

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

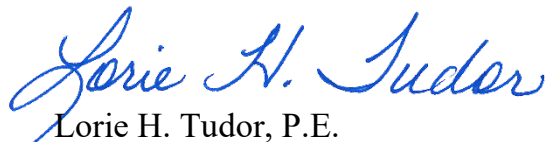
September 1, 2021

ADMINISTRATIVE CIRCULAR NO. 2021-12

TO: DIVISION HEADS AND DISTRICT ENGINEERS

We are transmitting herewith for your information and records a copy of the Minutes of the Commission Meeting in Little Rock, AR on July 28, 2021.

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.


Lorie H. Tudor, P.E.
Director

c: Commission

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

July 28, 2021

Following is the record of proceedings of the Arkansas State Highway Commission in Little Rock, Arkansas, July 28, 2021. Members present were:

Robert S. Moore, Jr., Chairman
Alec Farmer, Vice Chairman
Philip Taldo, Member
Keith Gibson, Member
Marie Holder, Member (via WebEx)

2021-051

IT IS ORDERED that a meeting of the Arkansas State Highway Commission be opened at 10:00 a.m., July 28, 2021.

2021-052

WHEREAS, the Purchasing Committee has awarded purchases on June 16, June 25, and June 30, 2021 totaling \$131,670.00, 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.

2021-053

WHEREAS, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) has requested the Department's participation in the Fiscal Year 2022 AASHTO Engineering Technical Service Programs; and

WHEREAS, these programs provide benefits to the member departments through the pooling of resources and expertise from across the country; and

WHEREAS, the benefits include technical services in a wide variety of areas, pooled resources for a common goal, and reducing duplication of effort; and

WHEREAS, these memberships include the Development of AASHTO Materials Standards (DAMS); Equipment Management Technical Services Program (EMTSP); Highway Safety Policy and Management Technical Service Program (SAFETY); Load and Resistance Factor Design (LRFD) Bridges and Structures Specification Maintenance; National Transportation Product Evaluation Program (NTPEP); National Operations Center of Excellence (NOCoe); Transportation Curriculum Coordination Council (TC3); Transportation System Preservation Technical Service Program (TSP2); Transportation and Civil Engineering (TRAC) and Roadways Into Developing Elementary Students (RIDES); and Transportation Performance Management (TPM); and

WHEREAS, these programs are regarded as highly beneficial to the Department in order to exchange ideas, information, and best practices with other highway agencies.

NOW THEREFORE, the Director is authorized to utilize State Planning and Research funds to pay annual membership dues for participation in these programs.

2021-054

WHEREAS, Act 1176 of 2013 enacted a 15% registration fee increase on certain commercial vehicles registered under the International Registration Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Act provides for the first \$2 million collected under the fee increase each year to be set aside for a Commercial Truck Safety and Education Fund; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of this program is to advance state interests in roadway safety by improving the safety of the commercial truck industry through cooperative public-private programs that focus on increased enforcement, regulatory compliance, industry training, and educational programs to ensure the safe movement of goods on Arkansas' roadways; and

WHEREAS, proposals for eligible projects have been solicited, received, reviewed, and evaluated by the Arkansas Commercial Truck Safety and Education Program (ACTSEP) Committee; and

WHEREAS, the ACTSEP Committee has recommended awarding Commercial Truck Safety and Education Funds for the projects as presented on the attached report.

NOW THEREFORE, the Director is authorized to proceed with the award of these funds to the appropriate applicants to implement these projects.

2021-055

WHEREAS, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment - Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) will provide coverage for in-stream activities on construction projects where ARDOT maintains direct operational control; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Arkansas Pollution Control and Ecology Commission (APC&EC) Rule 2305, DEQ hereby authorizes ARDOT's short term activity authorizations located within the state of Arkansas that are initiated, implemented, and maintained in compliance with the terms of the MOA and any other applicable federal or state laws; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Ark. Code Ann. § 8-4-234(b)(4)(A), the MOA creates an alternative payment structure for short term activity authorizations in lieu of statutory fees for short term activity authorizations issued by DEQ to ARDOT. The alternative payment structure is that for each fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2021, ARDOT shall pay \$32,623.50; and

WHEREAS, to maintain coverage under this MOA, ARDOT shall submit bi-annual reports on or before June 30th and December 31st of each year. DEQ and ARDOT will review the MOA annually and modify each fiscal year as needed. Any proposed revisions must be put in writing and will take effect when the revised MOA is signed by DEQ and ARDOT.

