

NORTH LITTLE ROCK PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

August 18, 2025

The North Little Rock Parks and Recreation commission meeting was called to order by Mrs. Vicki Stephens at 5:00 p.m. on August 18th, 2025 at the North Little Rock Community Center.

Commission Members Present: Randall Bradley, Neil Bryant, Toby Burkett, Laura Juels, Don Skrivanos, Otistene Smith, and Vicki Stephens.

Vote for Excused or Unexcused Absences: All members were present.

Staff Members Present: Kenny Stephens, Amy Fields, Jennifer Fields, Patrick Isbell, Joe Ralston, Jamie Pettit, Greg Zonner, Jeff Caplinger, Tina Worrell, and Daniel Cornelison.

Others Present: Officer James Neeley, Deanna Garretson, Ebony Kelsey, Steve Manatt, Michelle Shellabarger, Scott Shellabarger, and JD Borgeson, and Steve Ralston.

Disposition of Minutes: Mrs. Stephens presented the July 21, 2025 minutes to be approved.

Ms. Juels made a motion, seconded by Mr. Skrivanos to approve the July 21, 2025 minutes. All voted aye and the motion passed unanimously.

Financial Report: Mrs. Stephens reported that Chief Financial Officer Ember Strange was unable to attend the August commission meeting due to a personal commitment. She noted that Mr. Burkett had met with Ms. Strange earlier in the day and would present the financial report on her behalf. Mr. Burkett reviewed the second quarter financial report for 2025, noting that year-to-date revenues totaled approximately \$4,173,000 while expenses were just over \$5,000,000, resulting in a deficit of about \$850,000 as of June 30, 2025. He explained that the timing of revenue and expenditure reporting creates challenges in interpreting the figures. For example, June Advertising and Promotions (A&P) revenues are not recorded until July, and January is accrued back to the previous fiscal year. As a result, the year-to-date totals are not fully accurate until year-end.

Mr. Burkett stated that based on the July income statement, the City is currently about \$70,000 over budget, but tax receipts are trending higher than projected, which should help offset the deficit. He also reported that two budget amendments are forthcoming: one concerning credit card processing fees, which remain higher than the statutory collection cap, and another to reclassify Funland expenses that had been categorized under concessions. Both amendments will be submitted to City Council. Mrs. Stephens and Mr. Bryant thanked Mr. Burkett for the report. Mr. Bryant commented that financial reporting had long been difficult to interpret, even during his time on City Council, because collections and expenditures never appeared current.

Mr. Bryant then asked about \$57,000 in expenditures for archery range upgrades, noting he did not recall prior discussion. Mrs. Stephens explained that the project was initiated at the Mayor's request. Both she and Mr. Burkett added that the upgrades had resulted in an excellent facility. Director Kenny Stephens remarked that the department's financial position has improved compared to last year, when \$350,000 had to be added to balance the budget. Mrs. Stephens stated that she had assumed "year-to-date" totals reflected actual figures through the end of July, but now understood

Financial Report Continued: the reports are a month behind and exclude January. Mr. Burkett confirmed and added that payroll cycles also skew monthly figures, making them appear worse than they are.

Mrs. Smith asked why no funds were shown under community centers. Mr. Burkett explained that allocations were made generally and then applied to specific projects, such as Funland and other improvements. He stated that since 2025, approximately \$6.49 million has been allocated from the half-cent sales tax, with about \$4.38 million spent to date, leaving roughly \$1 million available. Mrs. Stephens asked if that meant about \$2 million remained, and Mr. Burkett clarified that future placeholders for 2026 and 2027 are not yet available and as of now about \$1 million remains.

Mrs. Stephens asked about expenditures for the Funland train and track. Mr. Burkett explained that some improvements, such as tennis court resurfacing, were funded through maintenance and grounds budgets or through general fund transfers. He added that Mayor Hartwick had directed staff to move forward with resurfacing the red ball courts after confirming funds were available. Mr. Bryant asked whether City Council would need to approve those amendments. Mr. Burkett replied that the discussion had not advanced that far.

