



ALABAMA PROFESSIONAL BAIL BONDING BOARD

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MINUTES Board Meeting November 1, 2024

The Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board met on Friday, November 1, 2024, at the Board's office located at 2777 Zelda Road, Montgomery, Alabama. The following Board members were in attendance: Mr. Jimmie Lay (Board Chair), Judge Spiro Cheriogotis (Board Vice Chair), Ms. Carla Woodall (Board Secretary), Mr. Chris McNeil (member), Mr. Gustavius Maxie (member), Ms. Jennifer Collard (member), Ms. Alexis Wooden (member), Mr. Barry Johnson (member) and Mr. John Vaughn (member). Others present at the meeting were Mr. Keith Warren (Executive Director), Ms. Tara Hetzel (Assistant Attorney General-Board Legal Counsel), Ms. Brenda Holden (Licensing Specialist), Mr. Brannon Littleton (Chief Financial Officer), Ms. Karen Entriiken (Investigator attending virtually) and Ms. Renee' Reames (recording secretary) and guest.

Mr. Jimmie Lay, Board Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Mr. Warren called the Board member roll and reported that a quorum was present to conduct Board business. An opening prayer was given at the beginning of the meeting. Chairman Lay reported that the meeting was open to the public and the meeting would be conducted under Roberts Rules of Order. Chairman Lay welcomed everyone attending the meeting.

Public notice of this regularly scheduled meeting was submitted to the Secretary of State www.sos.alabama.gov in accordance with the requirements of the Alabama Open Meetings Act and published on the Board's web site at www.apbb.alabama.gov.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Lay presented a copy of the meeting agenda for the Board's approval. A copy of the agenda was provided to the Board members prior to the meeting for their review.

MOTION: Mr. McNeil made a motion to approve the November 1, 2024 meeting agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Johnson and unanimously approved by the Board (agenda available for viewing in the Board's Official Book of Minutes).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Lay presented a copy of the August 9, 2024 regular meeting minutes and the September 20, 2024 special meeting minutes for the Board's approval.

MOTION: Mr. McNeil made a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve the August regular meeting minutes and the September special meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Johnson and unanimously approved by the Board (minutes available for viewing in the Board's official Book of Minutes).

REPORTS

Board Chairman Report: Chairman Lay indicated that he had no report at this time.

Executive Director Report: Mr. Warren reported on the current number of licenses (#560) that had been renewed and would expire October 31, 2025. He presented a list of licensees whose license had expired as of October 31, 2024, along with a list of licensees whose license was pending criminal background

history reports. He indicated that the list of expired licenses would be sent to the administrative director of the Alabama Court System to distribute to the courts (copies of list of expired licenses available for viewing in the Board's official Book of Minutes). The Board discussed the continued responsibility by the bail bond company owner to settle or transfer the obligation of any outstanding bonds when considering the sale of the company or retirement, etc.

Mr. Warren reported on the number of complaints received in FY 2025, FY 2024 and FY 2023 and the status of disciplinary fines assessed in each of the fiscal years (report available for viewing in the Board's official Book of Minutes). He reported that he had not received the quote for services to make improvements to the licensee database. He reminded the Board of the proposed cost, approximately \$10,000 to \$11,000, to build the website and the Board discussed proposed cost-cutting changes through the use of a WordPress website platform, etc.

Financial Report

Mr. Littleton presented the financial activities of the Board for the fourth quarter and 2024 fiscal year-end (report available in the Board's official Book of Minutes). A detailed list of deposits and expenditures as of September 30, 2024, was provided. Mr. Littleton reviewed with the Board the total obligation of outstanding invoices for the fiscal year, to include the previously reported invoices owed to Alabama Interactive. He provided a summary comparison of financial activities in FY 2020 through FY 2024 and FY 2025 projections. Mr. Warren indicated that the management fees were reduced in FY 2025 and revenue from late FY 2024 renewals was anticipated in FY 2025, based on the number of licenses not renewed by October 31, 2024. The Board discussed the basis for increased revenue in FY 2022 in comparison to the fiscal years that followed.

