noting that Fayetteville has it on their website, questioning the effectiveness.

CEO Sells stated that Fayetteville has had it for approximately two years now, adding that Fayetteville contracted directly with Jackrabbit and he has no additional information other than they seem to be pleased with it. He stated that if the booking agent were placed on the website today and the shooting range were not going to happen; he would not be recommending it. He further stated that if the Commission were going to do a three-month trial, he would want it to coincide with the opening of the shooting range.

Discussion ensued with CEO Sells stating that if Jackrabbit were to agree to a three-month trial, they would still require the \$1,000.00 start-up cost.

CEO Sells related that this is day one of the fourth week of the summer television buy with four more weeks to go, including this week. He noted that the vast majority of their work since the last meeting has been focused on FestiVille. He related that for anyone who saw the ad in the Patriot last week, it did not look good and some of the sponsors were left off. He explained that the artwork was sent correctly but something happened when it was reproduced. He noted the newspaper is going to correct and republish the ad.

Sells Agency Public Relations Account Executive Kathryn Heller presented the completed advertising/marketing projects report for this year, along with the public relations report that lists all of the recently completed items that were sent to the media. She noted that regarding FestiVille, they completed vinyl banners, flyers, posters, print ads, and a radio ad. She related that the first five items of the public relations report were recently completed and two of them were not on the original list. She noted that the next media alert would be regarding Olympic Day. She requested that omissions and/or additions be given to Recording Secretary Wilmoth for inclusion in the next report.

In response to a question from Commissioner Hurley, Parks and Recreation Director Kevin House replied that there were two station representatives doing regular call-ins from their cell phones for approximately four hours, adding that he did not receive any feedback.

Ms. Heller offered that they were given a list of things to do and city-wide events to promote.

Director House commented that they seemed unprepared and had asked him for a list of things to talk about.

Ms. Heller apologized, reiterating that she had sent the station a list of twelve "talking points".

Commissioner Hurley asked the Sells Agency to check into it, stating that two guys on a cell phone was not what he had in mind when he suggested a live remote.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion contribution to the Fallen Heroes Memorial Garden

Chairman & Alderman Ray stated that he would like for the Commission to put forth a monetary effort toward the Fallen Heroes Memorial Garden in the amount of \$10,000.00.

Alderman Elliott offered that based upon the last meeting, the Commission does what to be involved but with the decline in gross revenues, the Commission needs to utilize some discretion.

In response to a question from Commissioner Hurley, Alderman Mashburn replied that they have already begun construction. She stated that they have ordered the biggest part but are going to build as funding is received. She noted that they have raised \$17,150.02 but still need to raise \$9,895.00, adding that this is a rough estimate from Public Works Director Jimmy Oakley. She related that they have ordered the benches and the oblique for the Memorial Wall, which will take two to three weeks. She stated that the additional funding will be used for the sprinkler system, lighting, and electrical. She noted that they had to take out the waterfall because they could not afford the \$27,000.00 pump. She stated that they would still like to build the memorial without the waterfall because Jacksonville firefighters and police officers are deserving of a memorial and this is our way of saying "thank you" for all that they do.

In response to a question from Finance Director Erkel, Alderman Mashburn replied that the project will be completed in three weeks, explaining that they have already contracted with Conway Pre-Cast and Granite and More out of Benton.

Commissioner Hurley questioned when the \$9,895.00 would be needed to complete the project.

Alderman Mashburn stated that they would not need the funds this month but next month would be great, adding that the last day for donations is the end of this month. She offered that since they are building as they receive funding, there is no specific date however, they hope to complete the project by early fall.

Chairman & Alderman Ray questioned and Finance Director Erkel replied that it would be better if the funds could be expensed in August.

Alderman Mashburn agreed stating that it will take five to six weeks to complete the project.

Commissioner Hurley questioned if the funds will be available in August.

Finance Director Erkel confirmed that funds would be available.

