



ALABAMA PROFESSIONAL BAIL BONDING BOARD

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MINUTES

Board Meeting

April 25, 2025

The Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board met on Friday, April 25, 2025, at the Board's office located at 2777 Zelda Road, Montgomery, Alabama. The following Board members were in attendance: Mr. Jimmie Lay (Board Chair), Ms. Carla Woodall (Board Secretary), Mr. Chris McNeil (member), Mr. Gustavus Maxie (member), Mr. John Vaughn (member), Ms. Alexis Wooden (member arriving 10:16 a.m.), and Ms. Jennifer Collard (member arriving 10:59 a.m.). Member absent was Mr. Barry Johnson and one vacancy existed on the Board. 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), Ms. Karen Harlow (Legal Assistant) and Ms. Renee' Reames (recording secretary) and guests, Mr. Matthew Helms, Mr. Duntha Greene, and Attorney Courtney Murchison.

Mr. Jimmie Lay, Board Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. Mr. Warren called the Board member roll and reported that a quorum was present to conduct Board business. Chairman Lay reported that the meeting was open to the public and the meeting would be conducted under Roberts Rules of Order. Chairman Lay did not vote on matters before the Board except in cases of a tie. 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.

REQUEST TO APPEAR

Chairman Lay reported that Mr. Matthew Helms had requested to appear to before the Board and asked the Board to reconsider his request for licensure. Ms. Hetzel reported that Mr. Helms's new license had been denied due to his criminal history background that was not reported on his application. Chairman Lay introduced Mr. Helms and Mr. Helms indicated that he had received an order of limited relief and misread the question on the application. He indicated that the order of limited relief did not specify the licensing agency and, in April, he had filed for an additional court order to identify the Board as the licensing agency to receive the order of limited relief. The Board discussed the content of the Board's application questions concerning criminal history. Ms. Hetzel indicated that the Board would inform Mr. Helms of their decision and thanked him for attending the meeting.

Ms. Wooden arrived at 10:16 a.m.

Chairman Lay introduced Attorney Murchison and Mr. Duntha Greene to appear before the Board regarding the denial of Mr. Greene's license. Attorney Murchison reported on the criminal history background of the applicant and responded to questions from the Board about the circumstances involved in the applicant's arrests. Ms. Hetzel indicated that the Board would be making a decision regarding Mr. Greene's appeal, and she thanked them for responding to the Board's questions.

Chairman Lay reported that a third applicant, AD, had submitted an appeal request concerning the denial of his license and he was not present at the Board meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Lay presented a copy of the April 25, 2025 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 April meeting agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wooden 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 February 7, 2025 regular meeting minutes for the Board's approval.

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

REPORTS

Board Chairman Report:

Chairman Lay reminded the members that Judge Cheriogotis had resigned from the Board and a vacancy existed on the Board.

Executive Director Report:

Mr. Warren reported on the current number of licenses (#692), along with business (#193) and apprentice licenses (#26), as of March 31, 2025. He presented a list of new licenses that had been issued as of October 1, 2024 through March 31, 2025, along with new company licenses and apprentice licenses issued during the same period.

MOTION: Mr. McNeil made the motion to ratify the approval of new licenses as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Woodall and unanimously approved by the Board.

Mr. Warren reviewed the status of complaints for fiscal years 2023 through 2025. He reported on the changes to be updated on the Board's website to include the Board meeting minutes grouped by fiscal year, etc.

Mr. Warren reminded the Board members who attended the PBUS meeting to submit their paid invoices to his office by April 30, 2025, so that expense reports could be prepared and submitted for reimbursement.

Financial Report

Mr. Littleton presented the financial activities of the Board for the period of January 1, 2025 through March 31, 2025 (report available in the Board's official Book of Minutes). He reviewed the cash flow analysis indicating cash receipts and expenditures. He presented the total amount of expenditures during the reported period, as compared to budget, to include encumbered expenses not yet paid, and estimated expenses for the remainder of the fiscal year. He reported a projected positive cash balance for fiscal year-end.

Ms. Collard arrived at 10:59 a.m.

Mr. Littleton reported that the projected revenue for the remainder of the year was approximately \$106,000.