Mrs. Stephens expressed concern about whether Parks was receiving the correct share of A&P revenues, referencing past funding decisions, such as the Dickey-Stephens Park roof. City Attorney Amy Fields clarified that the A&P Commission is an independent body, required by law to distribute 1% of hotel tax and 1% of food tax revenues, while the additional 1.5% that Parks receives is discretionary. She explained that allocations beyond the statutory minimum have historically been influenced by politics. Mr. Burkett noted that while it sometimes seemed funds were diverted, higher-than-expected sales tax receipts often meant Parks still received more than originally budgeted. He acknowledged that the reports are difficult to interpret and expressed interest in discussing this further with City Attorney, Amy Fields. Mrs. Stephens asked when the Commission would know exactly what A&P provides. Mr. Burkett pointed out that the revenue and expenditure report reflects actual receipts, though the columns can be confusing. City Attorney, Amy Fields confirmed that the statutory minimum is clear, but the additional allocations are more complex to follow, as the reporting format is not user friendly.

Mrs. Stephens also referenced conversations with A&P staff regarding capital improvements, noting discrepancies in reported amounts. City Attorney, Amy Fields explained that some allocations listed for capital are actually used for operations, which may cause confusion. Mrs. Stephens thanked everyone for their efforts to clarify the information. Mr. Burkett concluded by reporting that Chief Financial Officer, Ember Strange's last day with the City would be Monday, as she has accepted a position with Conway School District. He added that she would continue part-time or on contract through the end of the year to assist with financial matters. Mr. Bryant asked who would replace her, and Director Kenny Stephens stated that Assistant Finance Director Anita Worley would assume her role. Mrs. Stephens and Mr. Bryant both expressed appreciation for Ms. Strange's service, noting that she had been very helpful in clarifying financial matters for the Commission.

Legal Memorandum: City Attorney Amy Fields presented recent changes to the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act, explaining that the legislature amended the law this year to clarify what

Legal Memorandum Continued: commissioners may and may not discuss with City staff, officials, and one another outside of official public meetings. She noted that commissioners are free to communicate with City employees to receive background information, but they may not disclose how they intend to vote on matters, nor may staff attempt to determine voting outcomes in advance. For example, staff may inform commissioners about upcoming agenda items or provide additional details, but they cannot solicit commitments or count votes outside of a public meeting. In response to a question from Ms. Juels regarding what happens if a commissioner unknowingly violates these rules, City Attorney, Amy Fields explained that typically the other party in the conversation would remind the commissioner that the topic is not permitted. She added that these clarifications were adopted to consolidate years of differing court rulings and attorney general opinions into one clear standard.

Bonzai BMX Requirements: Mrs. Stephens asked Mrs. Pettit if she had any additional information regarding Bonzai BMX requirements. Mrs. Pettit responded that she had sent two (2) emails and left a voicemail for Dave Larson regarding the required documentation but had not received a response. Mrs. Stephens stated that the Bonzai BMX requirements would remain on the agenda for another month. Mrs. Pettit added that if Mr. Larson submits any information in the meantime, it will be included under the action items on the agenda.

The North Little Rock Tourism Department not attending the August Park and Recreation Commission Meeting. No Tourism Updates or Reports will be Presented this Month. Mrs. Stephens stated that North Little Rock Tourism did not have anything to present at the commission meeting for the month of August.

Conversion of Red Ball Courts at Burns Park Tennis Center: Daniel Cornelison presented information on the conversion of the red ball courts at Burns Park Tennis Center. He explained that he was tasked with determining the project costs and had initially begun the bid process, but was not satisfied with the specifications provided. After meeting with Director Kenny Stephens and Purchasing Manager Amy Smith, he learned that the project could move forward more effectively through a cooperative purchasing program with Sourcewell, which would provide clearer specifications and better pricing. Mr. Bryant asked what the co-op was. Director Kenny Stephens explained that it was through Sourcewell. City Attorney Amy Fields added that cooperative purchasing programs allow governments to participate in contracts that have already been competitively bid at a national level, ensuring compliance and cost efficiency without having to conduct a separate bid. Director Stephens noted that Sourcewell manages the bid process to secure the best deal and that this information had only come to their attention earlier that day. Mr. Bryant asked why the Commission had not heard of this process before and what prompted it to be considered now. Director Kenny Stephens responded that Mr. Cornelison had not been satisfied with the original bid because it did not cover everything needed for the court upgrades. They stopped the process, regrouped, and learned about going through a co-op. Director Kenny Stephens stated that the cooperative purchasing process would save money, be more efficient, and ensure the project is completed properly. Mrs. Smith asked where Amy Smith was from, and City Attorney Fields clarified that she is the City's Purchasing Manager.

