

Meeting Minutes of the Arkansas Motor Vehicle Commission

Business Meeting
900 West Capitol Avenue, Suite 400
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

October 15, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Arkansas Motor Vehicle Commission was called to order on October 15, 2025, at 9:32 a.m. by Commission Chair Joy Blankenship.

ATTENDEES

The commissioners in attendance included Commission Chair Joy Blankenship, Michael Johnson, Jerel Saeler, Scott Wood, Jimmy Jones, Michael Moix, and Clay Maxey. Staff present included Director Daniel Pace, Licensing Supervisor Alexis Dunlap, and Investigators Margie Sexton and John Aquilino. Other attendees included Assistant Attorney General Aaron Lowrey, Greg Kirkpatrick of Arkansas Automobile Dealers Association, Courtney Sheppard of Government Solutions, Representatives of Tesla Inc., Chris Snyder, Chance Billingsley, Catherine Cho, and Matt Franzella, as well as Trevor Hawkins of Mitchell, Blackstock, Wright & Alagood, PLLC.

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the Tuesday, September 30, 2025, regularly scheduled Commission meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved by the Commission following a proper motion by Michael Johnson and a second by Jerel Saeler.

REPORTS AND INFORMATION

Director Pace presented the Financial Revenue and Expenditure Reports for fiscal year 2026. Fiscal year 2026 reflects a revenue deposit total of \$313, 340.00 to date, with an additional \$1274.00 in funds pending deposit. Following a proper motion by Scott Wood and a second by Jimmy Jones, the Commission unanimously approved the Financial Revenue and Expenditure Reports for fiscal year 2026.

Director Pace presented the Monthly License Activity Report, License Renewal Report, Manufacturer & Distributor License Renewal Summary, Late Fee Invoice Report, and Voluntary License Surrender Report. Director Pace noted the addition of one newly licensed franchise dealer: Oak Grove Powersports. In addition, one new distributor has been licensed, Sherco US NEA LLC. AMVC staff are working to ensure all manufacturer and distributor-related licenses are properly renewed for the 2025-2026 licensing period.

The Investigation Summary Reports compiled by Investigators Margie Sexton and John Aquilino included the time frame of September 2025 through October 2025. There have been investigations into title issues, unlicensed dealers, warranty disputes, and advertising complaints. In addition, 19

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dealer visits have been conducted from September to October 2025. The Commission has received 198 complaints (Formal & Non-Formal) since the first of the year.

Investigator Aquillino, provided the Commission with a brief explanation of a few open and closed Formal, and Non-Formal Complaints. Investigator Sexton provided the Commission with an update on several investigations and complaints. She also reviewed the progress of the site visits to the Tractor Supply Co., and Lowe's Companies Inc., locations in Arkansas that will be applying for Franchise Cycle licenses.

Director Pace provided the Commission with a brief explanation of several open and closed Ad-Hoc, Formal, and Non-Formal Complaints. He discussed C#25-020, a formal complaint filed by Honda Yamaha NLR against Yamaha Motor Corp., regarding a relevant market area dispute. Director Pace and Assistant Attorney General Aaron Lowrey will keep the Commissioners up to date on this protest complaint, and a Hearing may be necessary in the future if no resolution agreement is reached between the parties. Director Pace reviewed NF#25-167, a non-formal complaint initiated by the Commission against the Walmart retail store location in Batesville, regarding the sale of regulated vehicles without a license. He noted that AMVC investigators are near completion on several additional complaints.

LEGAL BRIEFINGS

Assistant Attorney General Aaron Lowrey provided an update on H#25-040 Gentry Chevrolet vs. General Motors. A formal hearing was set for October 15, 2025, at the request of both parties, in anticipation of a final sale of the dealership and resolution by early October. The dealership was damaged by fire in September. Thus, Gentry Chevrolet requested that the Commission cancel the scheduled Hearing, with no objection from General Motors. Following a proper motion by Scott Wood and a second by Jerel Saler, the Commission unanimously approved the undisputed Gentry Chevrolet request to cancel the scheduled Hearing.

Assistant Attorney General Aaron Lowrey provided an update on NF#25-096 AMVC vs. White River ATV, which is owned by Bill Holifield. During a previous Meeting, the Commission unanimously approved the motion for Director Pace and Assistant Attorney General Aaron Lowrey to present a consent agreement to Mr. Holifield and White River ATV, which was meant to bring the business into full compliance, require the payment of a penalty, and require Mr. Holifield to appear before the Commission to discuss his license. Following additional site visits and investigation by Commission Investigator Aquilino, Director Pace and Assistant Attorney General Aaron Lowrey requested that the Commissioners also consider setting a Hearing in this matter. The Commission unanimously approved for a hearing to be set for NF#25-096 AMVC vs. White River ATV, at the January 21, 2026, Commission Meeting, after a proper motion by Michael Moix and a second by Clay Maxey.