Commissioner Hurley moved, seconded by Alderman Elliott expend \$10,000.00 for the Fallen Heroes Memorial Garden with funds to be expensed in August. Motion Carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Recording Secretary Wilmoth read the announcements to include FestiVille on June 21st and 22nd and Olympic Day on June 27th.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman & Alderman Ray adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m., next meeting July 15, 2013.

CALL TO ORDER:

The Jacksonville A & P Commission met in the regular meeting place of the Commission on Monday, August 19, 2013. Chairman & Alderman Ray called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. He then delivered the invocation and led a standing audience in the "Pledge of Allegiance".

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Ray Patel, Andy Patel, Dee Lawrence, Jim Hurley, Alderman Kenny Elliott and Mayor Swaim answered roll call. Chairman & Alderman Ray also answered roll call and declared a quorum. Present (7), Absent (0)

Others present for the meeting included: Recording Secretary Nikki Wilmoth, Finance Director Cheryl Erkel, Mayor Gary Fletcher, Parks and Recreation Programs Supervisor Dana Rozenski, Sells Agency Account Executive Kristen Burgeis, Sells Agency Public Relations Account Executive Kathryn Heller, Warren Dupree, and Rick Kron with The Leader newspaper.

DEVIATION IN AGENDA:

Chairman & Alderman Ray suggested moving the monthly meetings from 6:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., asking for the Commission's preference.

It was the consensus of those present to move the monthly meeting start time from 6:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Resume Agenda

MINUTES:

Commissioner Andy Patel moved, seconded by Commissioner Hurley to approve the minutes of the June 17, 2013 meeting as presented. Motion Carried.

FINANCIALS:

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel related that at this time, there is no need to amend the budget. She then presented the financial report for July, noting total assets of \$745,849.00 which includes a \$398.00 overpayment that was received. She noted accounts payables of \$156,189.00, explaining that the amount does not include the \$230,000.00 shooting range contribution to be expensed in late September to mid-October. She noted a fund balance of \$589,659 of which \$505,957.56 has already been allocated for budgeted expenditures. She reported \$413,176.00 in revenues and \$315,489.00 in expenditures, leaving an excess of \$97,587.00 in revenues over expenditures.

She noted July hotel/motel gross receipts of \$217,603.00, which is a decline of 18% compared to last year. She reported prepared food tax gross receipts of \$3,133,892.00, which is a 2% decrease from last year. She noted overall gross receipts of \$3,351,495.00, which is an overall decrease of 3% compared to last year. She suggested hiring an auditor to review the hotel/motel and prepared food tax receipts that are reported.

Discussion ensued, it was noted that the cost is anywhere from \$75.00 to \$100.00 per hour depending on detail of the information. It was also stated that if the State would agree to the audit, there would be no cost. It was agreed that the issue would need to be addressed with City Attorney Bamburg.

Commissioner Andy Patel moved, seconded by Commissioner Ray Patel to approve the July financial report as presented. Motion Carried.

SELLS AGENCY REPORT:

Sells Agency Public Relations Account Executive Kathryn Heller presented the public relations report through August, noting that presently they are working on posters and flyers for the Reed's Bridge Sesquicentennial.

OLD BUSINESS:

In response to a question from Commissioner Hurley, Mayor Fletcher related that the shooting range has not progressed at the rate expected. He stated that the construction date was September 1st however, due to the weather and drainage issues the timeline was extended four to five additional weeks. He expressed his disappointment at the lack of progress.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Service award presentation to Mike Houchen

Chairman & Alderman Ray stated that Mr. Houchen was unable to attend the meeting tonight, adding that hopefully he will be able to attend the next meeting.

2. FestiVille presentation

Parks and Recreation Programs Supervisor Dana Rozenski gave a brief PowerPoint presentation of the recent FestiVille event, noting that the event was shortened due to rain.

Mayor Fletcher expressed his appreciation to Dana Rozenski and the Park's Department for all of their hard work. Chairman & Alderman Ray concurred.

Commissioner Hurley stated that he attended and noted the lack of Chamber involvement. He suggested involving the schools. He also noted that Commissioner Lawrence worked the Canine Cutie contest.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Recording Secretary Wilmoth read the announcements to include the Back 2 School Splash on August 23rd, the Reed's Bridge 150th Civil War Re-Enactment on September 7th and 8th, and the NFL Punt, Pass, & Kick event on September 14th.