Arkansas Climbers Coalition Crag Opening in September: JD Borgeson, Treasurer of the Arkansas Climbers Coalition, presented information on the potential opening of Crag Two (2). Mr. Borgeson noted that he had previously used the Sourcewell co-op and found it to be a positive experience. He explained that the Coalition had originally requested to be on the agenda before the August deadline with the intention of proposing a September opening for the third section of the cliff line, Crystal Bluff. However, after recent meetings with developers, they decided to delay the opening. Mr. Borgeson proposed October 19th as the new opening date for the third section, referred to as Crag C, in order to align with the development plan and allow additional time for trail refinement. He stated that all routes and trails are developed and cleaned, but the summer heat had slowed progress. Mrs. Stephens noted that no vote was needed at this time, as the item was for informational purposes, and she asked Mr. Borgeson to coordinate with Jenni Fields to ensure commissioners are notified of the opening date. Director Kenny Stephens asked when the crag would officially be named. Mr. Borgeson responded that it could be named at any time, noting that the group had agreed on "El Capitan Crag." Mr. Bryant asked if the already opened sections were receiving visitors. Mr. Borgeson confirmed that people are climbing almost daily. Mr. Burkett added that he had heard positive feedback from the community despite not being part of the climbing group. Mr. Borgeson agreed, stating that he frequently visits the site and sees regular use, though attendance has slowed somewhat due to the heat. City Attorney Amy Fields remarked that her daughter had visited the crag and had a great experience. Mr. Borgeson concluded by noting that the Coalition has begun early planning for Phase two (2).

Disc Golf Wander Request: Mrs. Pettit and Steve Manatt presented information regarding Disc Golf Wander. Mrs. Pettit noted that a request pertaining to the program was included in the commissioners' packets and asked if there were any questions. Mrs. Smith asked if the three-month term would occur four times a year. Mr. Manatt confirmed that it would run quarterly for three months. He presented a mock QR code to demonstrate how it would appear at the disc golf course, explaining that one 3D-printed QR code would be mounted on wood at each course and rotated every three months to a different point of interest. Mrs. Stephens asked how the information collected would be used. Mr. Manatt stated it would be for drawing purposes only and that a privacy statement would be included on the website.

Mr. Bryant asked for clarification on the process. Mr. Manatt explained that scanning the code would take participants to the website, emphasizing that participation is voluntary. At the end of the term, a random draw would be conducted and the winner would receive a prize provided by Mr. Manatt. Mrs. Smith confirmed that the term length was three months, which Mr. Manatt affirmed, adding that if no one scanned the codes within that period, he would remove them from the course.

Mrs. Stephens noted that she assumed the project was intended to encourage appreciation of the environment. Mr. Manatt explained that the idea originated from a hiking experience with his children at Burns Park, where he encouraged them to observe nature and take photos. He stated that the program aims to provide a similar incentive for disc golfers, who often focus solely on the game, to notice and enjoy the parks. Mr. Bryant asked again what participants see when scanning the QR code. Mr. Manatt replied that they are directed to a form requesting their name and phone number

Disc Golf Wander Request Continued: so winners can be notified. Mrs. Stephens concluded by noting that Director Kenny Stephens recommended voting in favor of the request.

Mr. Bryant made a motion, seconded by Mr. Burkett to approve the Disc Golf Wander request. All voted aye and the motion passed unanimously.