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

Legal Counsel Report:

Ms. Hetzel presented the Investigative Committee (IC) report, which included a list of standardized disciplinary fines (copy available in the Board's official Book of Minutes). She explained that the standardized fines would bring consistency in decisions about disciplinary fines; however, the Board had the right to aggregate or mitigate any case.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion to approve the list of standardized disciplinary fines as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. McNeil and unanimously approved by the Board.

Ms. Hetzel presented the IC recommendations on the following cases:

Case 2025-022BR – founded and recommendation to issue an emergency suspension of the respondent's license for violations of standards of professional conduct and danger to the public. The respondent was a repeat offender in four other cases, and one of the cases, 2024-022BR had an outstanding consent order. She reported that the license suspension would be for 120 days, and the respondent would be notified of an administrative hearing in the meantime.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion to approve the IC recommendation to issue an emergency suspension of the license for the respondent in case 2025-022BR. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wooden and unanimously approved by the Board, with Chairman Lay and Mr. McNeil recusing to vote.

Cases 2024-053 and 2025-016 – founded and recommendation of a one-year probation and assess fines totaling \$3,000 for failure to cooperate in both cases and failure to refund the complainant. The respondent was a repeat offender in another 2024 complaint case.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion to approve the IC recommendation to assess \$2,000 fine in case 2024-053 and \$1,000 fine in case 2025-016 and one-year probation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Vaughn and unanimously approved by the Board, with Chairman Lay and Mr. McNeil recusing to vote.

Case 2025-007 – founded and recommendation of \$1,000 fine and one-year probation for performing without a license.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion to approve the IC recommendation to assess \$1,000 fine, one-year probation and include the disciplinary modification that the Board Attorney file criminal charges with the District Attorney office. The motion was seconded by Ms. Vaughn and unanimously approved by the Board, with Chairman Lay and Mr. McNeil recusing to vote.

Case 2025-010 and 2025-011 and 2025-012 – founded and recommendation to assess \$1,000 fine in each complaint case and one-year probation.

MOTION: Ms. Collard made the motion to assess the respondent a fine of \$1,000 per unlicensed agent in case 2025-011 for a total of \$2,000 and a one-year probationary for the respondent. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wooden and unanimously approved by the Board, with Chairman Lay, Mr. McNeil and Ms. Woodall recusing to vote.

MOTION: Ms. Wooden made the motion to assess a fine of \$1,000 in case 2025-012 and a one-year probationary. The motion was seconded by Mr. Vaughn and unanimously approved by the Board, with Chairman Lay, Mr. McNeil and Ms. Woodall recusing to vote.

MOTION: Ms. Wooden made the motion to assess a fine of \$1,000 in case 2025-010 and a one-year probationary. The motion was seconded by Mr. Vaughn and unanimously approved by the Board, with Chairman Lay, Mr. McNeil and Ms. Woodall recusing to vote.

Case 2025-018 – founded and recommendation of \$1,000 fine and two-year probation for performing without a license. It was noted that the respondent was a repeat offender in two other founded cases.

MOTION: Ms. Wooden made the motion to assess a fine of \$1,000 in case 2025-018 and a two-year probationary. The motion was seconded by Mr. Maxie and unanimously approved by the Board, with Chairman Lay and Mr. McNeil recusing to vote.

Case 2025-019 – founded and recommendation to assess \$500 fine and one-year probation for making a bond without an order from the court.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion to assess a fine of \$500 in case 2025-019 and a one-year probationary. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wooden and unanimously approved by the Board, with Chairman Lay and Mr. McNeil recusing to vote.

Case 2025-023BR – founded and recommendation to assess \$500 fine and one-year probation for failure to report arrest within 10-day period.

MOTION: Mr. Maxie made the motion to assess a fine of \$500 in case 2025-023BR and a one-year probationary. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wooden and unanimously approved by the Board, with Chairman Lay and Mr. McNeil recusing to vote.

Case 2024-056BR – unable to locate the respondent. Respondent currently had an expired license and IC recommended to administratively close the case and flag the licensee database to not issue license until terms of case 2024-056BR had been met.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion to approve the IC recommendations. The motion was seconded by Mr. Maxie and unanimously approved by the Board, with Chairman Lay, Mr. McNeil and Ms. Collard recusing to vote.

Cases 2025-004, 2025-008, 2025-009, 2025-013 and 2025-014 – unfounded and recommendation to close cases.

MOTION: Mr. Maxie made the motion to approve the IC recommendations. The motion was seconded by Mr. Vaughn and unanimously approved by the Board, with Chairman Lay and Mr. McNeil recusing to vote.