Warren Dupree invited everyone to attend the business after hour's event at the Museum that is being held with the Chamber of Commerce on August 27th at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman & Alderman Ray adjourned the meeting at 7:08 p.m., next meeting September 16, 2013.

CALL TO ORDER:

The Jacksonville A & P Commission met in the regular meeting place of the Commission on Monday, October 21, 2013. Alderman Ray called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Alderman Ray delivered the invocation and led a standing audience in the "Pledge of Allegiance".

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Ray Patel, Jim Hurley, Alderman Kenny Elliott, and the Honorable Tommy Swaim answered roll call. Chairman/Alderman Ray also answered roll call and declared a quorum. Present (4), Absent (3) Commissioner Andy Patel arrived at approximately 6:27 p.m. Commissioners Dee Lawrence and Jim Hurley were absent.

Others present for the meeting included: Recording Secretary Nikki Wilmoth, City Attorney Robert Bamburg, Finance Director Cheryl Erkel, Parks and Recreation Director Kevin House, Parks and Recreation Programs Supervisor Dana Rozenski, Planning Commissioner Jim Moore, and Warren Dupree.

MINUTES:

Alderman Elliott moved, seconded by the Honorable Tommy Swaim to approve the minutes of the August 19, 2013 meeting as presented. Motion Carried.

FINANCIALS:

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel presented the financial report for September, noting total assets of \$464,777.00, accounts payables of approximately \$35,857.00, and a fund balance of \$428,920.00. She stated that the fund balance is obligated with the exception of \$18,258.00. She reported \$552,108.00 in revenues and \$683,714.00 in expenditures, leaving an excess of expenditures over revenues in the amount of \$131,606.00.

She reported August hotel/motel gross receipts of \$227,636.00, which is a decline of 19% compared to last year. She also reported prepared food tax gross receipts of \$3,039,372.00, which is a 1% decrease from last year. She noted overall gross receipts of \$3,267,008.00, which is an overall decrease of 3% compared to last year.

The Honorable Tommy Swaim moved, seconded by Alderman Elliott to approve the September financial report as presented.

Alderman/Chairman Ray recalled discussion at the last meeting regarding auditing businesses. He stated that he has spoken with City Attorney Bamburg who informed him that the audits could be completed in-house. He then asked Finance Director Erkel how this could be done.

Finance Director Erkel replied that she does not have the time and personnel to complete the audits in-house. Alderman/Chairman Ray asked Finance Director Erkel to consult with an accounting firm regarding this issue.

City Attorney Robert Bamburg noted that the Commission has the authority to require the businesses that remit hotel/motel or prepared food tax taxes to submit their records for review. If there are questions or reasonable suspicions, a mandate can be issued for them to submit their records by a certain time, date, and for a given time frame. Those records can then be given to someone on staff or that the Commission has contracted with for audit.

Motion Carried.

**SELLS AGENCY REPORT:
OLD BUSINESS:**

At this time, Alderman/Chairman Ray acknowledged Jim Moore's request to address the Commission.

Jim Moore expressed his agreement regarding the audit of businesses, explaining that it was one of the reasons that he attended the meeting. He related that he is the acting executive director of Keep Jacksonville Beautiful, since Charlie Jenkins resigned, adding that the committee has not met to elect a new executive director. He expressed concerns regarding certain businesses in Jacksonville who are not giving receipts for cash payments, adding that if a receipt is requested, a handwritten receipt is given without a breakdown of cost and taxes paid. He related that this concerns him because a restaurant should be providing a cash register receipt showing the breakdown of the taxes. He stated that he is present on behalf of the citizens of Jacksonville who use the restaurants along with his family, to request that an independent audit be performed.

Alderman/Chairman Ray asked Mr. Moore to give his list of businesses that he has concerns about to Finance Director Erkel.

