

MINUTES

SENATE AND HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEES ON
CITY, COUNTY, AND LOCAL AFFAIRS

DECEMBER 13, 2018

The Senate and House Interim Committees on City, County, and Local Affairs met Thursday, December 13, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. in Room B, MAC, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Committee members present: Senator Alan Clark, Chair, Linda Collins-Smith, Lance Eads, Scott Flippo, and Stephanie Flowers. Representatives Tim Lemons, Chair, Carol Dalby, Jana Della Rosa, David Fielding, Lanny Fite, Bob Johnson, Fredrick Love, Roger Lynch, Andy Mayberry, Johnny Rye, and Nelda Speaks.

Other members present: Representatives Fred Allen, Trevor Drown, Charlene Fite, Joe Jett, Austin McCollum, Donald Ragland, Laurie Rushing, and Danny Watson. Representative-Elects, Marsh Davis, and Mark Johnson.

Call to Order

Representative Lemons called the meeting to order.

Consideration of Motion for Approval of Minutes [Exhibit C]

A motion to approve the minutes of the November 26, 2018 committee meeting was made by Representative Lynch and seconded by Representative Mayberry. The motion carried.

Continued Discussion of Arkansas's Statewide 9-1-1 Systems, Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), and Next Generation (NG911) Project

Representative Lemons recognized Josh Curtis, Governmental Affairs Director, Association of Arkansas Counties (AAC), County Judge Rusty McMillon, Greene County, Renee Hoover, Administrator, Emergency Telephone Services Board (ETSB), A.J. Gary, Executive Director, Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM), and Shelby Johnson, State Geographic Information Officer, Arkansas Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

Mr. Curtis referenced the request made by the Committees at the November 26, 2018 meeting asking for information on the connection costs for PSAPs. He deferred to Renee Hoover who described the process used by ETSB for the collection and distribution of funds.

Costs for 911 calls made to PSAPs:

- The telephone company in Arkansas who provides the most connections is AT&T
- AT&T selects the routers to deliver the 911 calls to the PSAPs
- The ETSB processes payments to the PSAPs for these charges
- The total amount paid out by ETSB in 2017 for these charges was \$2,157,706.00

Ms. Hoover said it is difficult to determine exact costs because PSAPs receive a monthly statement from telephone companies with no specific details for the charges shown. Charges can include maintenance, costs of telephone land lines, leased equipment costs, and other costs which can

appear as one lump sum amount. Ms. Hoover said the 911 Call Center in Perry County provided the total amount it paid to AT&T and Windstream in 2017 at approximately \$35,000.00.

Mr. Curtis said he received information from the Saline County 911 Call Center listing their costs for equipment, 911 services, monies paid to telephone companies, and software maintenance agreements, which totaled \$171,000.00 for 2016.

Legislators discussed the need for consolidation of PSAPs statewide and what the appropriate minimum number might be. Mr. Gary stated that one of the reasons exact call cost information is so difficult to obtain is the lack of an established oversight governing body.

Review of Draft Legislation for the 92nd General Session Proposed by the Arkansas Municipal League (ARML) [Exhibit E]

Representative Lemons recognized Mark Hayes, Executive Director, and John Wilkerson, General Counsel, Arkansas Municipal League (ARML). He said the ARML represents 500 cities and towns in Arkansas. Mr. Hayes gave an overview of the ARML proposed legislative packet he provided to committee members. The draft legislation includes a bill by Representative Dan Douglas regarding the Market Place Fairness Act. Several states have passed similar legislation providing methods to collect internet sales tax for the state, county, and municipal governments. Mr. Hayes said both the ARML and the Association of Arkansas Counties strongly support passage of this legislation because of the substantial economic impact it will have. He then reviewed in-depth the proposed legislation which they will present during the 92nd General Session:

- Allowing second class cities and incorporated towns to appoint municipal treasurers
- Amend bidding limits to fifty-thousand dollars (\$50,000.00)
- Supports amending or repealing the law that prohibits the use of traffic cameras
- Adding flexibility to Clerk/Recorder/Treasurer duties
- Changing formats of Municipal Government
- Terminating the office of City Collector
- Clarifying that election run-offs are to be held three weeks after the General Election

Review of Draft Legislation for the 92nd General Session Proposed by the Association of Arkansas Counties (AAC) [Exhibit F]

Representative Lemons recognized Chris Villines, Executive Director, Association of Arkansas Counties. Mr. Villines gave an overview of the AAC's proposed draft legislation. He identified the nine county associations which the AAC represents: Circuit Clerks, County Treasurers, County Clerks, County Judges, County Coroners, Quorum Courts, Sheriffs, County Tax Collectors, and County Assessors. Each association initially presented their draft legislation for consideration by the AAC Legislative Committee and the AAC Board of Directors. Mr. Villines discussed their consolidated tax reform bill that they had earlier presented to the Tax Reform and Relief Legislative Task Force. He stated that AAC supports the legislation known as the Market Place Fairness Act, but is opposed to efforts to limit sales tax collections on a local level. He then reviewed their additional proposed legislation which would impact all county government:

- Legislation to amend the law concerning the dates for certain special elections
- Legislation to amend the Arkansas Gross Receipts Act
- Legislation to increase the homestead tax credit from the current annual amount of \$350.00

Representative Lemons announced that the Committees plan to meet at 9:30 a.m. January 8, 2019 if the House Speaker and the Senate Pro Tem authorize the meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 p.m.