NOW THEREFORE, the Director is authorized to enter into an agreement with the Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment - Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for the purpose of expediting the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) short term in-stream activity authorizations on construction projects.

2021-056

WHEREAS, the Arkansas Strategic Highway Safety Plan (2017) identified the need for enhancing traffic safety analysis techniques and tools to aid in the determination of countermeasures to improve safety on the state highway system; and

WHEREAS, the Department currently lacks a single, fully integrated roadway safety management system that can assist in the analysis and reporting for the Department's safety management process; and

WHEREAS, modern safety analysis software would benefit the Department by enhancing and streamlining current processes, improving the timeliness and accuracy of safety data analyses, and improving the efficiency of Department staff; and

WHEREAS, roadway safety management systems are eligible for Federal-aid Safety funds.

NOW THEREFORE, the Director is authorized to solicit and evaluate proposals for the development and implementation of a roadway safety management system.

2021-057

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the Department to provide timely studies and develop projects to address safety needs; and

WHEREAS, on-call service contracts have been found to be an effective method of producing timely services and supplementing in-house capabilities.

NOW THEREFORE, the Director is authorized to request proposals, select consultant engineering firms qualified to perform safety studies and engineering services, and enter into any necessary contracts as needs are identified for Federal Fiscal years 2022 through 2024.

2021-058

WHEREAS, the Department currently uses computer software systems to assist with the administration of Department employees, including the processing of employee compensation; and

WHEREAS, the existing systems rely heavily on paper manual processes that are inefficient and time consuming; and

WHEREAS, due to the age of the existing systems, the computer software is antiquated and has little room for enhancement or modernization; and

WHEREAS, the implementation of a modern, cloud-based Human Resources Information System (HRIS) will improve efficiencies in the Department's human resources and payroll processes and workflows; and

WHEREAS, implementation of a HRIS will also support enhanced data-driven decisions which will improve workforce administration.

NOW THEREFORE, the Director is authorized to issue a Request for Proposals to retain the services of a qualified consultant to implement a HRIS for the Department.

2021-059

WHEREAS, the 93rd General Assembly of the State of Arkansas enacted Act 884 during the 2021 Regular Session, which amended the Transportation-Related Research Grant Program to include transportation-related workforce development to create the Transportation-Related Research and Workforce Development Grant Program (TRRWDGP); and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the TRRWDGP is to support the study of transportation related materials to support industry training, apprenticeships, and educational programs that foster skills required for transportation related personnel development; and

WHEREAS, the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) is responsible for administration of the TRRWDGP; and

WHEREAS, ARDOT shall use these funds for distributing grants under the TRRWDGP to publicly funded institutions of higher education for transportation related research and workforce development; and

WHEREAS, as required by Act 884, the attached amended rules for administering this program shall be promulgated.

NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to Arkansas law, the Director is authorized to promulgate these amended rules to implement the TRRWDGP.

2021-060

WHEREAS, Act 1085 of 2017 authorizes the issuance of a special permit to allow agricultural trucks carrying agronomic or horticultural products to have a total gross weight of up to one hundred thousand (100,000) pounds, under certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, rules have been promulgated to implement the permit issuance, including without limitation, the criteria required to qualify for the issuance of the special permit; and

WHEREAS, certain changes in the promulgated rules are deemed necessary and desirable.

NOW THEREFORE, the Director is authorized to promulgate the amended Rule 19 – Permits for Overweight Vehicles Carrying Agronomic or Horticultural Products in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act for submission to the Administrative Rules and Regulations Subcommittee of the Arkansas Legislative Council for its review and approval.

2021-061

WHEREAS, the Arkansas Department of Transportation (Department) owns and operates a King Air B200 aircraft for the transportation of passengers in order to accomplish official Department business; and

WHEREAS, the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) has expressed interest in entering into an agreement for use of the Department's King Air B200 aircraft to transport their officials and doctors to accomplish official UAMS business and to provide medical services at facilities outside of central Arkansas; and

WHEREAS, this agreement is beneficial to the Department, UAMS and to those receiving medical treatment from UAMS officials and doctors at facilities outside of central Arkansas.

