

ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

January 9, 2015

ADMINISTRATIVE CIRCULAR NO. 2015-01

TO: ALL DIVISION HEADS AND DISTRICT ENGINEERS

We are transmitting herewith for your information and records a copy of the Minutes of the Commission Meetings in Little Rock, AR on December 17, 2014.

After making a careful review of these proceedings, please take appropriate action through designated lines of authority to forward the carrying out of any orders applying to your respective divisions and districts.



Scott E. Bennett
Director of Highways
and Transportation

c: Commission

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

December 17, 2014

Following is the record of proceedings of the Arkansas State Highway Commission in Little Rock, Arkansas, December 17, 2014. Members present were:

John Ed Regenold, Chairman
Dick Trammel, Vice Chairman
Thomas B. Schueck, Member
Robert S. Moore, Jr., Member
Frank D. Scott, Jr., Member

2014-138 IT IS ORDERED that a meeting of the Arkansas State Highway Commission be opened at 10:30 a.m., December 17, 2014.

2014-139 WHEREAS, the Purchasing Committee has awarded purchases on November 4 and 20, 2014, in the amount of \$1,672,154.00, and \$300,603.38, respectively, totaling \$1,972,757.38, and supply and service contracts, in accordance with authority previously conveyed, all of which have been documented by official minutes which are of record in the files of the Commission and Equipment and Procurement Division.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that the action of the Purchasing Committee be ratified and confirmed in all particulars.

2014-140 WHEREAS, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Materials Reference Laboratory (AMRL) is operated by AASHTO and is authorized and approved by the Executive Committee of AASHTO; and

WHEREAS, the services of the AMRL are necessary for the Department to establish and maintain proficiency in sampling and testing material; and

2014-140 - Continued

WHEREAS, the participation in funding the services of the AMRL supports the laboratory accreditation program and provides technical support in maintaining the AASHTO standards for materials testing; and

WHEREAS, the Department has received notice that its share of support for Fiscal Year 2015 is \$20,000.00.

NOW THEREFORE, the Director is hereby authorized to pay the Department's share of the cost of support for this AASHTO program for Fiscal Year 2015.

2014-141

WHEREAS, in consideration of the continuing need for maintaining the roadways of the State Highway System; and

WHEREAS, the maintenance of roadway surfaces and shoulders in many locations is such that routine maintenance cannot provide the desired pavement condition; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to place an asphalt seal on many miles of the State Highway System annually to extend the life and preserve the roadway surface;

NOW THEREFORE, the Director is authorized to issue an allotment for Calendar Year 2015 described as the "ANNUAL SEALING PROGRAM" in the amount of \$9,000,000 to cover the maintenance of roadway surfaces including asphalt surface treatments and leveling.

2014-142

WHEREAS, certain highway segments critical to the movement of traffic and goods represent priority needs for improvement; and

WHEREAS, the Districts are identifying selected routes in need of resurfacing or rehabilitating in order to extend the useful life of these roadways.

2014-142 - Continued

NOW THEREFORE, the Director is authorized to proceed with a resurfacing and rehabilitation program for 2015 in the amount of \$50 million.

2014-143

WHEREAS, some state highways are posted for weight restrictions below the maximum weight limits allowed by State law; and

WHEREAS, the "*Process for Establishing Roadway Maintenance Assessments on Weight Restricted Highways*" adopted by Minute Order 2008-011 proved to be a successful method for recovering damage costs to weight restricted highways and was extended by Minute Order 2013-122 until December 31, 2014; and

WHEREAS, an evaluation is underway to determine if the Roadway Maintenance Assessment payments by the permit applicants have been adequate to recover damage costs on the weight restricted highways.

NOW THEREFORE, the current agreements with permit holders set to expire on December 31, 2014, may be extended until January 31, 2015, for completion of the evaluation and establishment of a new and appropriate Roadway Maintenance Assessment schedule.

2014-144

WHEREAS, Arkansas Code Annotated 27-35-103 and 27-65-107 and Commission Minute Order No. 84-342 authorizes the Arkansas State Highway Commission and the Department's District Engineers to establish reduced weight limits and post appropriate signs on any route on the State Highway System; and

WHEREAS, during certain periods of the year, road conditions are favorable and such that reduced weight limits can be temporarily increased.

