

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**OF THE**  
**ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (ALC)**

**JUNE 19, 2026**

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The Arkansas Legislative Council met at 9:00 a.m., Friday, March 20, 2026, in Committee Room A of the Big MAC Building, Little Rock, Arkansas. Senate Co-Chair Ben Gilmore called the meeting to order and recognized a quorum of members present. Representative Les Warren was recognized for the morning prayer.

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Co-Chair Gilmore referred members to the minutes of the last Legislative Council meeting held on February 20, 2026 (Exhibit C) and asked if there were any questions. There were no questions.

**Representative Mary Bentley moved that the minutes of the February 20, 2026, meeting of the Legislative Council be adopted. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.**

**Revenue Report**

Co-Chair Gilmore recognized Dr. Carlos Silva, Legislative Economist, Bureau of Legislative Research (BLR), to present the February 2026 General Revenue Report (Exhibit D). Dr. Silva reported that the collections of Gross General Revenues year-to-date are approximately \$5.36 billion an increase of \$89 million, or 1.7% above the \$5.27 billion collected last fiscal year-to-date. The Net General Revenue available for distribution of \$4.55 billion, increased \$163.7 million, or 3.7% from the \$4.39 billion available for distribution in February 2025.

Dr. Silva further stated that the Cumulative Deviation of the forecasted Net General Revenue Available for Distribution is \$7.4 million, clarifying that this reflects a reset due to the updated forecast from DF&A, rather than a decline from \$160 million from January 2026. The original forecast projected a surplus of \$185 million; however, the updated forecast from DF&A anticipated a surplus of \$334 million. When reconciled, this aligns with prior expectations. As of February, Net General Revenues are \$7.4 million above what DF&A projected. Gross Receipts category experienced a modest decline of 3.5% for the month, largely attributable to approximately \$10 million in refunds. Additionally, a significant change in driver search fee revenues is noted, which is often driven by timing factors. Payroll figures show some variability, though private-sector data suggests a low hiring environment. Revenue trends reported by neighboring states for February appear consistent with those observed in Arkansas. This concluded the February 2026 General Revenue report. Co-Chair Gilmore recognized members for questions.

## Report of the Executive Subcommittee

Co-Chair Gilmore recognized Co-Chair Les D. Eaves to present the report of the Executive Subcommittee (Exhibit E). Co-Chair Eaves reported that the Executive Subcommittee met on Thursday, March 19, 2026, and approved a waiver request for cooperative purchasing construction services for the Stuttgart School District. The Subcommittee approved two (2) contracts: one for the consulting services for the Hospital, Medicaid, and Developmental Disabilities Studies Subcommittee, related to their ongoing study; and one for actuarial services related to oversight of State Property Insurance issues (*Report Attachments 1 & 2*). The Subcommittee also approved a motion to approve the use of BLR funds for renovations to Committee Room C in the Big MAC building. This concluded the report of the Executive Subcommittee, and there were no questions.

**Co-Chair Les D. Eaves moved that the report of the Executive Subcommittee be adopted. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.**

## Standing Subcommittee Presentations

### Administrative Rules Subcommittee

Co-Chair Gilmore recognized Representative Matthew Shepherd to present the report of the Administrative Rules Subcommittee (Exhibit F.1). Representative Shepherd reported that the Administrative Rules Subcommittee met on Thursday, March 19, 2026. The Subcommittee approved one (1) agency request for exclusion from reporting requirements for rulemaking. The Subcommittee accepted the recommendation of the Arkansas State Library concerning the extension of rules, pursuant to Act 781 of 2017 and Act 65 of 2021. The Subcommittee received agency updates on outstanding rulemaking from the 2023 Regular Session and filed agency's monthly written updates on rulemaking from the 2025 Regular Session. All other rules were reviewed and approved as noted in the report. This concluded the report of the Administrative Rules Subcommittee, and there were no questions.

