

DRAFT MINUTES
INDEPENDENT CITIZENS COMMISSION

January 16, 2015

The Independent Citizens Commission met Friday, January 16, 2015, at 8:30 a.m., UALR Bowen School of Law, Friday Courtroom, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Commission members present: Chair-Mr. Larry Ross, Vice Chair-Mr. Chuck Banks, Mr. Mitch Berry, Ms. Barbara Graves, Mr. Stuart Hill, Ms. Brenda James, and Mr. Stephen Tipton.

Chairman Ross, called the meeting to order.

Commission Discussion:

Commissioners discussed General Assembly mileage, per diem and reimbursements. Commissioner James gave handouts (Handout 1&2) with graphs on Legislative base salary, per diem rates of the 5 states in the comparison along with graphs on Per Capita, Population, Cost of Living, Net Revenues, and Net Expenditures. Chairman Ross gave a handout (Handout 3) on his proposal for salaries.

Consideration of Mileage

After discussion, Commissioners purposed that the mileage rates stay as they are at the current GSA rate of 57.5/mile.

Consideration of Per Diem

Commissioners discussed current Per Diem rates. The proposal states that Per Diem will stay the same during the session. In the interim, no changes for committee members were made when attending and signing in for a committee meeting. Also, during the interim, freshmen non-committee members that chose to attend and sign in to a committee meeting will get paid ½ of the per diem. If freshmen are committee members, they are recommended to get the full per diem. Furthermore, during the interim, Legislators who are not in their first term and who are not members of the specific committee, but choose to attend a committee meeting, then, those Legislators will not receive per diem for those days.

Consideration of Expenses

Commissioners discussed the expense for the general assembly. Some clarification was given by Auditor Lea and Ann Cornwell, Secretary of the Senate. The Commission proposed that expenses will remain at the current rate with more transparency in the documentation.

Consideration of Salaries

After discussion among the commissioners, the commissioners gave their initial thoughts starting with Commissioner Tipton. His initial thoughts on salary are \$25,000 for Legislators and \$30,000 for President and Speaker. Commissioner James' thoughts are an average of the mean and the medium of the comparable states which is about \$26,000.00. Chairman Ross \$19,050.00 for Legislators and \$21,325.00 for President and Speaker. Vice Chairman Banks thoughts are \$45,000.00 for Legislators,

\$50,000.00 for Speaker. Commissioner Graves' initial thoughts on salary are somewhere around \$20,000.00. Commissioner Berry's initial thoughts on salary are around \$25,000.00 and Commissioner Hills' thoughts are around \$25,000.00.

Commissioner Tipton made a motion requesting Speaker Gilliam and Senator Dismang, President Pro Tem attend the next meeting. The commission is also requesting data from Bureau of Legislative Research on the per diem payments that were made over the last 3 years to non-first term non-committee members that attended and signed into committee meetings and a report on the freshmen non-committee members who were paid a per diem for going to committee meetings. Vice Chairman Banks seconded and the motion passed without objection.

The commission requested that Mr. Robinson make the above request to Senator Dismang and Speaker Gilliam.

Upcoming meeting dates are as follows:

Monday January 26, 2015- U of A System Administration Cammack Village
Tuesday January 27, 2015- U of A System Administration Cammack Village
Wednesday January 28, 2015- U of A System Administration Cammack Village
Thursday, January 29, 2015 - U of A System Administration Cammack Village
Friday, January 30, 2015- U of A System Administration Cammack Village
Monday, February 2, 2015 - U of A System Administration Cammack Village

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.