ALABAMA PROFESSIONAL BAIL BONDING BOARD
603 Interstate Park Drive, Montgomery, AL 36109
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 309440
Montgomery, AL 36130-9440
334-420-7225

Board Meeting
May 28, 2026

The Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board met on Thursday, May 28, 2026 at the Board's office located at 603 Interstate Park Drive, Montgomery, Alabama for a regular business meeting. The following Board members were in attendance: Mr. Jimmie Lay (Board Chair), Ms. Jennifer Collard Rubio (Board Vice Chair), Ms. Carla Woodall (Board Secretary), Mr. Chris McNeil (member-elected Secretary), Mr. Barry Johnson (member), Mr. Gustavius Maxie (member), Judge Zack Moore (member), Ms. Alexis Elloitt (member) and Mr. John Vaughn (member). Others present at the meeting were Mr. Keith Warren (Executive Director), Mr. Steve Herndon (Assistant Attorney General), and Ms. Renee' Reames (recording secretary), Ms. Brenda Holden (licensing specialist), Ms. Karen Harlow (Legal Assistant), and Mr. Denny Merritt (Investigator) and guests.

Public notice of this regular 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.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Lay, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m. Mr. Warren called the Board member roll and reported that a quorum was present to conduct Board business. Chairman Lay welcomed everyone attending the meeting and called for a moment of prayer.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Lay presented a copy of the May 28, 2026, meeting agenda for the Board's approval. A copy of the agenda was reviewed by the members.
MOTION: Mr. McNeil made a motion to approve the May meeting agenda as presented. 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).

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Lay presented a copy of the February 27, 2026, regular meeting minutes for the Board's approval. A copy of the minutes was provided to the Board prior to the meeting.
MOTION: Mr. Johnson made a motion to approve the February meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Judge Moore and unanimously approved by the Board (minutes available for viewing in the Board's official Book of Minutes).

IV. REPORTS

A. Licensing Requests:

Mr. Warren indicated that three applicants had appealed against the denial of their license and had requested to appear before the Board.

He introduced Mr. Yance Hitt, whose bondsman renewal application had been denied due to application discrepancies and criminal background history. Mr. Hitt indicated that he had made a mistake in answering the questions on the application. The Board indicated that his renewal application had been denied twice due to application discrepancies and his criminal background history was discussed. Chairman Lay indicated that the matter would be tabled for further consideration later in the meeting during the Executive Session.

Mr. Warren introduced Ms. Melinda Newbolt, whose apprentice application had been denied due to criminal background history. Ms. Newbolt's criminal background history was discussed. Chairman Lay indicated that the matter would be tabled for further consideration later in the meeting during the Executive Session.

Mr. Warren reported that Mr. Victor Collazo-Floyd had appeal the denial of his bondsman renewal application and the denial was due to application discrepancies and criminal background history. Mr. Johnson reported that Mr. Collazo-Floyd had spoken to him about this matter and Mr. Collazo-Floyd had stated that he misunderstood the question and thought it pertained to military convictions. Mr. Collazo was not present at the meeting to answer questions from the Board and Chairman Lay indicated that the matter would be tabled for consideration later in the meeting during the Executive Session.

Mr. Ben Maddox was present at the meeting and indicated that his bondsman renewal application had been denied. He explained that he had not submitted an appeal request but had assisted Mr. Hitt in completing his application. The Board inquired about the two denial notices that the Board had sent Mr. Maddox and Mr. Maddox stated that he had received only the first denial notice. The Board discussed the discrepancies between his residence on his Florida driver's license and the Alabama residence listed on his renewal application. Chairman Lay assigned the special review of Mr. Maddox's renewal application to the Investigative Committee.

B. <u>Board Chairman Report:</u>
Chairman Lay reported that he had an inquiry from a sheriff's office about the status of the bail scam brochures. Mr. Warren requested that the brochures be forwarded to him, to include any corrections made by the Board at the February Board meeting, and he would have them printed and distributed on behalf of the Board.

C. <u>Executive Director Report</u>:
Mr. Warren reported on the current number of active licenses (722), as of May 20, 2026, along with business (212) and apprentice (36) licenses, totaling 970 active licenses. Also included in his report was the status of complaints received in fiscal years 2023 through current fiscal year 2026 (report available in the Board's official Book of Minutes). He indicated that 51 complaints had been received in the current fiscal year.