**Representative Matthew Shepherd moved that the report of the Administrative Rules Subcommittee be adopted. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.**

### Claims Review & Litigation Reports Oversight Subcommittee

Co-Chair Gilmore recognized Senator Jim Dotson to present the report of the Claims Review & Litigation Reports Oversight Subcommittee (Exhibit F.3). Senator Dotson reported the Claims Review & Litigation Reports Oversight Subcommittee met on Monday, March 16, 2026, and reviewed: thirteen (13) litigation reports; one (1) litigation settlement; and one (1) dismissed claim that was appealed by the claimants, who were referred to the JBC-Claims Review/Litigation Reports Oversight Subcommittee. The Subcommittee affirmed the rulings of the Claims Commission as to all other claims on the agenda. This concluded the report of the Claims Review & Litigation Reports Oversight Subcommittee, and there were no questions.

**Senator Jim Dotson moved that the report of the Claims Review & Litigation Reports Oversight Subcommittee be adopted. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.**

### Game and Fish/State Police Subcommittee

Co-Chair Gilmore recognized Senator Missy Irvin, to present the report of the Game and Fish/State Police Subcommittee (Exhibit F.4). Senator Irvin reported that the Game and Fish/State Police Subcommittee met on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at the Joe Hogan Fish Hatchery in Lonoke, AR. The Subcommittee received an update from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and toured the Joe Hogan Fish Hatchery facility. Senator Irvin encouraged all to look at the Arkansas Legacy Lunger

Program and to go bass fishing. This concluded the report of the Game and Fish/State Police Subcommittee, and there were no questions.

**Senator Missy Irvin moved that the report of the Game and Fish/State Police Subcommittee be adopted. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.**

#### Higher Education Subcommittee

Co-Chair Gilmore recognized Senator Breanne Davis, to present the report of the Higher Education Subcommittee (Exhibit F.5). Senator Davis reported that the Higher Education Subcommittee met on Wednesday, March 18, 2026. The Subcommittee received the Annual Certification of Adequate Funds FY2025-2026 Report. The Subcommittee also heard testimony on the artificial intelligence in education, and ministerial and community programs in schools. This concluded the report of the Higher Education Subcommittee, and there were no questions.

**Senator Breanne Davis moved that the report of the Higher Education Subcommittee be adopted. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.**

#### Highway Commission Review and Advisory Subcommittee

Co-Chair Gilmore recognized Representative Ron McNair, to present the report of the Highway Commission Review and Advisory Subcommittee (Exhibit F.6). Representative McNair reported that the Highway Commission Review and Advisory Subcommittee met on Monday, March 16, 2026. The Subcommittee heard testimony of the Efficiency Study Recommendations; quarterly reports for land conveyances; reports on Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act and annual expenditures of revenue; and a report on the progress of each highway construction project of \$10 million or more. This concluded the report of the Highway Commission Review and Advisory Subcommittee, and there were no questions.

**Representative Ron McNair moved that the report of the Highway Commission Review and Advisory Subcommittee be adopted. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.**

#### Hospital, Medicaid, and Developmental Disabilities Study Subcommittee

Co-Chair Gilmore recognized Representative Mary Bentley, to present the report of the Hospital, Medicaid, and Developmental Disabilities Study Subcommittee (Exhibit F.7). Representative Bentley reported that the Hospital, Medicaid, and Developmental Disabilities Study Subcommittee met on Tuesday, February 24, 2026, at the Central Arkansas Development Council in Benton, to hear testimony on community-centered strategies to overcome transportation barriers affecting workforce participation.

Additionally, the Subcommittee met on Monday, March 2, 2026, to discuss the final report provided by Georgia Center for Opportunity and approved a motion made by Representative Rick Beck to engage with WorkEd Consulting, LLC.

The Subcommittee met again on Monday, March 16, 2026, to hear testimony on Department of Human Services (DHS) Hospital spending, and an update on the Reimbursement Rates Under the Living Choices Assisted Living Waiver. This concluded the report of the Hospital, Medicaid, and Developmental Disabilities Study Subcommittee, and there were no questions.