John Cain's Foundation Arkansas Rasta 5k/10k Special Event Fee Reduction Request: Mrs. Pettit introduced Ms. Ebony Kelsey, a representative of the John Cain Foundation to the commission. Mrs. Pettit noted that Ms. Kelsey's organization has held its annual event at Riverfront Park for the past five (5) years. She explained that typically, nonprofit events such as a 5K or 10K are allotted five (5) hours for a \$750 fee. For festivals, concerts, and other non-nonprofit events, the all-day rental rate is \$1,750.

Mrs. Pettit stated that Ms. Kelsey requested additional event hours at no additional cost. She and Director Kenny Stephens recommended charging an hourly rate so that the cost would remain below the full-day rate while still providing revenue to the department. Under this structure, Ms. Kelsey's total payment would be approximately \$1,050, which is about \$700 less than the standard all-day fee.

Mr. Bryant asked for clarification on the John Cain Foundation. Ms. Kelsey explained that the organization advocates for mental health and wellness, partners with the Little Rock School District on community boards and volunteer efforts, and provides outreach and programs for individuals, families, and children in need of mental health support. She stated that the Arkansas Rasta 5K/10K Run/Walk serves as a fundraiser to support a new after school program location and to help expand mental health resources in Little Rock, North Little Rock, and surrounding areas.

Mr. Bryant noted that event revenue was \$8,750, while expenses totaled \$9,600. Ms. Kelsey responded that the foundation is seeking additional sponsors to meet costs, as the event does not generate much income currently. She emphasized that while the foundation is still small, it is growing, and the event provides meaningful community impact.

Ms. Juels expressed support for the request. Mrs. Pettit added that the hourly rate recommendation was due to the popularity of Riverfront Park for events, noting that Burns Park is a lower cost alternative if needed.

Mr. Burkett asked what caused the need for extended hours. Ms. Kelsey explained that the race begins at 9:00 a.m. and typically ends around 1:00 p.m., but additional time is needed to allow participants to engage with health vendors, resource providers, and wellness activities.

Mr. Bryant made a motion, seconded by Ms. Juels to approve the special fee reduction request to an hourly rate with a total payment of \$1050. All voted aye and the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Stephens asked Ms. Kelsey if, should the organization be unable to meet the \$1,050 fee, she would consider moving the event to Burns Park. Ms. Kelsey confirmed that she would. Mrs. Stephens added that the commission hopes the event will be successful and generate funds to reinvest in the program.

John Cain's Foundation Arkansas Rasta 5k/10k Special Event Fee Reduction Request

Continued: Mr. Bryant then inquired about the "Riverfront Music Festival" advertised on television. Mrs. Pettit explained that the organizer has rented Riverfront Park for the event and previously rented Burns Park in 2018. Although that earlier event was canceled, and the organizer had delays in paying vendors and the police department, he did fulfill payment obligations to the City. For the upcoming festival, he has an approved event application and paid deposits.

Mr. Bryant asked if the commission was required to approve this event. Mrs. Pettit clarified that commission approval is not needed for such events, and Mr. Burkett added that the earlier vote related only to the John Cain Foundation's fee adjustment, not to event approval.

Mrs. Pettit further reported that the music festival will take place over Labor Day Weekend as a three-day event. While the organizer is behind schedule on some requirements, he has paid all fees to the City. Coordination has included the Police Department and Stan Jackson.

Affordable and Inclusive Membership Options for Families at North Little Rock Community Center:

Tony Pate presented proposed updates to the North Little Rock Community Center membership structure to make it more affordable and inclusive for families. He explained that the current membership options include only an individual membership and a couple's membership, a structure established during the facility remodel in 2006.

Mr. Pate noted that household dynamics have shifted in recent years, with more multigenerational families living together, including adult children (ages 18–22) and elderly parents. He stated that this is especially evident during the summer and holiday breaks when college students return home and wish to work out with their parents. Currently, these family members must purchase separate individual memberships, as the couple's membership does not allow additional participants.

Mr. Pate recommended modifying the couple's membership option to allow families to add additional members for \$4 more, the same increase currently applied to convert an individual membership to a couple's membership. This would allow households to include older children or family members while encouraging year-round membership retention, thereby generating additional revenue and increasing participation at the community center.

