



Leadership Spotlight:

Leading Little Rock's
Economic and Community
Renaissance

"Change will not come if we wait for some other people or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek".
-Barrack Obama

Mayor Frank Scott, Jr., truly embodies this philosophy as he continues to drive remarkable economic growth in Little Rock. Under his leadership, major businesses like Amazon, Trader Joe's, and Costco have been drawn to the city, fueling economic momentum, increasing the population, and creating new opportunities for residents. These additions have contributed to the city's vibrancy and economic expansion.

Mayor Scott's vision extends beyond immediate growth. He has proposed a sales tax increase that could generate over \$650 million in the next decade. These funds would be invested in critical areas such as public safety, infrastructure, and affordable housing.

A key focus is the revitalization of downtown, addressing residents' concerns, enhancing the community with new sports complexes and parks, and economic development at the city's ports. Mayor Scott's commitment to a brighter future for Little Rock is evident in every step he takes. We're honored to feature him in this edition's Leadership Spotlight.

To learn more about the mayor's tax proposal, visit resultsfortherock.com.

ABMA Vice Chair Tomeka L. Butler Completes Delta Leadership Institute Program



Tomeka L. Butler, Mayor of Eudora, AR, and Vice Chair of the Arkansas Black Mayors Association (ABMA), recently graduated from the Delta Leadership Institute (DLI) Executive Academy. Alongside 28 fellows from the Delta Regional Authority's eight states, Mayor Butler participated in a year-long leadership program aimed at addressing regional challenges and fostering economic development.

Key highlights of the program included studying county health rankings in Little Rock, AR, workforce development in Baton Rouge, LA, and disaster preparedness training. Fellows also visited Cape Girardeau, MO, to learn about supporting local entrepreneurs and engaged in discussions on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Graduation culminated with fellows delivering three-minute, Ted-like talks about their experiences. Mayor Butler reflected on her journey, noting the program's impact on her leadership and her commitment to improving her community.

Mayor Butler's participation in DLI reinforces her dedication to driving economic growth and progress in Eudora and across the Delta region. With new insights and skills, she is ready to lead with renewed purpose.

Empowering Communities: Fort Smith Mayor Selected for Air Force Initiative

Fort Smith Mayor George B. McGill has been chosen to join the inaugural class of the U.S. Air Force's Air Education and Training Command (AETC) Civic Leader Program, representing both the 188th Wing at Ebbing Air National Guard Base and the broader Fort Smith community. This distinguished program connects civilian leaders with Air Force officials to foster collaboration and strengthen community ties, emphasizing support for military personnel and advancing mission success. McGill's term, beginning this summer and lasting two and a half years, will include both in-person and virtual annual meetings, offering insights into AETC's training priorities and strategies for building enduring partnerships.

McGill's appointment aligns with Fort Smith's strategic role in hosting the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program, which trains F-16 and F-35 pilots and welcomes military personnel from around the world to live and train in Fort Smith. In this role, McGill will support Fort Smith's growing contributions to international security and peace efforts while reinforcing the city's commitment to a vibrant and inclusive community for military and civilian residents alike.

Fort Smith is experiencing tremendous growth! In his recent "State of the City" address, Mayor McGill highlighted significant achievements, including a 23% surge in building permits, representing \$494 million in development. The city is gearing up for even more growth with initiatives such as the \$19 million Slackwater Harbor development, set to drive economic expansion.

Fort Smith has also become home to new attractions, including a professional baseball team, the Marshals Museum, and an upcoming mountain biking park designed to address flooding issues. As Fort Smith continues to flourish, infrastructure investment remains a top priority to support its growing population and new opportunities.



ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION

THE MAYORS' RECEPTION

Thursday, December 5th

801 VIP LOUNGE

801 S. Chester St.

Little Rock, AR

Time: 5:30 PM

ANNUAL MEETING

Friday, December 6th

THE ROCK IT! LAB

120 River Market Ave.

Little Rock, AR

Time: 11:00 AM

Lifting a Community to New Heights:

Mayor Howell's
Vision for Strong, AR.

Mayor Daryell Howell has dedicated 22 years to leading Strong, Arkansas, with a focus on building a community that fosters unity, growth, and quality of life for all residents. His top priorities include expanding affordable housing options by encouraging new developments and partnerships to bring quality homes to

Strong. Under his leadership, the city has also prioritized economic growth, drawing in businesses to create more job opportunities, and improving infrastructure to ensure Strong can meet the needs of its residents now and in the future. One of Mayor Howell's most celebrated accomplishments is the development of the Strong Community Center, a central hub for gathering, activities, and strengthening bonds across the community. This project has not only provided a space for residents of all ages to connect but also stands as a symbol of pride and progress. Looking ahead, Mayor Howell is committed to completing the housing project and revitalizing downtown, creating an inviting city center to attract local businesses. Mayor Howell, along with his wife Allison, their three children, and two grandchildren, proudly calls Strong home. He is also a member of Omega Psi Phi Inc., bringing his dedication to service and leadership beyond his role as mayor.



Mitchellville’s Major Milestone: Wastewater Project Begins!