**Representative Mary Bentley moved that the report of the Hospital, Medicaid, and Developmental Disabilities Study Subcommittee be adopted. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.**

Occupational Licensing Review Subcommittee

Co-Chair Gilmore recognized Senator David Wallace, to present the report of the Occupational Licensing Review Subcommittee (Exhibit F.10). Senator Wallace reported that the Occupational Licensing Review Subcommittee met on Thursday, March 19, 2026, and received reports from various occupational authorization entities in Group 1. This concluded the report of the Occupational Licensing Review Subcommittee, and there were no questions.

**Senator David Wallace moved that the report of the Occupational Licensing Review Subcommittee be adopted. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.**

Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review (PEER) Subcommittee

Co-Chair Gilmore recognized Representative Jeff Wardlaw to present the report of the Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review (PEER) Subcommittee (Exhibit F.11). Representative Wardlaw reported that the PEER Subcommittee met on Tuesday, March 17, 2026. The Subcommittee received reports, reviewed requests, and approved the following: Various Temporary Appropriations; American Rescue Plan Act Appropriations; Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Appropriation Requests; and a Restricted Reserve Fund Transfer.

A motion to review failed for Item G.1, a Budget Classification Transfer Request from the Commissioner of State Lands for \$250,000, for a building purchase. This concluded the report of the PEER Subcommittee, and there were no questions.

**Representative Jeff Wardlaw moved to adopt the report of the Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review (PEER) Subcommittee. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.**

Review Subcommittee

Co-Chair Gilmore recognized Senator Blake Johnson to present the report of the Review Subcommittee (Exhibit F.12). Senator Johnson reported that the Review Subcommittee met on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, and reviewed: methods of finance, one (1) alternative delivery method construction project; discretionary grants; RFQ requests; services contracts; and received regular monthly reports. In-state contract #4 for the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), and contracts #6 and #7 for the Department of Human Services (DHS) were held for ALC, pending requests for follow-up information. Staff received and distributed the information from ADE and DHS to all interested parties. This concluded the report of the Review Subcommittee. Co-Chair Gilmore recognized members for questions.

Representative Wardlaw requested for DHS to come forward to respond to questions. Ms. Jennifer Brezée, Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS), Ms. Paula Stone, Director of the Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, Ms. Melissa Weatherton, Director of Specialty Medicaid Services, and Mr. Jay Hill, Director of the Division of Aging, Adult, and Behavioral Health Services, DHS, were all recognized to respond.

Afterwards, Co-Chair Gilmore recognized Senator Terry Rice for questions who then requested the Department of Public Safety - Arkansas State Police to come forward to provide information on Exhibit F.12, Item #19, Pg. 31, that was previously requested. Agency representatives were not in attendance. Senator Rice then focused on Exhibit F.12, Item #22, Pg. 22, for the Department of Shared Administrative Services. After discussions amongst members, Ms. Marty Garrity, BLR Director, was recognized to provide clarification.

After further discussion and questions from members, Senator Rice was then recognized to make a motion.

**Senator Terry Rice moved to adopt the report of the Review Subcommittee and hold Item #19 - Department of Public Safety - Arkansas State Police for Central Flying Service Inc., for the Joint Budget Committee (JBC). Upon Co-Chair Gilmore's request, Senator Rice withdrew the motion to allow questions of the agency.**

Co-Chair Gilmore then recognized Ms. Kay Barnhill, State Personnel Administrator of the Department of Shared Administrative Services (DSAS), Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Ms. Leslie Fiskens, Secretary, DSAS, and Mr. Jim Hudson, Secretary of DF&A, to respond to questions.

Senator Rice was recognized again and informed members that the information he requested had been received, and he no longer request a hold on Item #19 - Department of Public Safety - Arkansas State Police for Central Flying Service Inc.