Mrs. Stephens asked if there were any questions and stated that Director Kenny Stephens recommends approval of this action item.

Mr. Burkett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bradley to approve to add affordable and inclusive membership options for families at the North Little Rock Community Center. All voted aye and the motion passed unanimously.

Steve Ralston Contract Renewal: Mr. Steve Ralston addressed the commission regarding renewal of his contract, which runs annually. He stated that he would like the commission to consider extending his contract for another year. Mr. Ralston noted there are several projects he would like to continue working on, including cart changes, improvements to the cart shed, and additional upgrades to the golf course. He also referenced items on the driving range that fall under his

Steve Ralston Contract Renewal: responsibility. He explained that the commission has historically renewed his contract on a one-year basis, and he wished to begin the process early.

Mrs. Stephens stated that her assumption was the intent would be to leave the contract as is. Mr. Bryant recalled that the commission had previously addressed this process with Mr. Ralston, and explained that the proper procedure requires Mr. Ralston to bring forward the contract for commission review prior to the December renewal deadline. Once reviewed, the contract is then submitted to the City Attorney for legal approval. Mr. Bryant emphasized that he was not ready to approve a renewal without reviewing the contract document, even if it remained the same as in prior years.

Mr. Ralston stated that he had not realized the process required bringing the contract itself to the commission before approval. Mr. Bryant reiterated that the same issue had been discussed at the commission meeting the previous year and stressed the need to follow the proper process.

Director Kenny Stephens clarified that Mr. Ralston's presentation was intended only to make the commission aware of his interest in renewing for another year and was not a formal request for action at this meeting. He confirmed that at the time of renewal, the contract will be ready for review.

Mrs. Stephens stated her assumption was that this was simply an informational request. She confirmed that the contract is on file and can be made available to the commission, after which it will be forwarded to City Attorney Amy Fields for legal review. She emphasized that the commission has sufficient time to complete this process, as the contract does not expire until December.

Mrs. Stephens also noted that she and Director Stephens have met with Mr. Ralston on two prior occasions to discuss potential improvements to his contract. She expressed appreciation for Mr. Ralston's willingness to work collaboratively with the commission to strengthen the agreement.

Mrs. Stephens concluded by clarifying that the contract should be made available to the commission and City Attorney at the next meeting, at which time the commission can determine whether to move forward with renewal. Mr. Ralston stated that he was agreeable to this process.

Director Reports: Director Kenny Stephens reported that the lights and wiring at Sherman Park Community Center had been stolen. He stated that staff are working to resolve the issue and that an electrician is scheduled to complete the repairs before evening football games begin.

Director Kenny Stephens and Mr. Greg Zonner reported on recent issues and updates at the Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum.

Mr. Stephens stated that Mr. Zonner contacted him on a Sunday regarding a significant leak in one of the barges, which had taken on over 50,000 gallons of water. Initial pumping efforts, including assistance from the Fire Department, reduced the water level to where the barge was leaking approximately 75–100 gallons per hour.

Mr. Zonner explained that he and Director Stephens began applying hydraulic concrete to slow the leaks. A professional company was later hired to apply hydraulic concrete to every section at the bottom of the barge at an estimated cost of \$35,000. For the past three weeks, staff have been

Director Reports Continued working daily to pour concrete. The issue is expected to be fully resolved within two to three days. The barges are 82 years old, and inspections confirmed that the other barges remain solid with no leaks. The damage was attributed to metal deterioration caused by salt exposure.

Director Stephens emphasized that hydraulic concrete was the only viable solution, as it dries within minutes—even under water. He noted the material costs approximately \$47 per 50-pound bag. Mr. Bryant asked who was performing the work. Director Kenny Stephens responded that he and Mr. Zonner initially worked to apply 25 bags of concrete to slow the leak before the contracted company took over. He stressed that “everything attaches to that barge,” making its structural stability essential.

