

Fayetteville A&P Commission Meeting Minutes

June 23, 2025 – Fayetteville Town Center – 2:00 p.m.

Present: Chair Elvis Moya, Sterling Hamilton, Mike Wiederkehr, Sarah Bunch, Chrissy Sanderson, Katherine Kinney

Absent: Elliot Hunt

Staff: Jennifer Walker

I. Call to Order

Chair Moya called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Sanderson noted a correction to the May 19 minutes—she was present, not absent.

Motion to approve the minutes with correction: Commissioner Bunch

Second: Commissioner Sanderson

Vote: Passed via roll call

III. New Business

A. CEO Report – Jennifer Walker

- Incoming CEO Ryan Hauck visited June 16; his first official day is July 21.
- A new MOU with the City provides Placer AI software to estimate event attendance. The City is funding the first year, and data will be shared with local event producers.
- Discussions are underway for a new two-part mural on the back of the Town Center and Library parking decks, as the original site is no longer available.
- Chris Lankford has joined the marketing team as Director of Brand Strategy.
- “Favoriteville” trademark applications have been filed for apparel and tourism services.
- Staff attended the **Outside Festival** in Denver as part of a state tourism activation.
- “Vanny,” the Mobile Visitor Center, will be activated at Pride Festival on June 28.
- **Restaurant Week** is scheduled for July 20–26.
- Hotel occupancy is down 10% from last year; similar trends across Arkansas. Lodging accounts for 15% of HMR tax revenue but affects restaurants and related businesses.
- Walker closed by thanking the Commission for the opportunity to serve as Interim CEO.

B. Financial Report – Jennifer Walker

- **YTD through May:** Revenue at 40% (2% under target); expenses at 39% (3% under target).
- **HMR collections:** \$2,076,220 YTD
- **Net income:** \$93,560
- **Cash/investments:** \$4.9 million
- **Unearned revenue:** \$243,000 (mainly Town Center bookings)

C. Marketing Report – Sarah King

- Ongoing media coverage around SEC sports and cycling.
- Partnership with @explorestlparks and Visit Bentonville highlighted a 55-mile NWA family cycling trip.
- The Outside Festival activation in Denver helped showcase Arkansas tourism; follow-up email campaign in progress.
- Restaurant Week will include discount admission at the Arkansas Air Museum and Botanical Garden with proof of purchase.
- Anne Davis (Outright) reported 6.5 million campaign impressions and a 95% video completion rate—an 18% increase from April.
- Arrivalist data shows highest visitor conversion from drive markets.
- Ryan MacGregor (Outright) presented campaign performance data and optimizations underway.
- Chair Moya inquired about adding Pensacola (a new direct flight market) to ad campaigns. Davis responded that while Pensacola is not included this year, campaigns for new Salt Lake City and Philadelphia flights are being used to test direct-flight strategies.

D. Visitor's Guide Printing – Vote

Sarah King presented a proposal to print Visitor's Guides.

Motion to authorize the Interim CEO to accept a \$28,302.90 quote from The Roark Group: Commissioner Wiederkehr

Second: Commissioner Bunch

Vote: Passed unanimously via roll call

E. CEO Transition Policy – Vote

Walker presented a formal CEO Transition Policy requested earlier in the year. She reviewed its structure and confirmed legal review.

Motion to approve: Commissioner Kinney

Second: Commissioner Sanderson

Vote: Passed unanimously via roll call

F. CEO Transition Plan – Discussion

Walker shared highlights from a working transition plan, including active/future RFPs and financial obligations.

- The July 28 meeting will be led by Hauck with Walker and Hauck preparing the agenda.
- A small city/staff meet-and-greet will follow the July meeting, with a larger public welcome reception (in partnership with the Chamber) planned for August.

G. Favoriteville Festival Fund – Discussion

Walker introduced a draft of a new event support fund tied to the Master Destination Plan.

- The fund would exclude blackout dates (e.g., Razorback games, graduations).
- Applications would be scored using a rubric based on factors like financial viability, cultural value, and community impact.
- A sample event, **Togue Con 2025**, was shared by Commissioner Hamilton, along with a P&L example.
- Commissioners discussed guarantee percentages (e.g., 30%), overall budget size, and event eligibility.
- Moya suggested renaming “margin protection” to “financial risk justification.”
- Sustainability may become a core scoring category (not bonus points).
- Consensus: \$160,000 total will fund both this program and the Community Incentive Fund.
- All applications will be reviewed by the Commission during the pilot year.
- Commission requested a list of past sponsorship/CIF recipients.
- Walker proposed to send revised version of the plan ahead of the July meeting, with discussion and possible vote scheduled.

IV. Adjournment

Chair Moya thanked Jennifer Walker for her time as Interim CEO and staff for their leadership during the transition.

Motion to adjourn: Commissioner Sanderson

Second: Commissioner Kinney

Vote: Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Amy Stockton, Experience Fayetteville