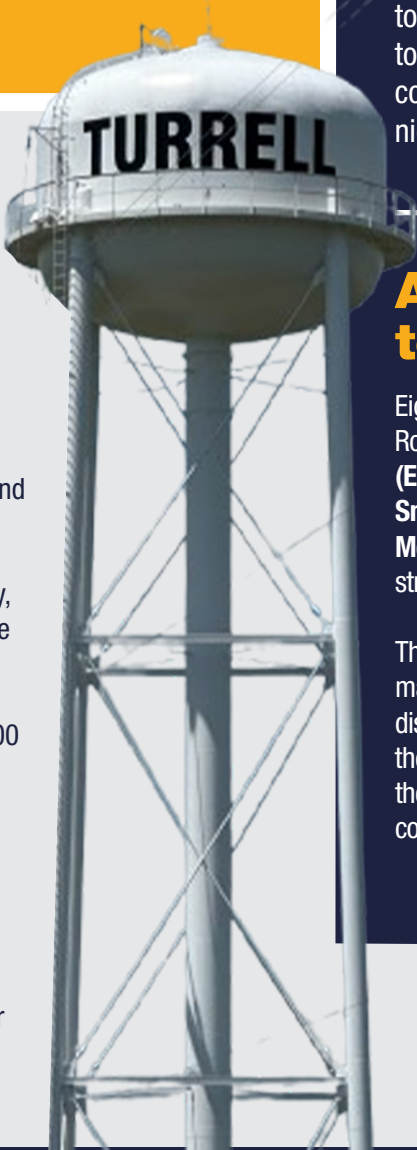


Exciting news for Mitchellville! Mayor Griswold has successfully secured approval and over \$2 million in funding for the city’s long-awaited wastewater project, which officially kicked off in June 2024. This development will transfer all wastewater treatment to the city of Dumas, significantly improving infrastructure and services for the community. The project is expected to be completed by December 2025, marking a major step forward for Mitchellville’s future. Mayor Griswold extends heartfelt thanks to the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission for their support in making this transformative project possible. This achievement sets the stage for continued growth and well-being in our city

Turrell Secures \$1.25 Million Grant for Essential Infrastructure Upgrades

The City of Turrell has received a generous \$1,251,000 infrastructure improvement grant, thanks to the support of Judge Wheelless and the Quorum Court. These funds will be allocated across several critical projects aimed at enhancing safety and functionality in the community. The Fire Department will use \$33,000 to purchase essential equipment, bolstering its ability to serve and protect. Additionally, \$18,000 will go toward renovating an abandoned fire hydrant to strengthen rural fire protection.

The Water & Sewer Department will receive \$200,000 for the renovation of three pump stations, ensuring continued compliance with Arkansas Department of Health standards and providing reliable wastewater services. The majority of the grant, \$1,000,000, will fund the construction of a new water tower to replace the one that has been out of commission for over 20 years, bringing a long-awaited upgrade to Turrell’s water infrastructure. Mayor Charles Webster is committed to making these vital improvements to ensure a safer, stronger community for Turrell residents.



A Night To Remember

ABMA Annual Fundraiser Gala



What an unforgettable evening! The Arkansas Black Mayors Association’s Annual Fundraising Gala was a powerful celebration of community, leadership, and progress. We were proud to present the Champion of Justice Award to Chief Terry Cosby, recognizing his outstanding career with the Natural Resource Conservation Service and his unwavering commitment to serving our communities. A special thank you to the young men from Boys State for your inspiring speeches and shared experiences. You are the future leaders of tomorrow, and your bright futures are ahead! We are deeply grateful to Entergy, AT&T, The Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, and Americans for Prosperity for their incredible support. Your dedication to our mission and the people of Arkansas strengthens us all, and we are truly better together because of you. With sixty-two mayors, esteemed honorees, and extraordinary supporters by our side, we came together to uplift underserved communities across Arkansas. From moving speeches to unforgettable moments, the evening was a powerful testament to unity and the collective strength of our shared mission. Thank you to everyone who helped make this night such a success! Together, we are building a brighter, more equitable future.

Arkansas Black Mayors Secure Funding to Enhance Community Infrastructure

Eight mayors from across Arkansas have been awarded over \$80,000 in grants from the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation. These mayors, **Mayor Roy Winfrey (Madison)**, **Mayor Tomeka Butler (Eudora)**, **Mayor Derrick Rainey (Wrightsville)**, **Mayor Lisa Hicks-Gilbert (Elaine)**, **Mayor Jaylen Smith (Earle)**, **Mayor Lincoln Barnett (Hughes)**, **Mayor Larry Bryant (Forrest City)**, and **Mayor Melisa Logan (Blytheville)**, will use the grants (\$10,000 each) to build capacity and improve infrastructure in underserved communities.

The grants will support critical efforts in housing, transportation, and infrastructure, helping these mayors create more sustainable and livable communities. These efforts are aligned with the goals discussed at the 1st Annual Age-Friendly, Livable Communities Summit and Expo, which highlighted the importance of accessible housing, transportation solutions, and digital technology for improving the quality of life in our cities. This funding marks a significant step toward revitalizing these communities and enhancing services for residents, ensuring a brighter future for all.



Thank you for being a part of the ABMA community! Together, we’re driving positive change and making a difference in the lives of African American communities across the state. Stay connected, stay inspired, and stay committed to building a brighter future for all.

We look forward to continuing this journey with you.

The Arkansas Black Mayors Association, established in 1972, is a non-profit, charitable, and educational organization.

