



Alabama State Bar

Board of Bar Commission Minutes

The Grand Hotel
One Grand Boulevard
Point Clear, Alabama 36564
Lagoon Room/Beachside Room

Wednesday, July 15, 2026, and Saturday, July 18, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

President Fred Helmsing convened this meeting of the Board of Bar Commissioners at 2:35 p.m. in the Lagoon Room of the Grand Hotel in Point Clear, 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:

Conrad Anderson	Jana Garner	George Parker
Pratt Austin-Trucks	Lisha Graham	Evan Parrott
Raymond Bell	Leon Hampton	Lynn Perry
Edgar Black	Doug Hargett	Tom Perry
Mark Boardman	Josh Hayes	Bobby Poundstone
Robert Bowers	Fred Helmsing	Robert Richardson
Sally Bowers	Scott Holmes	Brandy Robertson
Jeff Bowling	David Holt	Ryan Robichaux
Randy Bozeman	Carmen Howell	Freddie Rubio
Nicholas Bull	Kesa Johnston	Steven Savarese
Clay Carr	Will Lee	Holly Sawyer
Matthew Carter	Felicia Long	Pat Sefton
Hunter Compton	Doug Martinson	Sebie Sellers
Joel Connally	John McReynolds	Julius Shanks
Lisa Cooper	Wallace Mills	Mitch Shelly
Brad Cornett	Tamara Neeley	Jeff Sherrer
Kelly Davidson	Steven Nicholas	Elizabeth Smithart
Mark Debro	Andrew Nix	Stephen Still
Deb Dunsmore	Richard Nix	Sharon Stuart

Jimbo Terrell
Jerome Thompson
Jeff Utsey

Leila Watson
Joe Whitt

Suntrease Williams -
Maynard
Robin Wolfe

The following commissioners were absent:

Jody Bishop
Will Broome
Mitch Kemmer
Angela Kennedy
Edwin Lamberth
David Langston

Jorja Loftin
Leslie Moore
Ashley Peinhardt
Meredith Peters
Greg Price
John Rea

Chrissy Riddle
Tyler Sims
Kyra Sparks
Ron Strawbridge
Al Vance

Also in attendance were staff members Roman Shaul, Chad Coker, Merinda Hall, Melissa Warnke, Karen Laneaux, Suzi Huffaker, Hilaire Armstrong, and Michael Granger.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

President Helmsing recognized special guests including Chief Justice Sarah Stewart, Associate Justice Greg Shaw, Associate Justice Kelli Wise, Associate Justice Greg Cook, U.S. District Judge Austin Huffaker, Court of Civil Appeals Judge Matt Friday, Past President Lee Copeland, Past President Cole Portis, Past President Augusta Dowd, Past President Gibson Vance, and Past President Tom Methvin.

OATH OF OFFICE FOR NEW COMMISSIONERS

Associate Justice Kelli Wise administered the Oath of Office to the new board members.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- *Commissioner Pratt Austin-Trucks moved to approve agenda for July 15, 2026, seconded by Suntrease Williams-Maynard, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 1, 2026, BOARD MEETING

President Helmsing stated that the minutes of the May 1, 2026, Board Meeting had been transcribed and circulated prior to the meeting. He asked if there were any corrections, additions, or deletions.

- *Commissioner Edgar Black moved to approve the minutes as submitted for May 1, 2026, seconded by Lisha Graham, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Helmsing began his remarks expressing his gratitude serving as the 150th president of the Alabama State Bar. He provided an update since the last meeting to include the new Commissioner Orientation on June 25, the Eleventh Circuit Conference in Florida, speaking at the Alabama Defense Lawyers Association and celebrating with newly installed ADLA president and BBC member Mark Debro. Helmsing recognized Commissioner Lynn Perry's presence and recovery. President Helmsing thanked the commission for their service and recognized the members who had perfect attendance at all board meetings. Helmsing concluded by inviting all in attendance to his home for a reception following the meeting and reminding everyone of the Family Night Opening Dinner at 7:00 p.m.

SECRETARY/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Secretary/Executive Director Terri Lovell thanked the commissioners for their service during the 2025-2026 bar year. She encouraged the board members to review the Annual Report included in their Annual Meeting materials. She also confirmed full conversion of the Board of Bar Commission communication to the BBC Community Page. She offered to assist any board member who was unable to access the meeting materials and encouraged everyone to begin experimenting with the page and to use it as a resource to collaborate and easily access needed materials.

OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL REPORT

General Counsel Roman Shaul announced the release of the AI Opinion that has been communicated to the membership through the Sidebar and the Alabama Lawyer. He also previewed a discussion item on the Pro Hac Vice rule change and announced additional rule changes arising out of the OGC summit would be proposed in the near future.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Director of Finance Merinda Hall shared that the ASB 3rd quarter revenues showed modest growth for the year, increasing by less than half a percentage point over the last year. Spending rose by 12%, with personnel costs and grants and awards representing the main factors of the increase. Investments saw an increase of 6% throughout the fiscal year. Although revenue leads remain stable and spending has increased, a small surplus is forecasted for the end the fiscal year.

- *Commissioner Josh Hayes moved to accept the financial report, seconded by Mark Debro, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL REPORT

President Helmsing provided the final report for the 2025-2026 Executive Council. Helmsing stated the last meeting of the Executive Committee was held on June 25 following the new commissioner orientation. He thanked his Executive Council members on a successful year and for the time they committed to serving over the past year and for joining him for lunch prior to the BBC meeting.

BAR EXAM REPORT

Admissions Director Karen Laneaux announced the Admissions Department was busy preparing for the bar exam to be held July 28-29 at the BJCC in Birmingham, Alabama. She briefly discussed the rise in special accommodation requests and discussed how these matters are given an objective independent analysis by a medical expert. Laneaux thanked the volunteer lawyers who have agreed to serve as monitors during the exams. She informed the board of the monthly meeting of the Board of Bar Examiners to prepare for the implementation of the NextGen bar exam and the state essay exam in July 2028.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

PRO BONO TASK FORCE REPORT

Jeff Bowling, Past Chair of the Pro Bono Committee, presented Chris Cousins, Chair of the Pro Bono Celebration Task Force with a signed proclamation of Governor Kay Ivey, recognizing the efforts of the Alabama State Bar during pro bono month.

APPOINTMENT TO THE JUDICIAL INQUIRY COMMISSION

Maibeth Porter resigned from the Judicial Inquiry Commission in early 2026 and an appointment to fill the unexpired term of her appointment through March 2027 is needed. Terri Tompkins was the only nominee for the position.

- *Commissioner Pratt Austin-Trucks moved to suspend the rules and move the appointment to the Judicial Inquiry Commission to an action item, seconded by Scott Holmes, and approved by unanimous roll call vote.*
- *Commissioner Scott Holmes moved to close nominations, seconded by Edgar Black, and approved by unanimous roll call vote.*
- *Commissioner Clay Carr moved to nominate Terri Tompkins, seconded by Mark Debro, and approved by unanimous roll call vote.*

FINANCIAL POLICY MANUAL REVISIONS

Finance Director Merinda Hall announced revisions to the financial policy manual have been provided in red line form. The majority of revisions are to align existing financial policies with the judicial branch procurement policy.

2026 HALL OF NOMINEES

The Lawyer Hall of Fame Selection Committee met on May 1, 2026, and selected the following nominees: Joe Cassady, Hugh Maddox, Rick Manley, Demetrius Newton, and Laurence Lipscomb (100-year member).

PRO HAC VICE RULE CHANGE

Roman Shaul proposed a change to ARGA Rule VII as to Pro Hac Vice Admission. The red-lined rule change was included in the board materials.

ACTION ITEMS:

CHARACTER AND FITNESS COMMITTEE

President Helmsing announced the Character and Fitness committee is presented to the board on a recommendation from the Executive Council for appointment by President Jana Garner.

- *Motion to approve the Character and Fitness Committee appointment made by Jerome Thompson and seconded by Lisha Graham and approved by unanimous voice vote.*

18TH CIRCUIT, PLACE 3 VACANCY

No member qualified for the commission seat of 18th Circuit, Place 3, and the position became vacant as of July 1 on the expiration of Doug Smith's term. The position was advertised, a notice of vacancy was issued in the Commissioner Newsletter, and the Shelby County Bar Association was asked to submit nominations. Nominations were received and provided in the board materials. A vote was taken, and Jeff Hester was elected to fill the position.

DISCIPLINARY BOARD ALTERNATES

The Rules of Disciplinary Procedure allow for the hearing officer to appoint alternate panel members when the regular panel members cannot serve. A vote was taken of the nominated members and the board elected the following members:

Pratt Austin-Trucks
Doug Dellaccio
Deborah Bell Paseur

DISCIPLINARY BOARD HEARING OFFICERS

Positions for Disciplinary Board Hearing Officers were advertised, and nominations received. Nominations were closed and the board elected the following members:

Jeff Bowling
Edwin Lamberth
Steven Nicholas

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL NOMINATIONS

Commissioner Raymond Bell presented a report of the Nominating Committee and moved to approve the following officers for the 2025-2026 Executive Council as follows: Hunter Compton as Vice-President; Terri Lovell as Secretary; Mark Boardman as Parliamentarian; Mark Debro, Carmen Howell, and Jorja Loftin as voting members. No other nominations were received.