Mr. Moore also informed the Commission of an establishment that does not have a fluctuation in the prepared food tax remittances, adding that with his background in restaurant management, there should be some fluctuation during the year, especially during the summer. He stated that with the Shooting Range, now is the time to audit these businesses to make sure that the Commission is receiving all of the tax revenues that are due.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion 2014 budget

The Honorable Tommy Swaim noted that there were several large expenditures that were budgeted in 2013, explaining that the Commission was able to do this because funds were set aside for such a project. He stated that he would prefer that the Commission not obligate one hundred percent of the budget this year, especially with some outstanding projects that are still in progress. He further stated that the public needs to understand that during previous years, the Commission saved some money to do that, adding that he does not want the Commission to get into the mode of overspending.

Alderman Elliott noted that the current financials show that the Commission is down a considerable amount already this year, adding that the Commission is going to have to look at making cuts.

Alderman/Chairman Ray stated his feeling that “everyone gets a piece of the pie”, adding that if revenues improve during the year, there might be adjustments made. He reported proposed revenues of \$880,700.00, noting that 50% of the revenues go to the Parks and Recreation Department. He related proposed administrative costs of \$32,275.00, and Parks and Tourism proposed costs of \$6,072.00. He questioned if anyone knew whether there would be an Air Show in 2014, relating that there is proposed funding in the amount of \$4,000.00. He stated that regarding the Shooting Range, the budget-sub-committee proposed funding of \$180,000.00. He noted that \$43,000.00 was requested for FestiVille however, the budget sub-committee proposed \$20,000.00 in funding, which is a \$23,000.00 decrease. He stated that it may be possible to adjust this amount should revenues improve.

Alderman Elliott stated that there were several items that were cut back, but hopefully if revenues improve, the Commission could possibly make adjustments.

In response to a question from the Honorable Tommy Swaim, Alderman/Chairman Ray replied that the 2014 budget would not be approved tonight, adding that he hopes to pass the budget at the next meeting. He then asked for input regarding the “Big Bang on the Range” Fourth of July event.

Parks and Recreation Director Kevin House related that they discussed putting together an event after receiving negative feedback regarding the lack of an event this year. He stated that the thought was to team up with the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation to have a shooting event during the day and have a fireworks display in the evening at the Shooting Range.

Alderman/Chairman Ray noted that the budget sub-committee proposed funding in the amount of \$5,000.00.

Parks and Recreation Director Kevin House stated that would be contacting the Arkansas Game and Fish foundation for a possible contribution.

Alderman/Chairman Ray stated that regarding the Keep Jacksonville Beautiful funding request, it was contingent on matching funds.

Keep Jacksonville Beautiful Acting Executive Director Jim Moore, noted that their funding request was in the amount of \$6,000.00 to move the old gateway on the south end to the north end of Jacksonville. He stated that there is some land that Entergy has given for the gateway, adding that they want a really nice gateway on the south end since the City limits has been extended.

Alderman/Chairman Ray related that this was going to occur after the highway is widened. He stated that the Commission might be able to increase funding later for the project.

Mr. Moore agreed that the project would take some time to complete, adding that he will have to get with Public Works Director Jimmy Oakley to move the south gateway north.

Alderman/Chairman Ray related that the JHS Athletic Booster Club has proposed funding of \$2,000.00. He stated that he recently received criticism from a reporter regarding inequality for North Pulaski. He reminded those present that North Pulaski has received past funding from the Commission for canoes. He stated that North Pulaski’s Booster Club has not requested funding at this time.

He then related a meeting with Chamber of Commerce CEO Amy Mattison, who asked that funding be continued in 2014 for the Shop Local for the Holidays promotion. He noted that the budget sub-committee cut funding for the promotion along with the holiday decorating contest. He stated that he was thinking at the time that it was for 2013 but funding has already been approved, which will be expensed in the upcoming month. He related that CEO Mattison had stated that the newspaper already had the layout ready for print. He stated that this is another line item that could potentially be funded if revenues increase.

Alderman Elliott commented that funding had to be cut to balance the budget.