1. Mr. Warren presented a list of new licenses that had been issued from February 24, 2026, through May 20, 2026, along with issued new company licenses, apprentice licenses and reinstated licenses during the same period.
MOTION: Mr. McNeil made the motion to ratify the approval of new and reinstated licenses, along with new company and existing apprentice licenses issued between January 24, 2026, through May 20, 2026. The motion was seconded by Judge Moore and unanimously approved by the Board.

2. Mr. Warren reminded the members that Statement of Economic Interest was due April 30, 2026, for the prior year and the report could be filed electronically on the Alabama Ethics

Commission website. He also reported on the new Act 2026-160 effective October 1, 2026, concerning training through the Examiners of Public Accounts for new Board member appointments and current Board members.

3. Financial Report:

Mr. Warren presented the financial activities of the Board for FY 2026 covering October 1, 2025, through May 1, 2026 (report available in the Board's official Book of Minutes). He reviewed the cash flow analysis indicating cash receipts and expenditures for the reported period, along with invoices pending payment and reported a projected positive cash balance at the end of the reported period. He presented the total amount of expenditures compared to budget.

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

D. Legal Counsel Report:

Mr. Warren reported that Ms. Hetzel could not be present and introduced Mr. Steve Herndon, who attended the meeting as Board's Legal Counsel. He indicated that the Investigative Committee did not meet prior to the Board meeting and had no report at this time.

The Board discussed the email request received from a circuit clerk about whether a former bonding agent could request a bondsman process on a bond that was previously signed by his former company which is currently in final forfeiture with the courts and the company currently inactive? Furthermore, could this same bonding agent arrest the defendant on the bondsman process warrant for the bonding company? The Board discussed the implied authority of the owner of the company, if holding an active bondsman license, could sign/file for bondsman process, and could further assign to a licensed recovery agent or licensed bondsman. The Board considered whether the Board had jurisdiction in the matter.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion that the processing and issuance of bonds was not in the Board purview; however, if a bondsman makes application for a bondsman process without an active license, a licensing violation had occurred.

The motion was later withdrawn by Ms. Woodall.

MOTION: Ms. Rubio made the motion if a licensed bondsman should verify a request for bondsman process, the Board sees no reason why the bond should not be processed, with the understanding that the Board was not and should not provide legal advice. The motion was seconded by Mr. McNeil and unanimously approved by the Board.

Chairman Lay called a 10-minute recess of the Board at 11:50 a.m. and reconvened the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

Photo ID License

The Board discussed the delay in licenses receiving photo license IDs and Mr. Warren reported that the vendor, Tyler Technologies, had subcontracted the service to another source. He explained that the licensee pays the vendor direct for the services and the $10 charge was not paid to the Board. Mr. Warren indicated that the Board could consider other state-registered vendors for the service or produce the licenses in-house by purchasing the equipment to make IDs. The Board asked that the vendor and subcontractor be notified for comments about the Board's concerns that licenses were not being received.

Transition to State Government
Mr. Warren presented a copy of the Inter-agency Agreement between the Board and the Alabama Security Regulatory Board at a rate of $6,000 per month for the period of June 1, 2026, through September 30, 2026, for administrative employee services, office space, etc. on a fiscal year basis (copy available in the Board's official Book of Minutes).

Upon a proposal being submitted to the Board regarding the ~~Executive Director~~ Board entering into an interagency agreement with the Alabama Security Regulatory Board, all employees of Smith Warren Management Services, Inc., left the Board meeting. Discussions were held regarding the proposal and job performance of Smith Warren Management Services, Inc. (hereafter Smith Warren).

Executive Session:
MOTION: Ms. Rubio made a motion that the Board adjourn into Executive Session for approximately 30 minutes to discuss the good name and character regarding Smith Warren employees. The motion was seconded by Judge Zack Moore. Mr. Herndon certified the reason for the Executive Session, and Chairman Lay called for a roll call vote: Chairman Jimmie Lay, aye; Ms. Jennifer Rubio, aye; Mr. Barry Johnson, aye; Mr. Gustavius Maxie, aye; Mr. John Vaughn, aye; Judge Zack Moore, aye; Mr. Chris McNeil, aye; Ms. Carla Woodall, aye.
Chairman Lay called the Board into Executive Session at 12:14 p.m.

