

**APPROVED MAY 24, 2017**

# **EXHIBIT B**

## **MINUTES**

### **ALC-GAME/FISH/STATE POLICE SUBCOMMITTEE SENATE AND HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Meeting Jointly  
Thursday, December 15, 2016**

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The ALC-Game and Fish/State Police Subcommittee, and the Senate and House Interim Committees on Agriculture, Forestry, and Economic Development met jointly on Thursday, December 15, 2016, at 2:00 p.m., Room A, Multi-Agency Complex Building (MAC), Little Rock, Arkansas.

**ALC Game and Fish/State Police Members Present:** Senators Scott Flippo, Jimmy Hickey, Jason Rapert and Terry Rice; Ex-Officio. Representatives Josh Miller, Co-Chair, James Ratliff; Vice Chair, Scott Baltz and David Branscum.

**Agriculture, Forestry and Economic Development Committee Members Present:** Senators Ronald Caldwell, Chair; Eddie Cheatham, Blake Johnson, and Gary Stubblefield. Representatives Dan Douglas, Chair; David Hillman, Vice Chair; Charles Armstrong, Rick Beck, Ken Bragg, David Branscum, Andy Davis, Jon Eubanks, Douglas House, Lane Jean, Mark McElroy, Ron McNair, Stephen Meeks, James Ratliff, Matthew Shepherd and David Whitaker.

**Other Legislators Present:** Senator Greg Standridge. Representatives John Baine, Mary Bentley, Mary Broadaway, Karilyn Brown, Charlotte Douglas, Jack Fortner and Kim Hammer.

**Members-Elect Present:** Senator Trent Garner. Representatives Bruce Coleman and Carlton Wing.

Representative Miller called the meeting to order, and recognized Representative Douglas for remarks.

#### **CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE MEETING MINUTES [Exhibits B1, B2, B3, and B4]**

**Representation McElroy made a motion to approve the August 12, 2016, September 21, 2016, September 22, 2016, and October 20, 2016, meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Representative Whitaker, and without objection, the motion carried.**

#### **OVERVIEW OF FERAL HOG ERADICATION EFFORTS**

**Mr. Jeff Crow, Director, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) and Mr. Brad Carner, Chief Wildlife Management, AGFC, were recognized and presented a PowerPoint**

presentation titled, “Feral Hog Overview” [Exhibit D1]. Also participating in this discussion was AGFC board members **Mr. Fred Brown, Chairman-Corning, Mr. Steve Cook, Vice Chairman-Malvern, and Mr. Bobby Martin, Commissioner-Rogers.**

Mr. Carner stated feral hogs are exotic animals that are not native to North America and are causing a huge problem for Arkansas. Arkansas’ statute does not consider feral hogs as wildlife, but as a public nuisance. According to 2013 estimates from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), feral hogs cause approximately \$1.5 billion in damages annually. Of this amount, \$300 million resulted in agricultural damages. Based on a 2014 Arkansas survey, feral hog damage to row crops was approximately \$19 million. The AGFC has made a significant shift in management strategy by focusing on trapping the entire group. Efforts have been made to create a communication campaign to educate private landowners that desire to eradicate feral hogs. For the past seven years, AGFC has focused their efforts on controlling hogs on public lands, which has resulted in significant progress.

Representative Branscum asked if the Governor could establish a special task force to deal with the feral hog issue. Mr. Carner stated he will initiate a conversation with the Governor regarding this matter.

**Mr. Patrick Fisk, Deputy Director, Arkansas Poultry and Livestock Commission (ALPC), and Mr. Wes Ward, Secretary of Agriculture, Arkansas Agriculture Department,** were recognized. Mr. Ward gave a brief overview of the impact feral hogs have made on agriculture in Arkansas. In 2013, the ALPC was directed to certify and license feral hog hunting facilities. There were three terminal hog hunting facilities in place prior to the new statutes and regulations of 2013. Due to facilities being out of compliance with new regulations, and complaints regarding feral hogs escaping the facilities, currently, there are no terminal feral hog hunting facilities licensed under ALPC.