NOW THEREFORE, the Director is authorized to implement a policy to temporarily increase the reduced weight limits on all weight restricted routes, up to but not exceeding the maximum statutory axle and gross weight limits established by Arkansas Code Annotated 27-35-203 and 27-35-210, to allow travel for the following vehicles having an origin or final destination on said posted route(s):

2014-144 - Continued

- Vehicles, or combinations of vehicles, with five (5) axles hauling animal feed or unfinished and unprocessed farm products, forest products or other products of the soil, and
- Vehicles, or combinations of vehicles, which vehicles or combinations of vehicles have a total outside width in excess of 102” but not exceeding 108” used for hauling compacted seed cotton from the farm to the first point at which such seed cotton shall first undergo any processing, preparation for processing or transformation from its compacted state; and

FURTHERMORE, upon objectionable evidence of pavement deterioration attributed to these increased weights, the Department’s District Engineers are authorized to reinstate the previous weight restrictions in order to limit further deterioration.

2014-145

WHEREAS, the Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices authorizes the installation of General Service Signs on State highway right-of-way; and

WHEREAS, the Arkansas State Highway Commission desires to encourage continued economic activity in communities located on routes where the highway has been constructed on new location around the community.

NOW THEREFORE, the Director is authorized to implement a General Services Signing Program in accordance with the attached Policy for the Erection of General Service Signs.

2014-146

WHEREAS, IN CRAWFORD COUNTY, Minute Order 2008-096 authorized an access improvement feasibility study for the Interstate 40 interchange with Highway 59 in the City of Van Buren; and

WHEREAS, the Interstate 40/Highway 59 Interchange Improvement Study has been prepared and has identified feasible alternatives to accommodate current and future traffic through this interchange.

2014-146 - Continued

NOW THEREFORE, this study is adopted for use as a planning guide for scheduling future improvements in the area.

2014-147

WHEREAS, IN GARLAND AND SALINE COUNTIES, Commission Minute Order 69 of 1953 committed the Department to the construction of a freeway facility with full access control in the Highway 70 Corridor from Interstate 30 near Benton to Hot Springs in accordance with traffic needs and as funds become available, provided that local governments furnish all required right-of-way at no cost to the State; and

WHEREAS, Commission Minute Order 2008-115 authorized the update of the purpose and need document, including a determination of the most appropriate cross section, for widening of Highway 70 from the end of the four-lane divided section east of Hot Springs to the junction with Interstate 30 near Benton, a distance of approximately 19 miles; and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that a facility with four travel lanes and a flush paved median would meet the purpose and need for the project; and

WHEREAS, the County Judges in Garland and Saline Counties have expressed their support for the construction of a facility with four travel lanes and a flush paved median in the Highway 70 Corridor and have recently approved Court Orders to allow access for adjacent land owners.

NOW THEREFORE, Minute Order 69 of 1953, and any other Minute Orders not consistent with the terms herein, are hereby superseded and this updated purpose and need document is adopted for project development.

2014-148

WHEREAS, the Arkansas Strategic Highway Safety Plan (2013) identified enhancing pavement surface friction as a priority safety strategy; and

WHEREAS, an analysis of skid numbers and wet pavement crashes that occurred from 2009 through 2012 on ramps has been completed; and

2014-148 - Continued

WHEREAS, the analysis identified various ramps in the State where improving the pavement surface friction would provide substantial safety benefits; and

WHEREAS, this work is eligible for Federal-aid Safety funds.

NOW THEREFORE, the Director is authorized to proceed with plans and construction of projects to enhance pavement surface friction at the locations shown on the attached list and map as funds become available.