Alderman/Chairman Ray stated that regarding Reed's Bridge, the budget sub-committee cut funding for the Patriot Rifle. He related that a Parrott rifle is a cannon, explaining that someone brought it to the reenactment and the Reed's Bridge Historical Society decided to purchase it. He noted proposed funding for the Symposium in the amount of \$750.00 and the "Harvest Time in the Homeland" in the amount of \$1,250.00.

He related that the Boys and Girls Club is taking care of children in the community, stating that they received a cut but not as much as everyone else. He stated that the Boys and Girls Club had a proposed \$2,000.00 cut in funding.

He stated that the Military Museum has a proposed cut of \$14,000.00 for operational costs for a proposed funding of \$40,000.00.

He related that someone informed him that the Sells Agency had been dismissed however, that is not accurate. He explained that the proposed marketing fund line item has been decreased from \$150,000.00 to \$100,000.00. He then noted that the proposed 2014 funding for special projects totaled \$791,725.00. He stated his hope that revenues will improve with the opening of the Shooting Range. He further stated that the budget can be amended should revenues increase.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Recording Secretary Wilmoth read the announcements to include a Stamp Show on October 27th and 28th, My First School fall festival and food drive on October 26th and the A.N.S. Coin Show on November 8-10th.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman/Alderman Ray adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m., next meeting November 18, 2013.

CALL TO ORDER:

The Jacksonville A & P Commission met in the regular meeting place of the Commission on Monday, November 18, 2013. Chairman/Alderman Ray called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He then delivered the invocation and led a standing audience in the "Pledge of Allegiance".

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Ray Patel, Andy Patel, Alderman Kenny Elliott, and the Honorable Tommy Swaim answered roll call. Chairman/Alderman Ray also answered roll call and declared a quorum. Present (5), Absent (2) Commissioners Dee Lawrence and Jim Hurley were absent.

Others present for the meeting included: Recording Secretary Nikki Wilmoth, Finance Director Cheryl Erkel, Parks and Recreation Director Kevin House, Mr. Ivory Tillman, Ms. Tara Smith, Mr. Keith Weber, and Rick Kron with The Leader newspaper.

MINUTES:

The Honorable Tommy Swaim moved, seconded by Commissioner Andy Patel to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2013 meeting as presented. Motion Carried.

FINANCIALS:

Finance Director Cheryl Erkel presented the financial report for October, noting total assets of \$514,361.00 with a fund balance of \$412,779.00. She reported \$616,737.00 in revenues and \$698,759.00 in expenditures, leaving an excess of expenditures over revenues in the amount of \$82,022.00.

Discussion ensued regarding the excess of expenditures over revenues. It was noted that the overage in expenditures was remitted out of the fund balance.

The Honorable Tommy Swaim stated that the Commission should always try to keep a fund balance of a reasonable amount, explaining that if the Commission had not had those reserve funds, they would not have been able to expense funds for the shooting range. He further stated that the Commission should always try to end each year with a surplus balance.

Finance Director Erkel reported September hotel/motel gross receipts of \$242,748.00, explaining that there was one hotel that had not remitted at the time of the report, but has since remitted payment. She related that the difference is \$27,750.00. She noted a decline of 16% compared to last year. She also reported prepared food tax gross receipts of \$2,956,471.00, explaining that there were several businesses that had not remitted payments at the time of the report. She noted that some have since remitted payment and others have not.

She noted a difference of \$204,995.00, relating that this is a 1% decrease from last year. She noted overall gross receipts of \$3,199,219.00, which is an overall decrease of 2% compared to last year.

Commissioner Andy Patel noted that when comparing the last five years, this year is the slowest year for hotel/motel and prepared food tax revenues.

Alderman/Chairman Ray asked if there were any hotels or restaurants that could potentially be audited.

Finance Director Erkel stated that she has done some research, explaining that she sent an email to the State and was referred to the Department of Finance and Administration. She related that she was informed that the noted discrepancies could be reported to the Department of Finance and Administration for investigation. She stated she would need to send a follow-up email concerning cost.