The Board discussed pursuing an ad campaign to educate the public about bail scams, as a better use of Board funds, rather than discounting the cost of continuing education for licensees. Chairman Lay appointed Ms. Wooden, Mr. Vaughn, Mr. Maxie and Ms. Collard to the scam awareness committee to create a brochure to educate the public about the bail scams, and Ms. Woodall to proof-read the draft.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion to rescind waiving the \$50 continuing education fee, in consideration of having received the updated financial report and having met with the Sunset Committee. The motion was seconded by Ms. Collard and unanimously approved by the Board.

MOTION: Mr. McNeil made the motion to accept the financial report as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Johnson and unanimously approved by the Board.

Legal Counsel Report:

Ms. Hetzel presented a special review of the following applications for Board action:

- Case AD6484 – two felony convictions.
MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion to deny the new application for licensure based on the applicant's criminal background history as reported. The motion was seconded by Mr. Johnson and unanimously approved by the Board.
- Case MH9863 – Class A plea of guilty.
MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion to deny the new application for licensure based on the applicant's criminal background history as reported. The motion was seconded by Mr. Johnson and unanimously approved by the Board.
- Case JV4995 – Class A Guilty conviction.
MOTION: Judge Cheriogotis made the motion to refer the new application special review case to the Investigative Committee. The motion was seconded by Ms. Collard and unanimously approved by the Board.

- Case CF6644 – Case pending.

MOTION: Judge Cheriogotis made the motion to refer the new application special review case to the Investigative Committee. The motion was seconded by Ms. Collard and unanimously approved by the Board.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion that the Investigative Committee have the authority to approve or deny new applicant special review cases. The motion was seconded by Mr. McNeil and unanimously approved, with Mr. Vaughn abstaining from voting.

- Case AC0581 – Case pending.

MOTION: Judge Cheriogotis made the motion to approve the renewal application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Vaughn and unanimously approved by the Board.

- Case JS0837 – Felony case pending.

MOTION: Judge Cheriogotis made the motion to approve the renewal application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. McNeil and unanimously approved, with Mr. Johnson abstaining from voting.

Ms. Hetzel reported there was no Investigative Committee report at this time.

The Board discussed the application process to obtain an Apprentice license. Mr. Warren reported that no background check was required nor continuing education and the license would not lapse until the applicant was 21 years old. It was the consensus of the Board to validate the applicant's affidavit through a public records review of the applicant in advance of an apprentice license being issued and to modify the apprentice application to include a request for other alias of the applicant.

MOTION: Mr. McNeil made the motion that Smith Warren verify the affidavit of the applicant for an apprentice license through public records and any criminal history findings be referred to the Investigative Committee to resolve soon as practicable. The motion was seconded by Mr. Johnson and unanimously approved by the Board.

The Board also discussed the continuing education exemption cited in the Board's statute §15-13-217(i) and Rule 153-X-4-.05((1)(c)). Chairman Lay tabled further discussion of this matter to the next Board meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Public Hearing and Adoption of Public Rule 153-X-4-.02 Renewal Application Deadline

Mr. Warren reported that the published proposal Rule 153-X-4-.02 required further changes and recommended that the adoption as a final rule not go forth. The Board also discussed removing the word fingerprint in Board rules.

MOTION: Judge Cheriogotis made the motion that the Board's Legal Counsel and Executive Director review the entire Administrative Code and strike the word, fingerprint, in any place that the word may appear. The motion failed for a lack of a second.

Proposed Rule concerning Military Family Applicants:

Mr. Warren presented two versions of the Military licensure rule for the Board's consideration (copies available in the Board's official Book of Minutes). It was the consensus of the Board to consider the draft of the Academic Credit for Military Education, Training and Experience proposed rule and omitting sections 3 and 5, and title the new rule as the Military Family Jobs Opportunity Act Applicants. Mr. Warren indicated that he would present the modified proposed military rule at the next Board meeting.