NOW THEREFORE, the Director is authorized to enter into an agreement with UAMS to provide use of the Department's King Air B200 aircraft to transport their officials and doctors to accomplish official UAMS business at facilities outside of central Arkansas.

2021-062

WHEREAS, Act 1019 of 2019 granted the Commission authority to procure qualification based, Construction Manager-General Contractor (CMGC) services to implement the CMGC Method of Procurement Pilot Program; and

WHEREAS, the CMGC alternative project delivery method provides value to the Department by including a construction contractor to participate in a project's pre-construction activities and thereby encouraging innovation, reducing risk, improving design, improving cost certainty, and optimizing construction schedules; and

WHEREAS, selection of the Contractors for CMGC projects is qualifications-based using the criteria listed in Arkansas Code Annotated § 19-11-1406.

NOW THEREFORE, the Director is authorized to request and evaluate proposals and enter into any necessary contracts and agreements with firms for on-call Construction Manager-General Contractor (CMGC) services on assigned CMGC projects for calendar years 2021 through 2024.

2021-063

WHEREAS, the Arkansas State Highway Commission (Commission) owns property in Saline County, Arkansas, acquired in 1998 by Warranty Deed from T.O. Voyles and Gertrude Voyles, husband and wife, which is contiguous to State Highway 5 and Alcoa Road; and

WHEREAS, this property is now necessary for Job No. 61508, I-30 – Alcoa Road, and which property the Commission now holds as a capital asset, being in Saline County, more fully described as:

Part of the Northeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 30, Township 1 South, Range 14 West, Saline County, Arkansas, more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at a point being used as the Northeast Sixteenth Corner of Section 30; thence South $87^{\circ}51'42''$ East along the South line of the Northeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 30 a distance of 1,274.08 feet to a point on the Westerly right of way line of Alcoa Road as established by ARDOT Job 061508 for the POINT OF BEGINNING; thence North $14^{\circ}48'16''$ West along said right of way line a distance of 139.48 feet to a point; thence North $02^{\circ}59'17''$ East a distance of 43.10 feet to a point on the Southerly right of way line of Arkansas State Highway 5 as established by AHTD Job 060818; thence South $59^{\circ}00'13''$ East along said right of way line a distance of 58.39 feet to a point; thence South

01°05'13" East along said right of way line a distance of 148.58 feet to a point on the South line of the Northeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 30; thence North 87°51'42" West along said South line a distance of 19.49 feet to the point of beginning and containing 0.14 acres more or less as shown on plans prepared by the ARDOT referenced as Job 061508.

NOW THEREFORE, the character of the above-described property is hereby changed from capital asset to that of right of way, hereafter designated as a part of Tract No. 41, Job No. 061508; a copy of this Minute Order shall, if required, be recorded in the Circuit Clerk and Recorder's office of Saline County, Arkansas, and the right of way shall, if necessary, be remonumented.

2021-064

WHEREAS, the Arkansas State Highway Commission (Commission) acquired property known as Tract No. 519R, Job No. 1534-5, from John Provenzano and Alicia N. Provenzano, husband and wife, by Warranty Deed dated March 4, 1985, and filed of record on March 22, 1985, as Book 632, Page 872, in the Circuit Clerk's office for Benton County, Arkansas; and

WHEREAS, the property was purchased as a capital asset for the sum of EIGHT THOUSAND and NO/100 DOLLARS (\$8,000.00) and is not subject to re-acquisition by a prior owner pursuant to Ark. Code Ann § 27-67-322; and

WHEREAS, the District Engineer for District Nine has determined that Tract No. 519R is not now, nor in the foreseeable future will be, needed for highway purposes. The property is more particularly described as follows:

Part of the Northwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 21, Township 20 North, Range 30 West, Benton County, Arkansas, more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at the Southeast corner of the Northwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 21; thence South 89° 23' 01" West along the South line thereof a distance of 112.55 feet to a point on the Easterly existing right of way line of Relocated U. S. Highway 71; thence North 14° 27' 37" West along said existing right of way line a distance of 289.97 feet to a point; thence North 04° 27' 03" West along said existing right of way line a distance of 318.38 feet to a point; thence North 00° 14' 50" West along said existing right of way line a distance of 563.73 feet to a point; thence North 01° 28' 16" East along said existing right of way line a distance of 161.90 feet to a point on the North line of the Northwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 21; thence North 88° 55' 14" East

along the North line of the Northwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 21 a distance of 183.40 feet to the Northeast corner of the Northwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 21; thence South 01° 03' 41" East along the East line of the Northwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 21 a distance of 1326.24 feet to the point of point beginning and containing 5.54 acres, more or less.