2014-149

WHEREAS, the Arkansas State Highway Commission received bids on the following projects at the December 17, 2014 letting;

JOB NO.	DISTRICT	COUNTY	JOB NAME	ROUTE	APHN
BB0112	01	ST. FRANCIS	FISHING LAKE STR. & APPRS. (S)	40	Y
030427	03	SEVIER	HWY. 70B/HWY. 41/HWY. 329 SIGNAL REHAB. (DE QUEEN) (S)	VAR	Y
050230	05	FULTON	HWY. 9-SO. OF HWY. 342 (MAMMOTH SPRING) (S)	63	Y
061277	06	PULASKI	UNION PACIFIC RR STR. & APPRS. (ROOSEVELT RD.) (LR) (S)	70	Y
070240	07	CLARK	OUACHITA RIVER STR. & APPRS. (ARKADELPHIA) (S)	51	Y
070344	07	CLARK	GURDON-OAK GROVE STRS. & APPRS. (S)	67	Y
080484	08	POPE	HOB NOB RD.-CENTER VALLEY RD. (S)	124 & 326	Y
BB0902	09	BENTON	HWY. 264 INTCHNG. IMPVTS. (S)	49	Y
CA0907	09	BENTON	HWY. 112-I-49 (S)	412	Y
090169	09	NEWTON	JASPER-CO. RD. 46 (PASSING LANES) (S)	7	Y
090319	09	BAXTER	HWY. 62-HWY. 5 (MOUNTAIN HOME) (S)	201	Y
FA0313	09	BAXTER	HWY. 341 SOUTHEAST-STONE CO. LINE (PHASE 1) (S)	---	-

and

WHEREAS, a thorough bid review and analysis is undertaken by the Department to ensure that only those projects are awarded which are judged to be in the best interests of the State; and

WHEREAS, the right is retained to reject any or all proposals, to waive technicalities, or to advertise for new proposals, also as judged to be in the best public interests of the State; and

WHEREAS, the Commission desires to expedite work on these important projects; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Arkansas Constitution, Amendment 42, Section 6, as well as other laws of this State, the Commission has the authority to delegate certain of its powers to the Director of Highways and Transportation.

NOW THEREFORE, upon the Contractors furnishing the necessary performance and payment bonds and submitting all additional information required for the above mentioned projects, the Director is hereby authorized to enter into contracts and supplemental agreements for any projects deemed to be in the best interests of the State. Further, the Director is authorized to reject any or all proposals, to waive technicalities, and/or to advertise for new proposals whenever deemed to be in the best interests of the State.

2014-150

JOHN ED REGENOLD
Commissioner Emeritus

WHEREAS, ten years have passed since January 2005, and with their passing will cause to expire in January 2015, your term as a Member of the Arkansas State Highway Commission, we the undersigned, your friends and fellow Commissioners, those who will miss your comradeship, sound counsel, and words of encouragement, wish for your future the best of everything. We wish to recognize you for your tireless efforts and acclaim your devotion to the service of this Commission. Your personal contributions over the past ten years have promoted progress and economic growth in this Great State through sound planning and the application of business principles in the planning, construction, and maintenance of our overall State Highway System; and

WHEREAS, because of the imminent loss of the aforementioned knowledge and service to this Commission, these members, acting in their best interest, do herewith, through this instrument, serve formal notice that you are hereby directed and expected to continue to serve this Commission and the State of Arkansas.

NOW THEREFORE, with high esteem, we do hereby bestow upon you, ad infinitum, the title "Commissioner Emeritus."

MOTION Vice Chairman Dick Trammel moved, Commissioner Tom Schueck seconded and the motion passed to approve the Minutes of November 5, 2014.

MOTION The Commission approved a Minute Order on October 30, 2013, authorizing the Department to advertise for consultant services for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation and schematic design on Job CA0602, Interstate 530 to Highway 67 (Widening & Reconstruction) (I-30 & I-40) (F). Commissioner Frank D. Scott, Jr. moved, Vice Chairman Dick Trammel seconded, and the motion passed to accept the Staff's recommendation to enter into negotiations with the firm of CH2M HILL of Orlando, FL.

Chairman John Ed Regenold stepped down as Chairman to allow the Commission to select a new Chairman.

MOTION Commissioner Tom Schueck moved, Commissioner Robert S. Moore, Jr. seconded and the motion passed to elect Vice Chairman Dick Trammel as the new Chairman of the Arkansas State Highway Commission.

MOTION Commissioner Frank D. Scott, Jr. moved, Commissioner Robert S. Moore, Jr. seconded and the motion passed to elect Commissioner Tom Schueck as the new Vice Chairman of the Arkansas State Highway Commission.