Case 2025-005 – recommendation to issue a letter of concern to the respondent regarding standards of professional behavior and no solicitation at jails.

MOTION: Mr. Vaughn made the motion to approve the IC recommendations. The motion was seconded by Mr. Maxie and unanimously approved by the Board, with Chairman Lay, Mr. McNeil and Ms. Collard recusing to vote.

Case 2025-020 – accept voluntary surrender of license. Complaint indicated that the licensee was working as jail administrator.

MOTION: Mr. Maxie made the motion to accept the voluntary surrender of the license and to close the case. The motion was seconded by Ms. Woodall and unanimously approved by the Board, with Chairman Lay, Mr. McNeil and Ms. Collard recusing to vote.

The Board discussed repeat offender status and asked IC to submit a recommendation of elevated disciplinary action as a supplement to the standardized disciplinary fines approved by the Board earlier in the meeting.

Scam Awareness Committee Update: Ms. Wooden reported that a spreadsheet would be maintained listing incidents of bail bond fraud complaints submitted to the Attorney General's (AG) office. Ms. Hetzel reported that the consumer division of the AG office would receive the referrals and the AG's office was working on a campaign for citizen awareness. The Board discussed steps toward the prevention of fraud to include the jails maintaining a sign-in log for bail bond companies.

OLD BUSINESS

Update on Proposed Legislation HB410: Mr. McNeil reported that there was not enough time left in the Legislative Session for HB410 to go through the process. He recommended that the Board consider pursuing a separate legislative bill apart from the Association's efforts to propose changes in the Alabama Bail Reform Act.

Executive Session:

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion that the Board adjourn into Executive Session for approximately 15 minutes to discuss the good name and character concerning appeal requests received by the Board regarding denial of license. The motion was seconded by Mr. Vaughn. Ms. Hetzel certified the reason for the Executive Session and Chairman Lay called for a roll call vote: Ms. Woodall, aye, Mr. Chris McNeil, aye, Mr. Gustavius Maxie, aye, Mr. John Vaughn, aye, Ms. Alexis Wooden, aye and Ms. Jennifer Collard, aye.

Chairman Lay called the Board into Executive Session at 11:55 a.m.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion to adjourn from Executive Session to the business meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Vaughn and unanimously approved by the Board. Chairman Lay called the business meeting back into session at 12:11 p.m.

Chairman Lay called for discussion of the three appeal requests for denial of license.

The Board reviewed the letter from AD appealing the administrative decision to deny his Bondsman application based on his criminal history background and discussed his failure to attend the Board meeting.

MOTION: Ms. Wooden made the motion to deny AD's application for licensure. The motion was seconded by Ms. Woodall and unanimously approved by the Board, with Mr. McNeil abstaining from voting.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion to grant a license to Mr. Helms pending receipt of the Judge's motion naming the Board as the agency to receive his order of limited relief. The motion was seconded by Mr. Vaughn and unanimously approved by the Board, with Ms. Collard abstaining from voting.

MOTION: Mr. McNeil made the motion to deny Mr. Greene's application for licensure based on his criminal history background. The motion was seconded by Ms. Woodall and unanimously approved by the Board.

Annual Filing of Statement of Economic Interest: Ms. Woodall reminded the members about the deadline of April 30, 2025 to file their 2024 Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) with the Ethics Commission.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion that the Board members be required to submit via email to the Executive Director confirmation of completion of 2024 SEI. The motion was seconded by Mr. McNeil and unanimously approved by the Board. The members were encouraged to verify on the Ethic Commission's website the completion of prior year SEI filings.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

Submission of Board Travel: The Board accepted the travel expense forms submitted by the members for attending the Board meeting.

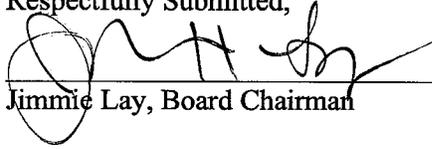
Next Board Meeting: Chairman Lay reminded the members that the next meeting of the Board was scheduled August 8, 2025.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business of the Board, and Chairman Lay called for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Collard and unanimously approved by the Board. Chairman Lay adjourned the meeting at 12:26 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jimmie Lay, Board Chairman



Carla H. Woodall, Board Secretary

rr/  Date Approved: August 15, 2025