Proposed Changes to Rule 153-X-9-.01 Fees:

Mr. Warren presented proposed changes to Rule 153-X-9-.01 Fees (copy available in the Board's official Book of Minutes).

MOTION: Mr. McNeil made the motion to approve the proposed Rule changes with correction to typographical errors as discussed. The motion was seconded by Ms. Collard and unanimously approved by the Board.

Proposed Changes to Rule 153-X-12 Records:

Mr. Warren presented proposed changes to Rule 153-X-12 Records.

MOTION: Mr. McNeil made the motion to approve the proposed Rules changes with corrections to typographical errors as discussed. The motion was seconded by Mr. Johnson and unanimously approved by the Board.

Discussion of Employee Definition:

Mr. Warren commented on the discussions with the Sunset Committee members about the definition of an employee based on the audit report and he indicated that any further changes in differentiating the role and duties of an employee and licensing requirements would need to be changed by the Legislature.

Update on Administrative Services Contract

Mr. Warren and staff left the Board meeting at 12:08 p.m. while the Board discussed the Administrative Services contract and rejoined the meeting at 12:27 p.m. Mr. Lay asked Ms. Hertzell to contact State Personnel about guidelines and current salary concerning Ms. Holden, a retired state employee employed by the Board, about the Board's intent to increase Ms. Holden's salary. The Board also considered providing a cell phone for Ms. Holden, since she was currently using her personal cell phone to conduct business.

MOTION: Mr. McNeil made the motion for the Board to purchase a cellphone for Ms. Holden's use and that the Board's Legal Counsel look at options in adjusting Ms. Holden's rate of pay. The motion was seconded by Ms. Collard and unanimously approved by the Board.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion of Proposed Legislative Changes to Statute:

The Board discussed proposed changes to the statute to include:

- Apprentice license - adding criminal background check, duration of license, annual renewal, renewal fee, education under age 21.
- Defining Employee.
- September renewals and late processing.
- Board composition and appointing authorities; sheriff member, consumer member, etc.
- Owner of bail bond company must have 3 years as bondsman.

Election of Board Officers:

Chairman Lay reminded the members that election of officers was conducted when there was a change in the Board appointments and an election was not required at this time.

Approval of 2025 Board Meeting Calendar:

Chairman Lay presented a list of proposed dates in 2025 for the Board to meet.

MOTION: Ms. Collard made the motion to approve February 7, May 2, August 8, and November 7, 2025, for the Board to meet. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wooden and unanimously approved by the Board.

The Board discussed the next Legislative Session starting in February.

MOTION: Judge Cheriogotis made the motion to amend the Board meeting schedule by replacing the February 7, 2025 meeting date with January 10, 2025. The motion was seconded by Ms. Collard and unanimously approved by the Board.

The Board discussed obtaining a quote to improve the Board's website.

MOTION: Judge Cheriogotis made the motion to empower the Executive Director to pursue and approve a new service provider for the Board's website, with an anticipated cost of \$10,000 to \$11,000, and not to exceed \$15,000. The motion was seconded by Mr. McNeil and unanimously approved by the Board.

OTHER BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Board Meetings:

Chairman Lay reminded the members that the next meeting of the Board was January 10, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. at the Board's office.

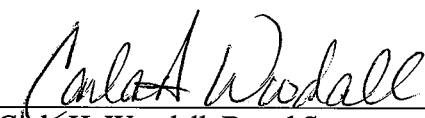
ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business of the Board, the Board members submitted travel expense reports for reimbursement. Mr. McNeil made the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Johnson and Chairman Lay adjourned the meeting at 12:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jimmie Lay, Board Chairman



Carla H. Woodall, Board Secretary

Date Approved: February 7, 2025 (RRr)