Commissioner Andy Patel moved, seconded by the Honorable Tommy Swaim to approve the October financial report as presented.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Approval 2014 budget

Alderman/Chairman Ray stated that at this time, there are no additional funds to allocate. He apologized, explaining that he wished that all of the requests could be funded as requested but the Commission does not have the funds. He expressed his belief that finances would improve and things would get better. He then asked if there were any questions that needed to be addressed.

Alderman Elliott confirmed that the "Shop Local for the Holidays" line item has not been funded in 2014 however; if revenues improve the line item could potentially be funded later in the year.

It was noted that the budget was cut by approximately \$90,000.00.

Commissioner Andy Patel moved, seconded by the Honorable Tommy Swaim to approve the 2014 budget as presented. Motion Carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Alderman/Chairman Ray asked Parks and Recreation Director Kevin House to provide an update regarding the shooting range.

Parks and Recreation Director Kevin House informed the Commission of their intent to partner with the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation to put on the "Big Bang on the Range". He related that if they do not partner with the Foundation, the event will not occur because \$5,000.00 is not enough to fund the event. He stated that the Foundation is interested in partnering with the Parks Department but the details have not been worked out.

Regarding the shooting range, he informed the Commission that they are getting a lot closer to completion. He related that within a week, the clubhouse will be 100% complete. He noted that the pavilions are approximately 85% complete, explaining that there is still some concrete and dirt work to do. He related that he met with the contractors today, who indicated that the project will be complete within three weeks.

In response to a question from Commissioner Andy Patel, Parks and Recreation Director House responded that the Foundation is helping with the grand opening that will be tentatively held on March 15th. He stated that as soon as everything is complete, they will be operational however; they want to delay the grand opening until all of the "bugs" are worked out so that they will be able to impress anyone who attends.

He then related a scheduled meeting with the Bass Pro Shop executive board regarding a potential donation. He stated that he and Mayor Fletcher attended the Bass Pro Shop grand opening in Little Rock where they met the owner, who is very interested in the project.

It was noted that the Bass Pro Shop donated .50 cents of every dollar spent at the grand opening to the Foundation with funds to be allocated towards the shooting range.

In response to a question from the Honorable Tommy Swaim, Director House answered that they have parking for approximately 700 cars.

Mr. Ivory Tillman informed the Commission that he is working with the Wet/Dry Committee and the Chamber, explaining that they are trying to get the law changed so that they can get on the ballot regarding restaurant alcohol sales in Gray Township. He explained that there would be no additional liquor stores but Jacksonville would be able to sell alcohol within restaurants and grocery stores. He related the need to do whatever Jacksonville can to raise additional tax dollars. He stated that if they can accomplish what they have set out to do, it will help bring additional funds into Jacksonville. He related that they need 4,400 signatures and hope to be at 25% on Wednesday.

Alderman/Chairman Ray stated that he is going to partner with members of the Wet/Dry Committee, adding that he was unaware that Valentine Road was a part of Gray Township.

Mr. Keith Weber stated that he would like to suggest to the Council members present that the Commission look into providing funds to staff the library on Sundays. He related the exchange of emails with Bobby Roberts, who had stated that it would cost \$500-\$600.00 to staff the library on a Sunday. He stated that the cost seems high but if Jacksonville were the only city in the area with a library that was open on Sundays, the Commission could advertise it and draw people that needs and wants to go to the library on Sundays to come into the City and keep Jacksonville residents from going to Little Rock or North Little Rock. He related that the Little Rock and North Little Rock libraries are the only ones open on Sundays, adding that they are not open during the summer when they need to be because they are a good cheap cooling center for the elderly. He also noted the need for additional parking.

Alderman/Chairman Ray asked Secretary Wilmoth to present Mike Houchen his appreciation of service plaque.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Recording Secretary Wilmoth read the announcements to include the 36th Annual Holiday Craft and Gift Sale on Friday, November 22nd and Saturday, November 23rd, the closure of City offices on November 28th and 29th for the Thanksgiving holidays and the Jacksonville Christmas Parade on Saturday, December 7th.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman/Alderman Ray adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m., next meeting December 16, 2013.