WHEREAS, Christopher P. Crossland of Bentonville, Arkansas has offered to purchase the above-described real property for the sum of SIX HUNDRED SIXTY-SEVEN THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED FIFTY and NO/100 DOLLARS (\$667,850.00). Three (3) qualified appraisers have opined that the current fair market value of Tract No. 519R, Job No. 1534-5, is the same amount as the purchase price.

NOW THEREFORE, the above-described property is declared surplus and upon receipt and consideration of the sum of SIX HUNDRED SIXTY-SEVEN THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED FIFTY and NO/100 DOLLARS (\$667,850.00) from Mr. Crossland, the Chairman of the Commission is authorized and directed to execute a Quitclaim Deed conveying the right, title, interest or equity of the above-described property to ROC Complex Property, LLC; and hereby releasing the same from the State Highway System, that the Right of Way Division is directed and authorized to record a copy of this Minute Order and the Quitclaim Deed in the records of Benton County, Arkansas; and, if necessary, the right of way shall be remonumented to reflect the boundaries designated herein. Any Federal-aid funds from this disposal shall be credited to Federal-aid funds or otherwise credited as permitted by federal law.

2021-065

WHEREAS, the Arkansas State Highway Commission (Commission) acquired property known as Tract No. 9R, Job No. 070150, from First State Bank of Warren, by Warranty Deed dated September 14, 2000, and filed of record on October 13, 2000, as Volume GE, Page 650, in the Circuit Clerk's office for Bradley County, Arkansas; and

WHEREAS, Len E. Blaylock, III of Warren, Arkansas has requested to purchase Tract No. 9R, Job No. 070150, which the District Engineer for District 7 has determined is not now, nor in the foreseeable future will be, needed for highway purposes except for the abutter's right to Highway 278 which the Commission shall retain; and WHEREAS, Tract No. 9R was acquired as surplus property by the Commission and is exempt from reacquisition by the former owners under Ark. Code Ann. § 27-67-322. Mr. Blaylock offered to purchase the tract for

THREE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIVE AND NO/100 DOLLARS (\$325.00), representing the Fair Market Value by three Commission appraisers. WHEREAS, the Commission acquired Tract No. 9R for EIGHT THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED AND NO/100 DOLLARS (\$8,500.00), which the tract is more particularly described as follows:

Part of the Northwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 4, Township 13 South, Range 9 West, Bradley County, Arkansas, more particularly described as follows:

Starting at the Northeast Corner of the Northwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 4; thence South 00° 20' 03" West along the East line thereof a distance of 239.46 feet to a point on the Southerly existing right of way line of U.S. Highway 278; thence in a Westerly direction along said existing right of way line on a curve to the left having a radius of 11,400.05 feet a distance of 213.24 feet to a point; thence South 00° 20' 03" West a distance of 25.97 feet to a point on the Southerly proposed right of way line of U.S. Highway 278 for the point of beginning; thence continue South 00° 20' 03" West a distance of 75.42 feet to a point on the Northerly existing right of way line of Old Monticello Road; thence in a Westerly direction along said existing right of way line on a curve to the left having a radius of 7679.37 feet a distance of 260.21 feet to a point; thence North 02° 10' 33" West along said existing right of way line a distance of 20.06 feet to a point on the Southerly proposed right of way line of U.S. Highway 278; thence South 80° 58' 56" East along said proposed right of way line a distance of 220.15 feet to a point; thence South 71° 08' 49" East along said proposed right of way line a distance of 26.09 feet to the point of beginning and containing 0.27 acre more or less.