OTHER DISCUSSION ITEMS

Director Scott Bennett recognized new staff positions based on recent promotions: Lorie Tudor as the new Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer, Emanuel Banks is the new Deputy Director and Chief Engineer, Kevin Thornton is the new Assistant Chief Engineer for Planning, Tony Sullivan is the new Assistant Chief Engineer for Operations, and Gill Rogers is the Section Head of Policy and Legislative Analysis.

Director Scott Bennett recognized Sharon Hawkins, Section Head of Mapping and Graphics in the Department's Transportation Planning and Policy Division, as having received an award from the Association of Transportation Safety Information Professionals for Best Practices in Traffic Records-Data Visualization. Sharon was also recently appointed to the Arkansas Geographic Information Systems Board by Governor Mike Beebe.

Larry Dickerson, Chief Fiscal Officer, provided the November 2014 update on state highway revenue. Mr. Dickerson noted that state highway revenues to the Department from most traditional sources are up a total of \$6.0 million in the first five months of State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2015 compared to the same period for SFY 2014. With the revenue from the Natural Gas Severance Tax coming in higher for the first five months of this year compared to last year, total revenues available are \$11.2 million higher for this year. Actual state revenue received is also \$11.0 million higher compared to projected (budgeted) revenue for this year.

In closing, Mr. Dickerson stated that November revenue from the 0.5% General Sales Tax for the Connecting Arkansas Program was 2.0% higher (\$0.3 million) than projected by the Department of Finance and Administration (DF&A). This revenue source has come in under DF&A's projections for eleven of the seventeen months since the tax went into effect, and is cumulatively 1.1%, or \$2.4 million, under DF&A's projections to date.

Director Bennett provided the latest information on the Federal highway and transit funding issues. Director Bennett noted that the Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014 (H.R. 5021) is a temporary patch to the Highway Trust Fund. It allows states to be reimbursed for projects until roughly May 2015, and it extends MAP-21 funding authorization and policies for highway, mass transit, and safety programs through May 31, 2015.

Director Bennett stated that some states are already cutting back on their Federally-supported capital projects in order to stabilize and protect their cash flow in the event Congress does not act before May 2015. Beginning with the jobs scheduled for the January letting, the Department will review projects to possibly be delayed until the funding crisis is resolved.

Director Bennett gave an update on the status of the 2011 Interstate Rehabilitation Program (IRP), Connecting Arkansas Program (CAP), and State Aid City Street Program. The 2011 Interstate Rehabilitation Program was approved by Arkansas voters in November 2011. Under this program, the Commission has the authority to issue up to \$575 million in GARVEE bonds for Interstate rehabilitation. The first was sold in September 2012 at a par value of \$197 million (true interest cost of 1.6%) with a premium of \$33 million (total of \$230 million available for construction). The second was sold in October 2013 at a par value of \$172 million (true interest cost of 2.2%) with a premium of \$29 million (total of \$201 million available for construction). The third was sold in November 2014 at a par value of \$206 million (true interest cost of 2.1%) with a premium of \$37 million (total of \$243 million available for construction).

The Connecting Arkansas Program was approved by Arkansas voters in November 2012. Under this program, the Commission has the authority to issue up to \$1.3 billion in revenue bonds for four-lane highway construction. The first series of bonds was sold in September 2013 at a par value of \$469 million (true interest cost of 3.1%) with a premium of \$25 million (total of \$494 million available for construction).

With the approval of the 0.5% Sales Tax for the Connecting Arkansas Program, 1 cent in motor fuel tax revenue (approximately \$20 million annually) is being set aside for a State Aid City Street Program. Projects are selected by the State Aid City Street Committee and are designed, let to contract, and inspected by the Department.

Aaron Robinson, Regional Governor for the Arkansas State Chapter of American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) provided the Commission with a 2014 Report Card for Arkansas' Infrastructure. The purpose of the report card is to present to the public, in a simple A-F grade format, their assessment of the condition of our infrastructure, including roads, bridges, transit, drinking water, wastewater, levees, and dams. The report card also includes their recommendations on ways to raise those grades.

2014-151

IT IS ORDERED that a meeting of the Arkansas State Highway Commission be closed at 11:50 a.m., December 17, 2014.

I hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken by the Arkansas Highway Commission at its meeting on December 17, 2014.


Lindy H. Williams
Commission Secretary