

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Meeting Jointly
Wednesday, October 11, 2023
9:00 AM
Don Tyson Center for Agricultural Sciences, 1371 Altheimer Dr.
Fayetteville, Arkansas

Committee members present: Senators Ronald Caldwell, Chair; and Tyler Dees; Representatives Jack Fortner, Chair; Roger D. Lynch, Vice-Chair; Cameron Cooper, Denise Garner, Delia J. Haak, Ron McNair, Kendra Moore, Chad Puryear, and Danny Watson

Other members present: Senator Bryan King and Representative Jay Richardson

Senator Caldwell called the meeting to order.

University of Arkansas System

Dr. Deacue Fields, Vice President of Agriculture, discussed the research and extension efforts from the university's Division of Agriculture.

Discussion of Illinois River Watershed and Act 158 of 2023 [Exhibit C-C1]

Leif Kindberg, Executive Director, Illinois River Watershed Partnership, and Representative Delia Haak, House District 17, discussed the opportunities the Illinois River provides the state, along with the conservation efforts to preserve the watershed.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
Meeting Jointly
Tuesday, October 10, 2023
1:00 PM
Crossland Construction Training Room, 1800 S. 52nd St.
Rogers, Arkansas

Committee members present: Senators Ronald Caldwell, Chair; Tyler Dees, and Greg Leding; Representatives Jack Fortner, Chair; Roger D. Lynch, Vice-Chair; Cameron Cooper, Denise Garner, Delia J. Haak, Austin McCollum, Ron McNair, Kendra Moore, Chad Puryear and Danny Watson

Other members present: Senators Joshua Bryant, Jim Dotson, and Clint Penzo; Representatives Brit McKenzie and Aaron Pilkington

Representative Fortner called the meeting to order.

Consideration to Approve Meeting Minutes [Exhibit C]

Representative Fortner made a motion to approve the meeting minutes, seconded by Representative Garner, and the motion carried.

Place Based Economic Development [Exhibit D]

Dave Shideler, Chief Research Officer, Heartland Forward, and Katie Milligan, Program Director, Heartland Forward, gave an overview of the Heartland Forward program for entrepreneurship and innovation in Arkansas.

Greenhouse Outdoor Recreation Program

Phil Shellhamer, Director of the Greenhouse Outdoor Recreation Program for the Walton College of Business, University of Arkansas, discussed the process and success stories of businesses that went through the program.

Presentation and Tour of New Walmart Home Office [Exhibit F]

Cindi Marsiglio, SVP of Corporate Real Estate, Walmart, presented the vision of the new Walmart headquarters located in Bentonville. After the presentation, members toured the construction site of the future home office.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

MINUTES

HOUSE AND SENATE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Tuesday, May 23, 2023

2:00 PM

Oaklawn Event Center, 2705 Central Avenue
Hot Springs, Arkansas

Committee members present: Senators Ronald Caldwell, Co-Chair; Matt Stone, Vice-Chair; Tyler Dees, Ben Gilmore, and Fredrick J. Love; Representatives Jack Fortner, Co-Chair; Brandon Achor, Howard M. Beaty, Jr., Cameron Cooper, Bruce Cozart, Denise Garner, Steve Hollowell, Stephen Magie, Ron McNair, Danny Watson, and Carlton Wing

Other members present: Senators Linda Chesterfield, Alan Clark, Steve Crowell, Jim Dotson, and Matt McKee; Representatives Stan Berry, Vivian Flowers, Jack Ladyman, Rick McClure, Richard McGrew, David Ray, and Johnny Rye

Senator Caldwell called the meeting to order.

Consideration of a Motion to Ratify Special Expenses Incurred in Conjunction with the May 23, 2023, House and Senate Agriculture, Forestry & Economic Development Committee Meeting in Hot Springs, Arkansas

Without objection, the motion carried.

Consideration of a Motion to Authorize Chairs to Approve Special Expenses Incurred by the Committee

Without objection, the motion carried.

Presentation from Arkansas Economic Development Commission

Matt Twyford, Director, Community Development, gave a presentation regarding organizational structure and mission of the Arkansas Economic Development Commission.

Written Statement from Department of Agriculture [Exhibit F]

Representative Jack Fortner read a written statement from Wes Ward, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, regarding the recent changes to the State Plant Board structure.

Report from Entergy Arkansas

John Bethel, Director, Public Affairs and Ventrell Thompson, Vice-President, Customer Service, shared statewide customer concern about irrigation well activation and how those concerns are being addressed.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.