



Alabama State Bar

Board of Bar Commission Minutes

Alabama State Bar Building
415 Dexter Avenue, Montgomery, AL 36104

March 6, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

CALL TO ORDER

President Fred Helmsing convened this meeting of the Board of Bar Commissioners at 10:04 a.m. in the boardroom of the Alabama State Bar in Montgomery, Alabama. Helmsing led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

The secretary took the roll of the Commission with the following commissioners answering as present and thus establishing a quorum:

Pratt Austin-Trucks
Raymond Bell
Edgar Black
Mark Boardman
Sally Bowers
Jeff Bowling
Randy Bozeman
Will Broome
Devan Byrd
Clay Carr
Hunter Compton
Joel Connally
Lisa Cooper
Brad Cornett
Mark Debro
Lang Floyd
Jana Garner
Leon Hampton

Josh Hayes
Fred Helmsing
David Holt
Ralph Holt
Carmen Howell
Mitch Kemmer
Angela Kennedy
Lee Knowles
Will Lee
Jorja Loftin
Felicia Long
Doug Martinson
Bob McMillan
Steve Nicholas
Andrew Nix
Manish Patel
George Parker
Lynn Perry

Tom Perry
Bobby Poundstone
Brandy Robertson
Steven Savarese
Pat Sefton
Julius Shanks
Mitch Shelly
Jeff Sherrer
Doug Smith
John Stamps
Stephen Still
Ron Strawbridge
Sharon Stuart
Jerome Thompson
Jeff Utsey
Leila Watson
Suntrease Williams-
Maynard

The following commissioners were absent:

Conrad Anderson	Wallace Mills	Holly Sawyer
Christine Butler	Leslie Moore	Sebie Sellers
Matthew Carter	Tamara Neeley	Tyler Sims
Kelly Davidson	Evan Parrott	Elizabeth Smithart
Deborah Dunsmore	Ashley Peinhardt	Kyra Sparks
Kirk Garrett	Gregory Price	Jimbo Terrell
Lisha Graham	John Rea	Al Vance
Scott Holmes	Robert Richardson	Artie Vaughn
Kesa Johnston	Chrissy Riddle	Robin Wolfe
Edwin Lamberth	Ryan Robichaux	
David Langston	Freddy Rubio	

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

President Helmsing asked for approval of the agenda.

- *Commissioner Mark Debro moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Pratt Austin-Trucks, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

President Helmsing welcomed special guests in attendance which included Chief Justice Sarah Stewart, Associate Justice Will Sellers, Associate Justice Will Parker, and Megan Rhodebeck, Supreme Court Clerk. Helmsing further recognized the Leadership Forum Class 20 members who were in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES JANUARY 30, 2026

President Helmsing stated the minutes from the January 30, 2026, Board of Bar Commissioners meeting had been distributed prior to the meeting.

- *Commissioner Randy Bozeman moved to approve the minutes as submitted, seconded by Steven Savarese, and said motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.*

PUBLIC REPRIMANDS

Huntsville, Alabama attorney Matthew Brett Reeves, was issued a Public Reprimand with General Publication by the Disciplinary Commission of the Alabama State Bar on March 6, 2026, for violating Rules 1.1 [Competence], 3.3 [Candor Toward the Tribunal], and 8.4(d) and (g) [Misconduct], *Alabama Rules of Professional Conduct*. On July 23, 2025, United States District Judge Anna Manasco entered a sanctions order against Reeves and other lawyers in his firm. At the time, Reeves was employed by a law firm who was retained to represent the State of Alabama

in litigation involving the Department of Corrections (“DOC”). In representing DOC, Reeves used the Artificial Intelligence tool ChatGPT to assist him in drafting two (2) separate motions. Some of the legal citations Reeves listed in the motions were false. The false citations were generated by ChatGPT and are commonly referred to as “hallucinations.” Reeves failed to verify whether all the citations generated by ChatGPT were accurate.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