- *The motion was seconded by Josh Hayes and the following officers were approved for the 2026-2027 Executive Council by voice vote.*

Hunter Compton - Vice-President
Terri Lovell - Secretary
Mark Boardman - Parliamentarian
Mark Debro – Commission Member
Carmen Howell – Commission Member
Jorja Loftin – Commission Member
Jeff Bowling – Finance Chair (Ex-Officio)
Lisa Cooper – Personnel Chair (Ex Officio)
Mitch Shelly – Special Projects Chair (Ex Officio)

ANNUAL LICENSE FEE RENEWAL

President Helmsing announced that the Finance and Audit Committee and the Executive Council recommended licensing fees continue for a fourth year at the reduced rate of \$300 for occupational license and \$150 for special license.

- *Motion to approve the recommended licensure fees as \$300 for occupational and \$150 for special memberships was made by Hunter Compton, seconded by Edgar Black, and approved by a unanimous voice vote.*

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND GENERAL COUNSEL

Prior to any discussion beginning, Commissioner Randy Bozeman announced his recusal from any discussion regarding performance evaluations and excused himself from the meeting.

President Helmsing informed the board evaluations of both the Executive Director and General Counsel had been conducted, reviewed by the Performance Evaluation Committee, and were available for inspection by the board prior to the meeting.

A motion to accept the recommendation of the Executive Committee to approve the evaluations of both the Executive Director and General Counsel was made by David Holt, seconded by Carmen Howell, and approved by voice vote.

RECESS

President Helmsing declared that the meeting was in recess at 4:05 p.m. to a time and place certain, specifically Saturday, July 18, 2026, reconvening in Beachside Room at 11:15 am.



Alabama State Bar

Board of Bar Commission Minutes

The Grand Hotel
One Grand Boulevard
Point Clear, Alabama 36564
Beachside Room

Saturday, July 18, 2026

RECONVENED MEETING

MEETING RECONVENED

Parliamentarian Mark Boardman announced the meeting of the Board of Bar Commission reconvened in Beachside Room

CALL TO ORDER

President Jana Garner called the meeting to order at 11:15 a.m.

ROLL CALL (Need to verify attendance with financials before final)

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

Conrad Anderson	Joel Connally	David Holt
Pratt Austin-Trucks	Lisa Cooper	Carmen Howell
Raymond Bell	Brad Cornett	Kesa Johnston
Edgar Black	Kelly Davidson	Will Lee
Mark Boardman	Mark Debro	Felicia Long
Robert Bowers	Deb Dunsmore	Doug Martinson
Sally Bowers	Jana Garner	John McReynolds
Jeff Bowling	Lisha Graham	Wallace Mills
Randy Bozeman	Leon Hampton	Tamara Neeley
Nicholas Bull	Doug Hargett	Steven Nicholas
Clay Carr	Josh Hayes	Andrew Nix
Matthew Carter	Fred Helmsing	Richard Nix
Hunter Compton	Scott Holmes	George Parker

Evan Parrott
Lynn Perry
Tom Perry
Bobby Poundstone
Robert Richardson
Brandy Robertson
Ryan Robichaux
Freddie Rubio
Steven Savarese

Holly Sawyer
Pat Sefton
Sebie Sellers
Julius Shanks
Mitch Shelly
Jeff Sherrer
Elizabeth Smithart
Stephen Still
Sharon Stuart

Jimbo Terrell
Jerome Thompson
Jeff Utsey
Leila Watson
Joe Whitt
Suntrease Williams -
Maynard
Robin Wolfe

The following commissioners were absent:

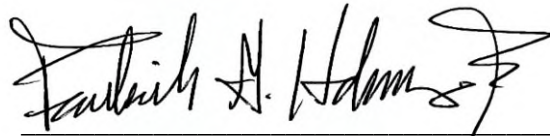
Jody Bishop
Will Broome
Mitch Kemmer
Angela Kennedy
Edwin Lamberth
David Langston

Jorja Loftin
Leslie Moore
Ashley Peinhardt
Meredith Peters
Greg Price
John Rea

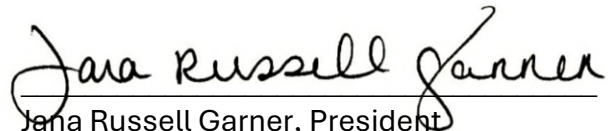
Chrissy Riddle
Tyler Sims
Kyra Sparks
Ron Strawbridge
Al Vance

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further old or new business, President Garner adjourned the meeting at 11:22 a.m.



Frederick G. Helmsing, Jr., President
Alabama State Bar, 2025-2026



Jana Russell Garner, President
Alabama State Bar, 2026-2027

ATTEST:



Terri B. Lovell, Secretary
Alabama State Bar

Approved by BBC on 8/28/26