MOTION: Mr. McNeil made the motion to adjourn from Executive Session to the business meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Rubio and unanimously approved by the Board.
Chairman Lay called the business meeting back into session at 12:39 p.m.

Discussions continued by the Board regarding the job performance of Smith Warren wherein Chairman Lay requested the presence of Executive Director Keith Warren. Discussions were held regarding:

- Questions of dissolution/existence of Smith Warren, Inc. Mr. Warren indicated that he had notified the Illinois Secretary of State office that he had dissolved his business in Illinois since Smith Warren was no longer providing services to FARB registered in Illinois, and Illinois had notified the Alabama Secretary of State (ASOS). ASOS had incorrectly dissolved Smith Warren in Alabama, and he had resolved this error.
- Concern of retaliatory Board-initiated complaints against owners with expired/late business licenses. Mr. Warren indicated that he had opened a board-review complaints (2026-013BR – 2026-015BR) when a company owner renewed three company licenses late on December 10, 2025, and the database renewal year indicated 2024. However, a further investigation indicated that the 2025 license (with a October 31, 2026, expiration date) had been renewed in June 2025 and was 237 days later and the current license renewal in 2026 was 40 days late. He explained that a further review of owners renewing licenses after November 1, 2025, resulted in 34 additional board-review complaints.
- Confirmation of renewal notification issued to all license holders prior to September 1, 2025. Mr. Warren reported that renewal notices were sent on August 26, 2025.
- Timely posting of Board minutes to website. Ms. Reames explained that her workload often interfered with her posting the minutes on the Board website following the Board's approval of the prior meeting minutes.

- Request from Examiners of Public Accounts pursuant to current audit of required documents to be provided by vendor of continuing education. Mr. Warren explained that the documents requested by the auditors were reports and services provided by the vendor to submit to the auditor.

Chairman Lay called a 10-minute recess of the Board at 1:40 p.m. and reconvened the business meeting at 1:51 p.m. and the Board continued to discuss job performance.

- Calculation of closed complaints in 2026. Mr. Warren referred to the current Executive Director's report presented earlier in the meeting and indicated that one case from FY 2026 had been closed and 49 cases were under investigation to include a 30-day period for the respondent's response and included the 34 board-review cases previously discussed.
- Inquiry of interested continuing education vendor. Mr. Warren reported that an inquiry had been received from an interested continuing education (CE) provider and they were referred to the Board's website.
- Moves of Board's office location. Mr. Warren explained that the original office building had sold and was torn down, and the plans for the second office space did not transpire as planned and a suitable third office space was acquired.
- Receiving/processing of incoming mail. Mr. Warren reported that office address was updated on the Board's website, post office box was established, mail-forwarding was provided and mail was logged as received in the office. A copy of the mail log between March 2026 to date was reviewed by Ms. Woodall indicating the amount of mail received daily.
- Delays in licensing. Mr. Warren reported that he typically reviews licenses on Tuesdays and Thursday after background criminal histories are approved.
- Delay in Board ID cards. Mr. Warren reported that the vendor printing and issuing laminated licenses had subcontracted the work to another service and there were delays in the issuing of licenses by the new subcontractor. He indicated that this change had also affected the Board identification cards being issues. The Board requested copies of the communications with the vendor(s).

The Board discussed the criticism of management by some legislators. Mr. Warren reminded that Board that a legal audit of the Board was underway and to date no findings had been reported to him. The Board discussed the tentative release date of the audit report.

Mr. Warren reminded the Board that they had other options, in consideration of the proposed Inter-agency Agreement with the Alabama Security Regulatory Board, such as RFP vendors and an inter-agency agreement with another board. He indicated that, as of June 1, 2026, with the State transition plan, Smith Warren would not be charging management fees to the Board effective June 1, 2026.

The Board discussed meeting when the audit results were released, tentatively meeting within the next 45-60 days.
MOTION: Mr. Maxie made the motion for the Board to meet on July 10, 2026. The motion was seconded by Mr. Vaughn and unanimously approved by the Board.

Chairman Lay called for a discussion of the appeal requests presented earlier in the meeting.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion to deny the renewal application with the opportunity to reapply with a new renewal application, completed correctly, and pay all applicable fees in accordance with the Board and Examiners of Public Account requirements. The motion was seconded by Mr. McNeil and unanimously approved by the Board with Mr. Johnson abstained from voting.