**Mr. Chuck Yoest, Assistant Chief of Wildlife and Forestry, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA),** was recognized and presented a PowerPoint presentation titled, “Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency” [Exhibit D4]. He stated the Tennessee Wildlife Commission (TWC) is responsible for setting hunting regulations, but does not regulate the transportation of domestic or wild swine. Moreover, feral hogs/boars are considered wildlife in Tennessee. In 1999, Tennessee began an effort to decrease the population of feral hogs by implementing a statewide season of hunting. Tennessee’s hog hunting history proved that wild hogs cannot be controlled through hunting. Mr. Yoest noted the Kansas model has been successful in eliminating sport hunting, and creating effective means of control through a strong outreach effort. Some challenges Tennessee has experienced include: enforcement of illegal transportation, lack of desire to eliminate hogs, landowners not accepting government assistance, the popularity of hog dog hunting is growing, and legislative compromises.

Mr. Yoest stated it is not clear as to which agency has the authority over feral hogs in Arkansas. Representative Shepherd stated dispersed authority across several agencies has been a problem, and asked if AGFC would be open to accepting the responsibility of controlling feral hogs. Mr. Crow stated AGFC is a constitutional agency that does not receive general revenue and there is a

concern with classifying feral hogs as wildlife in Arkansas. He supports a partnership and prefers that another agency take the leadership role over feral hogs.

**Dr. Bronson Strickland, Associate Extension Professor, Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Mississippi State University**, was recognized and presented a PowerPoint presentation titled, “Wild Hog Update: The Mississippi Experience” [**Exhibit D5**]. He stated the estimate of \$1.5 billion damages caused by feral hogs is underestimated. He stated corn is the most damaged crop in Mississippi. The cost to affected farmers was severe with damage ranging from 5% - to 100% of their crops. Mississippi developed an 80,000 acre research study area for controlling feral hogs, and in an effort to eradicate the feral hog population, they are utilizing trapping and aerial hunting. Dr. Bronson also noted Mississippi has established a task force that is representative of the community to help with the issue of feral hogs.

#### **UPDATE ON CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE.**

**Mr. Jeff Crow, Director, AGFC and Mr. Cory Gray, Deer Program Coordinator, AGFC**, were recognized and presented a PowerPoint presentation titled, “Arkansas CWD Response” [**Exhibit E**]. Mr. Crow gave a brief update of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) efforts. He stated CWD was detected on February 17, 2015, and AGFC held an emergency meeting to approve the CWD Response Plan. The plan included two primary actions which are to determine the disease prevalence rate and a statewide surveillance to examine the spatial distribution of the disease. Of the 1,136 total hunter harvest samples collected, 36 tested positive for CWD. The AGFC has adopted CWD regulations for the 2016-2017 hunting session.

#### **FUTURE FUNDING NEEDS FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE**

**Dr. Mark Cochran, Vice President, University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture**, was recognized and presented a PowerPoint presentation titled, “Your U of A System Division of Agriculture” [**Exhibit F**]. He stated the Division is divided into two components; the Cooperative Extension Service and the Agricultural Experiment Station. The Division is part of a land grant university system institution that has partnerships with the federal, state and local governments. The Division is a non-formula institution that must have its budget justified every year, starting with the recommendation of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. Agriculture adds \$20 billion to Arkansas’ economy and is responsible for 1 of 6 jobs. Moreover, agriculture contributes 18% of the gross state product of the economy, not counting retail food markets. Notably, agriculture’s share of the state’s economy is greater than any of its neighboring states.

#### **OVERVIEW OF THE DAIRY INDUSTRY –TRENDS AND FUTURE OPTIONS**

**Mr. Bruce Tenclve, Commodity Activities and Regulatory Affairs, Arkansas Farm Bureau**, was recognized and presented a PowerPoint presentation titled, “Arkansas Dairy - History and Future” [**Exhibit G**]. He stated in 1989, Arkansas had over 800 dairy farms, but that number has steadily declined over the years. Nationally, there are 57,000 dairy farms.

Under the government dairy buyout program, approximately 750,000 million cows in the United States were purchased; approximately 16,000 in Arkansas. The United States relies heavily on foreign markets to meet their milk shortage. Without a permanent funding mechanism in place for dairies, the program is steadily declining. Legislation was passed during the 2009 legislative session regarding Arkansas' dairy stabilization, but was not signed into law. The Dairy Stabilization Board still exists and continues to look for help for the dairy industry.

Representative Douglas stated Arkansas' dairy industry is in trouble, and he would like the committee to meet during the upcoming legislative session to discuss this issue further.

Representative Miller announced the ALC-Game and Fish/State Police subcommittee will convene a meeting after the legislative session to discuss the dog hunting issue. Senator Caldwell announced the House and Senate Agriculture Committees will likely meet before the upcoming legislative session to discuss a joint resolution to create a task force to address the feral hog issue.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:17 p.m.