Representative Wardlaw was then recognized and requested that the Arkansas Department of Education come forward to respond to questions on Exhibit F.12, Item #4, Pg. 26 - Department of Education, for Umbrella Security Solutions Corp. Ms. Courtney Salas-Ford, Chief of Staff, and Mr. Greg Rogers, Chief Fiscal Officer, Department of Education, came forward to respond.

After discussion, Co-Chair Gilmore recognized Senator Blake Johnson, as Co-Chair for the Review Subcommittee, to state his motion.

**Senator Blake Johnson moved that the report of the Review Subcommittee, including In-State Contracts #4, #5, and #6, be adopted, and to take up a separate vote for Out-of-State Contract #22. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.**

**Senator Blake Johnson then moved that Out-of-State Contract, Item #22 for the Department of Shared Administrative Services be adopted. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.**

#### State Insurance Programs Oversight Subcommittee

Co-Chair Gilmore recognized Senator Jim Petty, to present the report of the State Insurance Programs Oversight Subcommittee (Exhibit F.13). Senator Jim Petty reported the State Insurance Programs Oversight Subcommittee met on Wednesday, March 18, 2026. The Subcommittee heard an update on the United Healthcare rebid by the Employee Benefits Division, and a presentation on the Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug contracts, by The Segal Group. This concluded the report of the State Insurance Programs Oversight Subcommittee, and there were no questions.

**Senator Jim Petty moved that the report of the State Insurance Programs Oversight Subcommittee be adopted. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.**

Uniform Personnel Classification and Compensation Plan Subcommittee

Co-Chair Gilmore recognized Senator Breanne Davis to present the report of the Uniform Personnel Classification and Compensation Plan Subcommittee (Exhibit F.14). Senator Davis reported the Uniform Personnel Classification and Compensation Plan Subcommittee met on Wednesday, March 18, 2026, and heard all items listed in the report. Item 2 and Item 3 of the report received approval from the Subcommittee, as required by code, and all other items were reviewed. This concluded the report of the Uniform Personnel Classification and Compensation Plan Subcommittee. Co-Chair Gilmore recognized members for questions.

Mr. Hugh McDonald, Secretary, and Ms. Allison Hatfield, Chief of Staff, Department of Commerce, were recognized to respond to questions regarding a Reduction in Force (RIF).

Co-Chair Gilmore paused discussion on this matter and recognized Senator Ronald Caldwell for a point of personal privilege.

**Point of Personal Privilege**

Senator Caldwell recognized the Jr ROTC members from Wynne High School, located in Wynne, Arkansas, as they were in attendance to view a legislative meeting and to tour the Arkansas State Capitol. The students were welcomed by members and staff.

After the point of personal privilege, Co-Chair Gilmore continued with questions. Senator Missy Irvin was recognized for a motion.

**Senator Missy Irvin moved to adopt the Uniform Personnel Classification and Compensation Plan Subcommittee report and refer the matter of the Reduction in Force Report - Department of Commerce to the Joint Performance Review Subcommittee (JPR) for further discussion, concurrently with a motion for immediate consideration. The motions were seconded and passed by voice vote.**

**Review of Communications**

Co-Chair Gilmore referred members to the communications listed on the agenda as Items H.01 - H.09 and noted that action by Legislative Council was needed for Item H.01. A report may be given for Item H.3(a) - Arkansas Insurance Department.

**H.01 - Arkansas Public Employees Retirement System (APERS), Request to review investment summaries, submitted pursuant to A.C.A §19-69-101.**

- a. Neuberger Berman Real Estate Strategic Capital Fund, "RECAP"
- b. HarbourVest Private Equity Fund-of-One

**With no questions, Senator Jonathan Dismang moved to file the request from APERS, as reviewed. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.**

There were no questions or requests from members on the remaining reports.

**Adjournment**

At 10:31 a.m., the meeting was adjourned as there was no further business to come before the Legislative Council.

Respectfully submitted,

ATTEST:

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Senator Ben Gilmore  
Co-Chair, Senate

Marty Garrity  
Executive Secretary