MINUTES

# ARKANSAS INDEPENDENT CITIZENS COMMISSION

# April 24, 2018

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The Arkansas Independent Citizens Commission met on Tuesday, April 24, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. in room 151 of the State Capitol in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Commission members present: Chairman- Mr. Larry Ross, Vice Chair - Mr. Chuck Banks, Mr. Stuart Hill, Dr. Brenda James, Ms. Barbara Graves & Mr. Stephen Tipton.

Commission members absent: Mr. Mitch Berry

Also present: Ms. Nga Mahfouz, Assistant Attorney General and Ms. Melanie Jenkins with the Auditor of State’s office.

**Chairman Ross called the meeting to order**

Chairman Ross reminded the commission that from the outset in 2014 that the commissioner all agreed that there would be an open, honest, transparent and inclusive assessment processes with appropriate input from the public. He went on to say that the commission agreed they would have a ‘Vision to See, Courage to Act, and Faith to Trust one Another.’

**Consideration of minutes from the June 27, 2017 commission meeting**

A motion was made by Commissioner Graves to adopt the minutes as written, seconded by Commissioner James. The motion carried without objection.

Chairman Ross welcomed and invited Dr. John Shelnutt- Administrator for Economic Analysis and Tax Research, DFA to present his Economic Analysis.

**Dr. John Shelnutt- Administer for Economic Analysis and Tax Research, DFA**

Dr. Shelnutt gave an Economic overview. *(all handouts and charts can be found under Handouts 4/24/18 on the website)*

After questions, remarks and comments by the commissioners to Dr. Shelnutt, Chairman Ross then moved to the ‘Public Comments’ part of the agenda regarding salary adjustments and invited the following individuals for comments:

**John Dan Kemp- Chief Justice Supreme Court:**

Judge Kemp spoke in favor of a 3% Cost of Living Adjustments for member of the judiciary. *(letter to the commissioners can be found under Handouts 4/24/18 on the website)*

**Wiley Branton, Jr. Arkansas Judicial Council-** Spoke in favor of a 3% Cost of Living Adjustments for member of the judiciary. *(letter to the commissioners can be found under Handouts 4/24/18 on the website)*

**Bob McMahnn-Prosecutor Coordinator- Arkansas Prosecuting Attorneys Association**

They request that any COLA given to the judges also be passed along to the Prosecuting Attorneys as well.

**Arkansas District Judges Council -Clinton Casey Jones-** **President** Sent a letter to the Commissioners. (*letter to the commissioners can be found under Handouts 4/24/18 on the website)*

Chairman Ross then asked each commissioner to express their thoughts regarding the request from the various elected public servants. After each commissioner expressed their position and lastly before calling on Vice Chairman Chuck Banks, Chairman Ross expressed his appreciation to the commissioners and especially to Vice Chairman Banks for his wise counsel in helping to guide the commission’s work in a fair and equitable manner; further stating that the commission would not have been as successful without the valuable input from Vice Chairman Bank.

The Commission discussed in detail the adjusting of salaries for the Arkansas Constitutional Officers, the Judiciary, the Legislature, and the Prosecuting Attorneys A and B.

After some discussion Commissioner Graves made a motion to give a 3% Cost of Living increase across the board to everyone. Stuart Hill seconded. Motion passed without objection.

Chairman Ross asked advice and counsel from the Assistant Attorney General, Nga Mahfouz, Esq. on the proper needed procedures going forward. Assistant AG Mahfouz commented on the proper procedure including a notice period for the public to express any comments before the COLA could go forward. All the materials that the commission received will be made available to the public. All materials will be available on the Independent Citizens Commission website

Commissioners set forth there will be a 2 week Public Comment period before the Resolution is signed and filed with the Auditor of States office.

**Salary Resolution:**

Commissioner James made a motion that after the public comment period if there isn’t anything glaring, then the Chairman will sign the Resolution on behalf of the Commissioners and file with the Auditor’s Office. Vice Chairman Banks seconded. Motion passed without objection.

**Stipend for Commissioners**

Commissioner Tipton made a motion that the Stipend for the commission remain the same. Commissioner James seconded. Motion passed without objection.

**Next Meeting:**

Tentatively the next meeting will be September 11, 2018 9am the commission will discuss the Per diem for Legislators. Speaker of the House and Senate Pro Tempore will be invited to come and address the Commission if they so choose. The staff will make arrangements and get that information to the Commissioners and the Public.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

*Public comment can be made to the Commissioner’s via the website* [*https://citizenscommission.ar.gov*](https://citizenscommission.ar.gov)

*Handouts, public comments and complete audio of the meeting can be found at* [*https://citizenscommission.ar.gov*](https://citizenscommission.ar.gov)