President Fred Helmsing began his report stating he attended the National Conference of Bar Presidents meeting in San Antonio, Texas, in early February, wherein he led a breakout session of the Southern Conference of Bar Presidents. He highlighted the life and significant contributions of William Barrett Travis, a lawyer from Alabama who was placed in command of the troops at the Alamo. Helmsing mentioned he was honored to attend the Judge’s Mid-Winter Conference in February where he addressed the Women’s Section of the ASB at their luncheon. Most recently Helmsing attended the investiture ceremony of Justice Will Parker at the Alabama Supreme Court. Helmsing congratulated Justice Parker before the commission. Helmsing also discussed his participation with Leadership Forum over the previous two days. He attended a luncheon held with the Leadership Forum participants and Supreme Court justices at the bar building and attended a reception hosted by past president Tom Methvin for the Leadership Forum class. Helmsing reported no finance report would be provided as we were not at the end of a financial quarter and concluded his remarks welcoming George Parker as the President-Elect designate.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Executive Director Terri Lovell also welcomed the Leadership Forum participants and thanked those commissioners in attendance that served in different governance positions within the ASB. Lovell recognized the strong relationship the bar has with the Supreme Court and stated the bar continues to work to strengthen this bond. She discussed the recent administration of the February bar exam wherein 318 people were tested with 76 receiving special accommodations. Grading of the bar exam is underway and over 550 examinees are anticipated for the July exam. Last week Lovell was informed the Sunset Review audit by the Examiner of Public Accounts was complete. She stated the bar continues to work with the Court regarding the Alabama Rules Governing Admission in anticipation of changes relating to Next Gen bar exam implementation in addition to rules regarding military spouses. Lovell stated the election website is live and all members can see who has qualified to seek commissioner positions. It was announced the annual meeting registration would soon be opening and reminded members that Law Day registration would soon be available. Lovell concluded her report calling on Chad Coker, Director of Operations, to provide a report regarding the Southern Conference of Bar Presidents meeting that is to be held in October 2026.

GENERAL COUNSEL REPORT

General Counsel Roman Shaul began his remarks discussing the increased level of threats of violence directed to lawyers and Judges warranting investigation and involvement from his office.

He cautioned members to be vigilant. Shaul informed the commission of four new lawsuits concerning the bar arising out of the disciplinary process and discussed the forthcoming issuance of two new formal opinions from his office regarding agency artificial intelligence matters and ethical obligations surrounding payments through online means. Shaul concluded his remarks providing an overview of reappointment votes concerning disciplinary board members and hearing officers which would be held later in the meeting.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL REPORT

Legislative Counsel Suzi Huffaker reported the bars legislation, Act 2026-58, was signed into law on February 17, 2026. The session continues to move along and over 900 bills have been filed. She encouraged membership to utilize the new tracking system implemented by the bar.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL and LOCAL BAR REPORT

Devan Byrd, President of the Young Lawyers Section, provided an update of the Executive Council's actions since the last meeting. Byrd referenced only one meeting had taken place since the last bar commission meeting. She stated that updated section data was provided revealing an increase of 1,858 members in section membership. Byrd also gave the local bar report. The Young Lawyers Section concluded a legal boot camp last week in Montgomery and will continue that programming in Huntsville, Birmingham, Mobile, and in Baldwin County. She announced an annual meeting would be held in May and encouraged all young lawyers to attend.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

CLIENT SECURITY FUND APPOINTMENTS

Roman Shaul announced there are appointments needed for the Client Security Fund. One member and two lay members are up for appointment or reappointment. The positions are currently filled by Michael Ballard (lawyer member), Lee Boles (lay member), and David Loe (lay member).

DISCIPLINARY BOARD ALTERNATE APPOINTMENTS

Shaul stated the Rules of Disciplinary Procedure also allow for the hearing officer to appoint alternate panel members when the regular panel members cannot serve. The OGC tries to keep three alternates prepared and trained in case the need arises. There will be appointments for two alternate positions. Deadline for nominations will be April 3, 2026, in order to complete the required review for each candidate.

DISCIPLINARY BOARD HEARING OFFICER APPOINTMENTS

David Martin, Rebekah McKinney, and Jim Rebarchak currently fill these positions. All three individuals will have completed their terms as hearing officers and are not eligible for reappointment. Deadline for nominations will be April 3, 2026, in order to complete the required review for each candidate.

ALABAMA LAW FOUNDATION APPOINTMENTS

The BBC appoints six members to the ALF Board on staggered terms. The positions held by Jeannie Rizzardi and Josh Hayes are up for appointment. A recommendation will be received by ALF and nominations will also be accepted and submitted to the BBC for consideration.

