Mayor's Journal March 15-19

I guess I know it would happen sooner or later…I would be late in posting the Mayor's Journal. I don't suppose there is a vast audience, but for those who do take the time to read my wanderings, I apologize for my tardiness. In addition, this entry will be relatively brief and will dispense with the more routine items such as policy meetings and staff meetings.

March 15, Monday: I began my day with the routine policy meeting with the city manger, assistant city manager, city attorney and assistant to the mayor. Later, the city manager and I met with officials from Entergy to discuss the utility relocation requirements and suggested changes in our ordinances. We also met with the Mayor of Shannon Hills and various staff, engineers and officials from the Little Rock Waste Water Utility to discuss future needs of Shannon Hills and how best to accommodate those needs. At noon I spoke to the Arkansas Advertising Federation and gave those attending an update on the exciting events of this year surrounding the Clinton Presidential Center opening in November. Later, I joined the city manager in a meeting with the new COO of the Clinton Presidential Center and Park Grand Opening. The sheer logistics of thousands of visitors and security issues for past or present United States Presidents is challenging. I am pleased to report the organization of this is well underway and we will be prepared to welcome visitors from all over the globe to this once in a life time occasion.

March 16, Tuesday: Today we had our Board meeting during which, we recognized Mr. Donald Marshall and his family for the unbelievable renovation of apartments in Southwest Little Rock. Mr. Marshall, at his wife's prompting, moved to Little Rock from California and has transformed a negative blight into a wonderful, well-managed residential complex off Stanley Drive. Our hats are off to this family as we welcome them to our capital city.

I had a luncheon meeting with the Chairman of our Little Rock Port Authority, Gary Barkett. He and his board have done a tremendous job during the past few years in advancing our port and in preparing it for the future. I also had a meeting and update with officials from the Corp of Engineers to discuss design and timelines on the magnificent bridge to be constructed on top of Murray Lock and Dam and connecting the bicycle trail along the river in Little Rock and North Little Rock's 14 miles looping and connecting our two cities.

March 17, Wednesday: The Downtown Partnership is a major team member with a focus on downtown development and downtown promotion. Today, the partnership hosted its annual meeting and recognized Clinton Presidential Foundation Director, Skip Rutherford, for his role and former President Clinton's role in the renaissance we are experiencing in the downtown. During the past 10 years, we have seen *ONE BILLION DOLLARS* of development and redevelopment in the downtown area…I am convinced, the best is yet to come.

March 18, Thursday: Clearly, there are other parts of Little Rock which are receiving attention and which have great potential for reinvestment and development. One of those is the 12th Street Corridor and today I had meetings to discuss the plans for partners in this historic part of the City.

I finished this day with meetings and updates from the City Year Program and a dinner hosted by the City and our Little Rock Visitor's and Convention Bureau in honor of the American Taekwando Association (ATA). ATA has a 30-year history in Little Rock and each year brings 15-20 thousand visitors to the area as we host the ATA World Championship. Deceased founder Grandmaster H.U. Lee brought his vision and corporate office to Little Rock and we are blessed to have his world-wide organization in our city.

Again, I apologize for my delay in posting this. Have a great day and week