MOTION: Mr. McNeil made the motion to approve the apprentice application submitted by Ms. Newbolt. The motion was seconded by Ms. Woodall and unanimously approved by the Board.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion to deny the renewal application submitted by Mr. Collazo-floyd. The motion was seconded by Mr. McNeil and unanimously approved by the Board with Mr. Johnson abstained from voting.

The Board agreed that no further action was needed regarding Mr. Maddox attendance at the meeting since no formal appeal had been submitted regarding the second denial of his application, and the matter had been referred to the Investigative Committee.

Executive Session:
MOTION: Mr. Johnson made a motion that the Board adjourn into Executive Session for approximately 15 minutes to discuss the current contract with and good name and character of Smith Warren employees. The motion was seconded by Judge Zack Moore. Mr. Herndon certified the reason for the Executive Session, and Chairman Lay called for a roll call vote: Chairman Jimmie Lay, aye; Ms. Jennifer Rubio, aye; Mr. Barry Johnson, aye; Mr. Gustavius Maxie, aye; Mr. John Vaughn, aye; Judge Zack Moore, aye; Mr. Chris McNeil, aye; Ms. Carla Woodall, aye.
Chairman Lay called the Board into Executive Session at 3:07 p.m.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion to adjourn from Executive Session to the business meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Johnson and unanimously approved by the Board.
Chairman Lay called the business meeting back into session at 3:41 p.m.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made a motion to table discussions and any action regarding the review of the current contract with Smith Warren or possible interagency agreement with the Alabama Security Regulatory Board (ASRB) to transition into State government until the current audit report was published and State Personnel met and suggested a special-called meeting be held by the Board on July 10, 2026. Motion was seconded by Judge Zack Moore. After continued in-depth discussions of the motion, a vote by a show of hands was taken resulting in Ms. Wooden, Judge Moore, and Ms. Woodall voting aye; Mr. Johnson, Mr. Maxie, Mr. Vaughn, Mr. McNeil, Ms. Rubio, and Chairman Lay voting nay. Motion failed.

At 4:00 p.m. Ms. Wooden left the meeting.

MOTION: Mr. McNeil made a motion to give a 30-day notice to terminate the current contract with Smith Warren. Motion was seconded by Ms. Rubio. Discussions continued regarding the current contract while an audit was pending and its ramifications. Mr. McNeil renewed his motion wherein Chairman Lay called for a vote by a show of hands resulting in Mr. Johnson, Mr. Maxie, Mr. Vaughn, Mr. McNeil, Ms. Rubio, and Chairman Lay voting aye; Judge Moore and Ms. Woodall voting nay. Motion passed.

At which time Ms. Woodall orally resigned as Secretary of the Board stating concerns of liability required of the Secretary under the Code of Alabama and Administrative Rules absent oversight and management of an Executive Director after 30 days.

Chairman Lay called for nominations for Secretary of the Board. Mr. Johnson nominated Mr. Chris McNeil, and the nomination was seconded by Mr. Maxie. A vote was called by Chairman Lay resulting in Mr. Johnson, Mr. Maxie, Mr. Vaughn, Mr. McNeil, Ms. Rubio, and Judge Moore voting aye; Ms. Woodall voting nay. Chairman Lay declared Mr. McNeil Secretary of the Board.

Upon a proposal being submitted to the Board regarding the Executive Director entering into an interagency agreement with the Alabama Security Regulatory Board, all employees of Smith Warren Management Services, Inc., left the Board meeting. Discussions were held regarding the proposal and job performance of Smith Warren Management Services, Inc. (hereafter Smith Warrant).

<u>Executive Session</u>:
MOTION: Ms. Collard made a motion that the Board adjourn into Executive Session for approximately 30 minutes to discuss the good name and character regarding Smith Warren employees. The motion was seconded by Judge Zack Moore. Mr. Herndon certified the reason for the Executive Session, and Chairman Lay called for a roll call vote: Chairman Jimmie Lay, aye; Ms. Jennifer Collard, aye; Mr. Barry Johnson, aye; Mr. Gustavius Maxie, aye; Mr. John Vaughn, aye; Judge Zack Moore, aye; Mr. Chris McNeil, aye; Ms. Carla Woodall, aye. Chairman Lay called the Board into Executive Session at 12:14 p.m.