ALABAMA LAWYER ASSISTANCE FOUNDATION APPOINTMENTS

The BBC appoints three members to the ALAF on staggered terms. Angela Kennedy is eligible for reappointment and is willing to continue in this position.

- *A motion to move the Alabama Lawyer Assistance Foundation Appointment to an action item was made by Bob McMillan, seconded by Jerome Thompson, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*
- *A motion to close nominations and reappoint Angela Kennedy to the Alabama Lawyer Assistance Foundation was made by Bob McMillan, seconded by Mark Debro, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*

APPROVAL OF ANNUAL ASB AWARDS

Approval is obtained by the BBC for various awards and recognitions bestowed by the Alabama State Bar. The deadlines are as follows:

March 15, 2026:

Bill Scruggs Award, Tony McClain Award, and Judicial Award of Merit.

April 1, 2026:

Pro Bono Awards and Lawyers Hall of Fame

ABA HOUSE OF DELEGATES ELECTION

The terms of Rich Raleigh, Richard Gaal, and John Stamps are expiring following the Annual ABA Meeting in August 2026. These positions are volunteer and do not receive reimbursement or

compensation for travel. The BBC appoints four positions and a Young Lawyer representative on staggered terms.

ACTION ITEMS:

AMENDMENTS TO THE ELECTION RULES

- *A motion to postpone allowing for more discussion was made by Hunter Compton, seconded by Lynn Perry, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*

APPOINTMENT TO THE LAWYERS HALL OF FAME

Four board appointments exist for the Lawyers Hall of Fame. Sam Rumore, Wendy Crew, Sandra Lewis, and Everett Price each seek reappointment. No further nominations were received.

- *A motion to close nominations was made by Pratt Austin-Trucks, seconded by Bob McMillan, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*
- *A motion to appoint Sam Rumore, Wendy Crew, Sandra Lewis, and Everett Price to the Lawyers Hall of Fame Committee was made by Joel Connally, seconded by Mark Debro, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*

APPOINTMENTS TO THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD

Five appointments exist to the Disciplinary Board. The following Disciplinary Board members are eligible for reappointment for a second 3-year term: Greg Brockwell, Carmen Howell, Brad Cornett, Angela Kennedy, and David Skinner. No further nominations were received.

Although not a discussion item on January 30th, General Counsel Roman Shaul asked the Board to consider suspending the rules and fill two additional positions held by Suntrease Williams-Maynard and Marshall Gardner on the Disciplinary Commission, as both are eligible for reappointment for a second 3-year term.

- *A motion to appoint Greg Brockwell, Carmen Howell, Brad Cornett, Angela Kennedy, and David Skinner, to the Disciplinary Board positions was made by Hunter Compton, seconded by David Holt, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*
- *A motion to amend the agenda and thus suspend the rules to add, as an action item, the reappointment of two individuals to the Disciplinary Commission, was made by Clay Carr, seconded by Manish Patel, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*
- *A motion to close nominations and reappoint Suntrease Williams-Maynard and Marshall Gardner to the Disciplinary Commission was made by Pratt Austin-Trucks, seconded by Mark Debro, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*

APPOINTMENTS OF LAY MEMBERS TO DISCIPLINARY BOARD

The following lay members are eligible for reappointment to the Disciplinary Board: Chris Phung, Bob Collins, Robert Davis, and Col. Danny Samples. No further nominations were received.

- *A motion to close nominations and reappoint Chris Phung, Bob Collins, Robert Davis, and Col. Danny Samples was made by Edgar Black, seconded by Steven Savarese, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*

WAIVER OF FIRST YEAR DUES TO YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION

Devan Byrd, President of the Young Lawyers Section, shared about the work of the YLS at the previous board meeting and proposed from the YLS executive committee a recommendation to waive first year dues to all new lawyers.

- *A motion to waive first year dues to the Young Lawyers Section was made by Josh Hayes, seconded by Pratt Austin-Trucks, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*

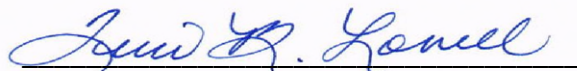
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further old or new business, President Fred Helmsing adjourned the meeting at 10:52 a.m.



Frederick G. Helmsing, Jr., President
Alabama State Bar

ATTEST:



Terri B. Lovell, Secretary
Alabama State Bar