NOW THEREFORE, the above-described property is declared surplus and upon receipt and consideration of the sum of THREE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIVE AND NO/100 DOLLARS (\$325.00) from Len E. Blaylock, III of Warren, Arkansas, the Chairman of the Commission is authorized and directed to execute a Quitclaim Deed conveying the right, title, interest or equity of the above-described properties excepting access to Highway 278 to Len E. Blaylock, III; and hereby releasing the same from the State Highway System, that the Right of Way Division is directed and authorized to record a copy of this Minute Order and the Quitclaim Deed in the records of Bradley County, Arkansas; and, if necessary, the right of way shall be remonumented to reflect the boundaries designated herein. Any Federal-Aid funds from this disposal shall be credited to Federal-Aid funds or otherwise credited as permitted by Federal Law.

2021-066

WHEREAS, by Resolution dated April 5, 2021, the City Council of Chidester has requested that the portion of Highway 24 between the eastern and western city limits of Chidester, be designated as the “Hesley Box, Jr. Memorial Highway”; and

WHEREAS, the Arkansas Highway Commission has adopted guidelines for the installation of commemorative signs by Minute Order 2014-023 and this request meets these guidelines.

NOW THEREFORE, the Director is authorized to permit the installation of signs on each end of this portion of highway, as requested by the City, in accordance with Commission Policy.

2021-067

WHEREAS, the Arkansas State Highway Commission will accept bids on the following projects in the August 11, 2021 letting; and

JOB NO.	DISTRICT	COUNTY	JOB NAME	ROUTE	APHN
110728	01	MONROE & ST. FRANCIS	Brinkley – Crittenden Co. Line (Sel. Secs.) (S)	70	Y
020786	02	ASHLEY	Hwys. 133 & 169 (Sel. Secs.) (Crossett) (S)	133 & 169	Y
050413	05	CLEBURNE	Cadron Creek Str. & Apprs. (S)	25	Y
061662	06	LONOKE	England – Keo (S)	165	Y
061710	06	PULASKI	Fairfax Dr. – Hwy. 70 (NLR) (S)	161	Y
101062	10	CRAIGHEAD	HWY. 18/QUALITY WAY SIGNAL (JONESBORO) (S)	18	Y
SA0143	02	ARKANSAS	Hwy. 44 – South (Overlay) (S)	---	-
SA1557	08	CONWAY	Conway Co. Overlay & Surfacing (S)	---	-
SA2947	03	HEMPSTEAD	Co. Rd. 2 Overlay (S)	---	-
FA5309	08	PERRY	Hwy. 155 – East (Phase 3) (S)	---	-

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 Amendment 42 of the Arkansas Constitution, Section 6, as well as other laws of this State, the Commission has the authority to delegate certain 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.

FURTHERMORE, 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.

Chairman Moore opened the meeting by welcoming those in attendance in-person, as well as those who were watching online.

MOTIONS

MOTION Vice Chairman Alec Farmer moved, Commissioner Philip Taldo seconded and the motion passed to authorize the use of electronic signatures for the July 28, 2021 Minute Orders.

MOTION Vice Chairman Alec Farmer moved, Commissioner Philip Taldo seconded and the motion passed to approve the Minutes from the June 16, 2021 Commission Meeting.

MOTION The Commission approved Minute Order 2020-102 on December 9, 2020, authorizing the Department to enter into any necessary contracts and agreements with consulting firms to provide on-call right of way acquisition services. Commissioner Keith Gibson moved, Vice Chairman Alec Farmer seconded and the motion passed to accept the Staff's recommendation to enter into negotiations with the following firms:

Appraisal and Appraisal Review Services:

- Arkansas Appraisal Associates (Appraisal only) – Little Rock, AR
- JLL Valuations & Advisory Services, LLC – Houston, TX
- Milestone Valuation (Appraisal only) – Oklahoma City, OK
- Reed and Associates, Inc. – Fayetteville, AR
- Richard A. Stephens and Associates, Inc. – Little Rock, AR

Appraisal, Appraisal Review, Negotiation, and Relocation Assistance Services:

- Ridge Point Consultants, LLC – Meadville, MS

Appraisal, Appraisal Review, Negotiation, Relocation Assistance and Property Management Services:

- Contract Land Staff, LLC – Tulsa, OK

Negotiation and Relocation Assistance Services:

- Universal Field Services, Inc. – Tulsa, OK

All service areas – Title & Closing, Appraisal, Appraisal Review, Negotiation, Relocation Assistance, and Property Management Services:

- Briggs Field Services, Inc. – Little Rock, AR
- O. R. Colan Associates, LLC – Little Rock, AR
- Pinnacle Consulting Management Group, Inc. – North Little Rock, AR
- Volkert, Inc. – Little Rock, AR

MOTION

The Commission approved Minute Order 2019-078 on July 24, 2019, authorizing the Department to advertise a Request for Proposals for Progressive Design Builder for Job 110652, Interstates 40/55 & Highway 77 Interchange in West Memphis, Arkansas. Vice Chairman Alec Farmer moved, Commissioner Philip Taldo seconded and the motion passed to accept the Staff's recommendation to enter into a contract with the following firm:

- Key, LLC – Madison, MS

OTHER DISCUSSION ITEMS

Patrick Patton, Chief Fiscal Officer, provided the June 2021 update on State Highway Revenue. This is the year-end report for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2021. Mr. Patton noted that State Highway Revenues to the Department from traditional sources are up a total of 3.1% (\$12.9 million) in the SFY 2021 compared to SFY 2020. Revenue from the Natural Gas Severance Tax is higher this year compared to last year. Total revenues available are 2.7% (\$11.9 million) above last year. Actual State Revenue received is 7.6% (\$30.8 million) above projected (budgeted) revenue for this year. Mr. Patton stated that June revenue from the 0.5% General Sales Tax for the Connecting Arkansas Program was

17.16% higher, (\$2,995,941) than projected by the Department of Finance and Administration (DF&A) for the month. Year to date actual revenue is above projections by 13.81% (\$28,077,501). Since inception, this revenue source is 1.67%, or \$24.5 million, above DF&A's projections.

Kevin Thornton, Assistant Chief of Administration, updated the Commission on the status of Federal Highway and Transit funding issues. Since the June 16 meeting, two of the seven proposed funding plans have risen to the top. These plans are the Senate Bipartisan G21 Plan and the House INVEST Act. The President and a bipartisan group of 21 Senators agreed upon the framework for the Senate Bipartisan G21 Plan. It includes \$579 billion in new funding across many areas of infrastructure, including transit, rail, airports, electric vehicles, ports, water, broadband, and other areas. Specifically, it increases funding approximately 30% for roads, bridges and safety. When combined with the existing baseline funding, this plan totals \$1.2 trillion over 8 years. Negotiations were still underway. The second plan, The House INVEST Act has already passed out of the US House of Representatives, and will provide \$715 billion over 5 years when combined with the existing baseline funding. This plan increases funding by 37% for roads, bridges and safety. At the time of this meeting, Congress and the President have 64 calendar days remaining before the FAST Act expires at the end of September. Thornton also updated the Commission on the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grants. Previously, the Department had applied for three grants. Thornton reported that none of the applications was selected for funding.

Rex Vines, Deputy Director and Chief Engineer provided an update to the repairs on the I-40 Mississippi River Bridge. Director Tudor briefed the Commission on the ongoing investigations of the Department's inspection process. Currently, there are two ongoing investigations as part of the US Department of Transportation. At the National level, the Federal Highway Administration is conducting a compliance assessment of the Bridge Program. At the end of their assessment, they will provide recommendations for best practices, recommendations for changes within the Program. The FHWA will also include in their assessment the areas in which the Program is performing well. Completion of the final report is expected in September 2021. In addition to the FHWA's assessment, The Office of Inspector General is conducting an investigation into the bridge inspector's failure to detect and report the fracture on the bridge. Internally, the Department has begun conducting their own investigations through the Maintenance and the Human Resources Divisions. The Commission will be briefed on the results of this investigation once the federal investigation have been completed.

Director Tudor presented a list of upcoming meetings and events that the Director will be attending.

2021-068

IT IS ORDERED that a meeting of the Arkansas State Highway Commission be closed at 11:00 a.m., July 28, 2021.

I hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken by the Arkansas State Highway Commission at its meeting on July 28, 2021.

Christie Heidelberg
Commission Secretary