Mayor's Journal May 17-June 11:

Hi again folks, what a busy and hectic month we have had with meetings, ribbon cuttings, press conferences, dignitaries visiting to out of state business meetings and the list goes on and on. I will try my best to recap all of this, but first let me apologize for not having done this sooner…time simply slipped away from me. In the future, I have asked Shayla to schedule a weekly appointment for me to take a few minutes to keep you all up to date on my weekly activities, so it will not be a month before I get a chance to write in the journal.

I have had the opportunity to visit with some wonderful people over the past month. I want to take a minute and compliment Terry Eastin, a Parks and Recreational consultant, who has been working hard on the River Trails project for the past several months. She and I have been visiting local companies/businesses to help raise funds for the Arkansas River Trail. Terry's dedication to this project is phenomenal and I appreciate the work she is doing to help our city build a river trail from downtown east Little Rock all the way to Pinnacle Mountain State Park and around from Cook's Landing to downtown North Little Rock with pedestrian bridges across Murray Lock and Dam and the newly renovated bridge near the Clinton Presidential Center creating a 14-mile loop. This trail will provide many miles of scenic trail on the banks of the Arkansas River for walking, running, bicycling or skating.

I want to commend the Riverfest staff for another super year! Your hard work certainly shows through the entertainers performing and the thousands of guests who attended the two-day event. I want to also send a special congratulations to Jim Sick for the fountain dedicated in his name. Jim has been a constant source of help and information for the staff each year and is well deserving of this recognition.

I held my monthly I-30 Task Force meeting at Curran Hall on May 24 and it continues to be a positive meeting. Each month we get reports of how crime is deterring or the quickness of our police department response time or how the City efficiently boarded up a home or cleaned a lot. There are occasional concerns, but for the most part, we are making huge strides in the downtown areas.

I was happy to speak to a group of graduating fifth graders at Meadowcliff Elementary as they move on to the sixth grade. I really enjoy working with our youth and the bright futures they hold. The kids were a wonderful group of students and I wish them the best of luck next year.

I also attended the grand opening of the Slackwater Harbor in the end of May. This is a wonderful project, which I am proud to have here in Central Arkansas…one which gives us a true opportunity to more effectively use the Arkansas River for economic development. My thanks to Paul Latture for his continued leadership at the Port Authority.

I, along with city administration, had our monthly criminal abatement procedure meeting and decided to host our next "Targeted Neighborhood Day" August 6. We are making huge improvements to the areas in which we focus on and I want to keep the motion moving in a

positive direction as we clean up our city. Special thanks to our police and housing departments as they are on the front lines issuing citations and cleaning up the neighborhoods.

One touching event I attended was the Flight 1420 Memorial service held at the Aerospace Center. There were survivors and families present for the dedication of a beautiful memorial. I was impressed to witness the unity and bonds of all in attendance.

I spoke to the Pulaski Visitor's Council in early June about all the events happening in the fall and about the continued development downtown, midtown and all over town.

Central High Commission was appointed and held the first of many meeting leading up to the 50th Anniversary of the Integration of this great inner city school. Principle Nancy Rousseau and Virgil Miller co chair this commission.

An interesting press event I attended informed the public of the impact the William Jefferson Presidential Library will have on the City of Little Rock and folks, it's phenomenal! Not only will we have the week long celebration during the Grand Opening, but according to the UALR study, the economic impact will be well in excess of the original estimate of $10 million dollars per year.

Staff and I met with the Coalition for a Smoke-Free workplace and had a good conversation with them about the possibility of Little Rock going smoke-free. Several other states have declared smoke-free workplace policies and I think Little Rock would be all the better for doing the same. The Coalition will be working with community organizations to promote this idea, so if interested in joining in, please contact them.

I was really excited to see the ALPS food store at the corner of Roosevelt and Broadway officially open. If you have not been by this store, you are missing something….they have really cleaned this corner up and you will be pleasantly surprised! I wish them the best of luck.

Staff and I met with HUD representatives to discuss ideas for improving the Little Rock Housing Authority. My plans are to meet with the HUD Field Representative and the Little Rock Housing Authority Director and our City Manager on a monthly basis.

And finally, I was in Chicago on Thursday and Friday for a National League of Cities Municipalities in Transition on Public Finance meeting. I am honored to Chair the Public Finance panel as we discuss the future of how cities will be financed as we move faster and faster into a service based economy. I must also compliment Mayor Daley of Chicago for the great things happening in the downtown area of this great American City.

So as you can see, this month has flown by with meetings. I hope you all are having a wonderful week and God Bless!