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ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Director Pace presented five (5) Voluntary License Surrender Agreement from license holders no longer conducting business in the state of Arkansas (listed under Section 6A on the agenda). The listed license holders requested that the license presented be terminated, and they acknowledged that if they wish to engage in business in the state of Arkansas after the license has been terminated, they must apply for a new license through the Arkansas Motor Vehicle Commission. After a proper motion to approve the five (5) Voluntary License Surrender Agreements listed under Section 6A on the Agenda by Scott Wood and a second by Jimmy Jones, the Commission unanimously approved the motion.

Assistant Attorney General Aaron Lowrey provided background and relevant statute information to Commissioners with respect to NF#25-121 AMVC vs. Arkansas Motors and Service LLC. Following submission of a Lessor License application by Arkansas Motors and Service LLC, as well as a site visit to inspect the location for compliance, it became known to the AMVC staff that a possible compliance issue may exist related to the principal owner of the LLC. Tesla Licensing Manager Matt Franzella and Legal Counsel Catherine Cho confirmed that Tesla Inc. is the sole (100%) owner of Arkansas Motors and Service LLC during their remarks to the Commission. There was no evidence presented to the Commission to show the LLC could operate independently of Tesla, Inc. Following a proper motion by Scott Wood and a second by Clay Maxey, the Commission unanimously approved the motion to deny the Lessor License application submitted by Arkansas Motors and Service LLC, pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §23-112-403(a)(3)(A).

Investigators Sexton and Aquilino presented investigation findings for NF#25-163 AMVC vs. Bale Chevrolet, Red River Ford (Cabot), & Superior Ford (Siloam Springs), regarding violations of AMVC Rule 7. The three dealerships were present with unauthorized Off-premise vehicle displays at the Chiefs of Police Conference at the Hot Springs Convention Center, which is not located within the defined relevant market areas of any of the three dealerships. Following a proper motion by Michael Johnson and a second by Jerel Saeler, the Commission approved for consent agreements and civil penalties to be issued to Bale Chevrolet, Red River Ford (Cabot) & Superior Ford (Siloam Springs) to address the violations of Rule 7, in lieu of a Commission Hearing. Commissioner Scott Wood abstained from the vote.

Director Pace provided an update and explanation to the Commission with respect to the Automotive Technologist Education Grant Program (ATEGP). The Commission previously approved funding for 11 education programs, and the total amount awarded was \$250,000.00 for Fiscal Year 2025. The grant fund warrants were issued to all 11 programs before the end of Fiscal Year 2025. Commission staff confirmed that all 11 grant fund warrants were received and properly deposited by each education program. The first ATEGP Accounting Report was due for submission to the Commission in September for all 11 programs that were awarded funding. South Arkansas College

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(ATEGP SFY25-006) requested an adjustment for the allocation of the funds originally awarded to them by the Commission under the ATEGP for fiscal year 2025. The remaining funds would be allocated to the installation of an Exhaust System, which would allow for training to take place indoors. Following a proper motion by Jimmy Jones and a second by Scott Wood, the Commission unanimously approved South Arkansas College to adjust the allocation of funds as provided in their official request. In addition, following a proper motion by Scott Wood and a second by Jerel Saeler, the Commission unanimously approved the first 2025 ATEGP Accounting Reports received from all eleven (11) education programs that were awarded funding.

Director Pace presented an update regarding the rule making process required by Act 233 of 2025, the proposed Rule section amendments package has been completed by Director Pace and ADLL Legal Counsel Lacie Kirchner and approved by ADLL Secretary Daryl Bassett. The proposed Rule section amendments package has been submitted to the Governor's office for review and approval.

ADJOURNMENT

Following a proper motion by Jimmy Jones and a second by Michael Moix, Commission Chair Joy Blankenship thanked everyone for their attendance and adjourned the meeting at 11:10 A.M. on October 15, 2025, and the Commission unanimously approved the motion.

Minutes submitted by:



Alexus Dunlap and Daniel Pace

21 January 2026
Date

Minutes Approved by:



Commission Chair Joy Blankenship

21 January 2026
Date