MOTION: Mr. McNeil made the motion to adjourn from Executive Session to the business meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Collard and unanimously approved by the Board. Chairman Lay called the business meeting back into session at 12:39 p.m.

Discussions continued by the Board regarding the job performance of Smith Warren wherein Chairman Lay requested the presence of Executive Director Keith Warren. Discussions were held regarding questions of dissolution/existence of Smith Warren, Inc., concern of retaliatory Board-initiated complaints against owners with expired/late business licenses, confirmation of renewal notification issued to all license holders in September 2025, timely posting of Board minutes to website, request from Examiners pursuant to current audit of required documents to be provided by vendor of continuing education, calculation of closed complaints in 2026, inquiry of interested continuing education vendor, moves of office location, receiving/processing of incoming mail, delay in licensing and Board ID cards.

<u>Executive Session</u>:
MOTION: Mr. Johnson made a motion that the Board adjourn into Executive Session for approximately 15 minutes to discuss the current contract with and good name and character of Smith Warren employees. The motion was seconded by Judge Zack Moore. Mr. Herndon certified the reason for the Executive Session, and Chairman Lay called for a roll call vote: Chairman Jimmie Lay, aye; Ms. Jennifer Collard, aye; Mr. Barry Johnson, aye; Mr. Gustavius Maxie, aye; Mr. John Vaugh, aye; Judge Zack Moore, aye; Mr. Chris McNeil, aye; Ms. Carla Woodall, aye.
Chairman Lay called the Board into Executive Session at 3:07 p.m.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made the motion to adjourn from Executive Session to the business meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Johnson and unanimously approved by the Board. Chairman Lay called the business meeting back into session at 3:41 p.m.

MOTION: Ms. Woodall made a motion to table discussions and any action regarding the review of the current contract with Smith Warren or possible interagency agreement with the Alabama Security Regulatory Board (ASRB) to transition into State government until the current audit report was published and State Personnel met and suggested a special-called meeting be held by the Board on July 10, 2026. Motion was seconded by Judge Zack Moore. After continued in-depth discussions of the motion, a vote by a show of hands was taken resulting in Ms. Wooden, Judge Moore, and Ms. Woodall voting aye; Mr. Johnson, Mr. Maxie, Mr. Vaughn, Mr. McNeil, Ms. Collard, and Chairman Lay voting nay. Motion failed.

At 4:00 p.m. Ms. Wooden left the meeting.

MOTION: Mr. McNeil made a motion to give 30-day notice to terminate the current contract with Smith Warren. Motion was seconded by Ms. Collard. Discussions continued regarding the current contract while an audit was pending and its ramifications. Mr. McNeil renewed his motion wherein Chairman Lay called for a vote by a show of hands resulting in Mr. Johnson, Mr. Maxie, Mr. Vaughn, Mr. McNeil, Ms. Collard, and Chairman Lay voting aye; Judge Moore and Ms. Woodall voting nay. Motion passed.

At which time Ms. Woodall orally resigned as Secretary of the Board stating concerns of liability required of the Secretary under the Code of Alabama and Administrative Rules absent oversight and management of an Executive Director after 30 days.

Chairman Lay called for nominations for Secretary of the Board. Mr. Johnson nominated Mr. Chris McNeil, and the nomination was seconded by Mr. Maxie. A vote was called by Chairman Lay resulting in Mr. Johnson, Mr. Maxie, Mr. Vaughn, Mr. McNeil, Ms. Collard, and Judge Moore voting aye; Ms. Woodall voting nay. Chairman Lay declared Mr. McNeil Secretary of the Board.

MOTION: Mr. Johnson made a motion that the Board adjourn the motion was seconded by Judge Zack Moore. and Chairman Lay called for a roll call vote: Chairman Jimmie Lay, aye; Ms. Jennifer Collard, aye; Mr. Barry Johnson, aye; Mr. Gustavius Maxie, aye; Mr. John Vaugh, aye; Judge Zack Moore, aye; Mr. Chris McNeil, aye; Ms. Carla Woodall, aye.

<u>Adjournment:</u>
The Board adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Jimmie H Lay

Jimmie Lay, Board Chairman