

SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON CITY, COUNTY, & LOCAL AFFAIRS
HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON CITY, COUNTY, & LOCAL AFFAIRS

MEETING JOINTLY

AUGUST 23, 2013
MINUTES

Senate and House Interim Committees on City, County, and Local Affairs met Friday, August 23, 2013 at 8:00 a.m. in Hot Springs, Arkansas. The meeting was held during the 2013 Annual Conference of the Association of Arkansas Counties.

Committee members present were Representatives David Fielding, House Chair, Eddie Armstrong, Bruce Cozart, Fonda Hawthorne, Monte Hodges, Mike Holcomb, Douglas House, Joe Jett, David Kizzia, Micah Neal, Mary Slinkard, David Whitaker, and Richard Womack.

Other members present were Senators Michael Lamoureux, and Jon Woods, also Representatives Denny Altus, Duncan Baird, Nate Bell, and Frederick Love.

"Aiming for the Stretch Run-Casting a Vision for Your County"

Committee members gathered in Horner Hall, Hot Springs Convention Center, for the General Session. Guest Speaker Mike Rainwater gave a presentation entitled, "Policy Governance Model" (Handout 1), based on a book by John Carver. Mr. Rainwater discussed policy governance as it relates to county government. He said this model defines the roles and functions of a board, or in the case of county government, the quorum court. The roles include organization and development of policies to facilitate the quorum court's accountability to the county government and the residents of the county. Mr. Rainwater then discussed information provided in his handout regarding the roles, responsibilities and functions of county government officials, which he explained in detail.

Johnson County Judge Mike Jacobs introduced Randolph County Circuit Clerk Debbie Wise, AAC Legislative Chair, to present the AAC Legislative Report for the 89th legislative Session. Ms. Wise said that a total of 3,490 Senate and House bills were introduced during the legislative Session. The AAC staff reviewed all the bills introduced during the 2013 Session to determine if they would have any impact on county government. Throughout the Session, the AAC staff tracked a total of 805 bills and resolutions. The legislative packet the AAC filed on behalf of counties contained 15 bills. Of the 15 bills filed, 13 were enacted and 2 failed. Ms. Wise said the AAC staff also assisted the County Judges' Association in passing 3 vital pieces of legislation dealing with annexations and detachments. Ms. Wise described

legislation which provided an additional \$2 million in 911 funding annually for locally underfunded programs. She said the General Assembly also created a study commission concerning the overall issue of 911 funding. She then discussed future goals the AAC is undertaking to ensure the growth and funding of county infrastructure. She thanked the legislative committees, legislative chairs, and elected officials who participated in the legislative process.

Johnson County Judge Mike Jacobs presented the AAC Retirement Committee Report. He said the APERS retirement system is sound and moving in the right direction. The employer contribution rate is currently 14.88%, with a projected decrease for fiscal year 2014. Judge Jacobs said the APERS retirement system ranks in the top 10% of publicly funded systems in the U.S.

Executive Director Chris Villines presented the AAC Director's Report. He expressed his thanks to all the participants of the conference. He introduced new AAC personnel Ms. Tammy Scarborough, Ms. Kim Mitchell, and Ms. Brandi McAllister, who will work in the Risk Management Division. He announced the expansion of the AAC office with the addition of a new 4,600 square foot extension. The new space will provide additional offices. Mr. Villines reported that a \$1 million dividend was realized from the Workers Compensation Trust. The Workers Compensation Trust provides coverage to 74 counties and 9 county-related entities. He reported on the Risk Management Trust Fund, which offers general liability programs with an auto protection program and a property insurance program. Currently 47 counties and approximately 400 volunteer fire departments participate in a mixture of the property and auto protection programs. Mr. Villines said the AAC has maintained an asset value of approximately \$11.4 million and all the AAC member programs are solvent. He thanked the members of the AAC Board of Directors and AAC staff.

The general session adjourned at 9:25 a.m.