Mr. Zonner further reported that AIMM has remained open throughout the repairs without loss of revenue. He announced that on September 2nd, AIMM will host an event commemorating the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II. The program will feature the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Brass Ensemble from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., with capacity limited to 150 guests by RSVP. The first 45 minutes will include a meet-and-greet, followed by a keynote address from Congressman Victor Snyder, who will speak about the end of the war, and an hour-long musical performance. Invitations have been sent to the City Council, AIMM Board, and Arkansas Symphony Orchestra patrons. Mr. Zonner invited members of the Parks and Recreation Commission to attend.

He concluded by reporting that aside from the barge issue, AIMM operations had a strong month, though attendance has slowed somewhat since the start of the school year.

Mr. Pat Isbell reported for Parks Maintenance. He stated that staff had treated armyworms on five (5) fields at the Girls’ Softball Complex, as well as on the Soccer Complex fields. Quad 1 and Quad 2, consisting of four (4) fields each, were also treated. All armyworms have been eliminated. Fertilizer has been ordered for the athletic fields and will be applied once received. In addition, ryegrass seed has been ordered, including for Wildcat Field, which will be overseeded in the winter for baseball games.

At Sherman Park, staff removed a broken pole that was discussed at the previous meeting. The Electric Department assisted in removing the pole, installing anchors, and straightening two additional poles. Mr. Isbell noted that the Electric Department will return to complete further cleanup and adjustments. Mrs. Smith thanked Mr. Isbell for addressing the pole issue at Sherman Park Community Center.

Mr. Isbell further reported that he and Director Kenny Stephens have visited several neighborhood parks to assess signage. Many signs were in poor condition, so replacements have been installed at John Barber, Camp Robinson, and Idlewild Parks. At Idlewild, two benches were also replaced, as the original ones were too low to the ground.

Regarding Vestal Park, Mr. Isbell met with the Police Athletic League (PAL) supervisor to clarify maintenance responsibilities. PAL is responsible for the football fields and one adjacent field, while Parks Maintenance oversees the pavilion, basketball courts, and another adjacent field. Mr. Isbell noted that the batting cages and runways had become overgrown with vegetation due to lack of

Director Reports Continued: regular upkeep. He will bring inmates to assist with clearing vegetation and cleaning up the park. Mrs. Smith asked if Vestal Park was still being used. Mr. Isbell confirmed it is primarily used for football games, the concession stand, and the restrooms, and that cleanup would begin the following day.

At Veterans Memorial on MacArthur Drive, several poles were damaged in the recent tornado. The Electric Department will remove two damaged poles and install a new one with LED lighting to illuminate the monument and improve visibility at night.

Mr. Isbell also reported that on September 2nd, the electrician will begin installing new wiring for the Sherman Park scoreboard, pavilion, and field lights. All materials have been ordered. Mrs. Stephens asked if alternatives to copper wiring were available. Director Kenny Stephens explained that aluminum wiring is not effective in this situation, and copper must be used despite theft concerns. Mrs. Stephens asked if copper wiring could be painted. Director Stephens clarified that the wires are underground and enclosed, but acknowledged that copper theft remains a concern. He added that the department hopes to deter theft through proper lighting and concealment.

Mrs. Smith asked if work had started at North Heights Community Center. Mr. Isbell replied that it had not. Director Kenny Stephens added that work is expected to begin next week. City Attorney, Marie Miller has provided a draft contract for painting the exterior of North Heights Community Center. The contractor has reviewed the draft and approved it, and once the contract is finalized, painting is expected to begin within approximately one week.

Mr. Joe Ralston reported for Burns Park Golf. He stated that July was a strong month for the golf course, with revenue of approximately \$6,000, compared to the same period last year. Mr. Ralston noted that the course recently hosted the State Men's Match Play Tournament, featuring some of the best amateur players in the state, as well as the Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament. He reported that the course is in very good condition, though it is in need of rainfall to maintain optimal playing conditions.

Jamie Pettit reported for Special Events. Mrs. Pettit stated that preparations are underway for the start of Fall Ball, which will begin after Labor Day.

Mr. Daniel Cornelison reported for Burns Park Tennis Center. He stated that the center recently hosted several tournaments in collaboration with Rebsamen Tennis Center and the Jr. Mixed Tape Academy this past weekend. Now that school has resumed, activity is quieter except after 4:00 p.m., when high school teams begin using the courts. The Tennis Center hosts seven high schools. Mr. Cornelison reported that Phase 1 of court improvements has been completed on six courts, with Phase 2 planned to begin in October. Mrs. Stephens asked about the installation of fans on the indoor courts. Director Kenny Stephens stated that fans have not yet been installed and that staff are still evaluating the structure to ensure proper installation.

Mrs. Smith inquired about Pickleball league fees, noting that the report indicates leagues are going strong, but only \$40 was listed. Mr. Cornelison explained that participants pay every two months. Mr.

Director Reports Continued: Burkett added that some months may not show league fees because participants have already prepaid. Mrs. Stephens asked how revenue from Pickleball Pro teaching is handled. Mr. Cornelison stated that he divides the revenue via purchase order, with 50% going to the professional and 50% to the City. Mrs. Stephens clarified that this revenue does not go into the standard Pickleball account but is included with other teaching pro revenues. Mr. Cornelison confirmed that Pickleball league, pro, and event revenue is recorded in the general ledger for Pickleball.

Mrs. Tina Worrell reported for Recreation. She stated that she recently spoke with Betty Perkins regarding splash pad attendance. Director Kenny Stephens has asked Mrs. Worrell and Ms. Perkins to propose updated operating times for the splash pad. The plan is to have it open in the evenings after school, from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m., and to continue weekend hours from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The decision on how long these hours will continue, at least through Labor Day, is still under consideration.

Mrs. Smith asked if this change would affect only parties or regular operations. Mrs. Worrell clarified that this pertains to splash pad operations and noted that, with cooler weather approaching, the pools will close after Labor Day.

Mrs. Worrell reported that the Sapling Summer Program recently concluded and transitioned directly into the After-School Program. Staffing is currently lower than desired, and the department is seeking part-time employees. Enrollment for the After-School Program is full at Glenview and North Heights Community Centers, with openings still available at Sherman Park and Rose City Community Centers.

Regarding Funland, Mrs. Worrell reported that 58 birthday parties were hosted in July, generating slightly over \$3,000. The facility also recorded 14,000 visitors during the month. Daily visits across all community centers totaled approximately 22,000.

Mrs. Worrell further reported that the adult basketball league has concluded. She highlighted the NLR Cares Youth Coalition event held at Sherman Park on August 9th, which supported youth in North Little Rock through collaboration with the school district and local nonprofits. Approximately 2,000 people attended, and services provided included haircuts, medical assistance, and school supplies. Mrs. Stephens thanked Mrs. Worrell and her staff for compiling and providing these attendance and program statistics for the commission.

Mr. Jeff Caplinger reported for Special Projects. He stated that staff have been updating the department's websites and will update Funland train times for public access as soon as possible. Additionally, a video project has been completed for the rental clubhouses, with professional videos approximately one and a half (1.5) minutes in length for each facility. Mr. Caplinger reported that all 2024 grant paperwork for the Recycle Bikes program has been submitted, and the department anticipates receiving a notice to proceed next month.

Director Reports Continued: Director Kenny Stephens added that there is a significant traffic concern at Northshore Drive which serves as a key route to the Big Dam Bridge and includes existing bike trails. He noted that a large medical facility, a 48,000-square-foot crime lab, is being constructed in the area. Traffic studies have been conducted, and Mr. Caplinger has captured drone footage to assist in planning. Director Stephens stated that traffic congestion is particularly problematic when school resumes, and the City is evaluating options to develop an additional road to improve access.

Calendar of Events: Mrs. Stephens stated the agenda deadline for the next meeting is Tuesday, September 2, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. The September commission meeting will be held Monday, September 15, 2025. The meeting will take place at 5:00 p.m. at the North Little Rock Community Center.

Adjournment: Mrs. Smith made a motion, seconded by Mr. Skrivanos, to adjourn the meeting at 6:24 p.m. All voted aye and the motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments/Visitors: Mrs. Stephens opened the meeting for public comments. There were none.

APPROVED BY: 
Chair, Vicki Stephens

SUBMITTED BY: 
Secretary, Otistene Smith