Alabama State Bar

Board of Bar Commission Minutes

Auburn Hotel and Conference Center
241 South College Street
Auburn, AL 36830

August 28, 2026, at 9:30 a.m.

CALL TO ORDER

President Jana Garner convened this meeting of the Board of Bar Commissioners at 9:32 a.m. in the Terrace Room of the Auburn Hotel and Conference Center in Auburn, Alabama. Commissioner Artie Vaughn 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:

Jana Garner
Hunter Compton
George Parker
Mark Boardman
Fred Helmsing
Mark Debro
Carmen Howell
Jorja Loftin
Conrad Anderson
Pratt Austin-Trucks
Raymond Bell
Robert Bowers
Randy Bozeman
Will Broome
Nicholas Bull
Clay Carr
Matthew Carter
Hunter Compton
Joel Connally
Lisa Cooper
Kelly Davidson
Lisha Graham
Leon Hampton
Doug Hargett
Josh Hayes
David Holt
Kesa Johnston
Edwin Lamberth
David Langston
Felicia Long
Doug Martinson
John McReynolds
Wallace Mills
Tamara Neeley
Richard Nix
Lynn Perry
Meredith Peters
Bobby Poundstone
Greg Price
Robert Richardson
Ryan Robichaux
Freddie Rubio
Steven Savarese
Holly Sawyer
Pat Sefton
Sebie Sellers
Mitch Shelly
Jeff Sherrer
Elizabeth Smithart
Sharon Stuart
Jimbo Terrell
Jerome Thompson
Leila Watson
Joe Whitt
Robin Wolfe

The following commissioners were absent:

Jody Bishop
Edgar Black
Sally Bowers
Brad Cornett
Deb Dunsmore
Scott Holmes
Mitch Kemmer
Angela Kennedy
Will Lee
Leslie Moore
Steven Nicholas
Andrew Nix
Evan Parrott
Ashley Peinhardt
John Rea
Chrissy Riddle
Brandy Robertson
Julius Shanks
Tyler Sims
Kyra Sparks
Stephen Still
Ron Strawbridge
Jeff Utsey
Al Vance
Suntrease Williams - Maynard

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

President Jana Garner asked for approval of the agenda.

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

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

President Garner welcomed special guests in attendance which included Judge Richard Minor of the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals and Curtis Seal, President of the Young Lawyers Association.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JULY 15 and 18, 2026

President Garner stated the minutes from the July 15th and 18th, 2026, Board of Bar Commissioners meeting had been distributed prior to the meeting.

- *Commissioner Mark Debro moved to approve the minutes as submitted with a noted scrivener's error, seconded by Pratt Austin-Trucks, and said motion was approved by unanimous voice vote*.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Jana Garner began her report thanking Immediate Past-President Fred Helmsing for his service to the Alabama State Bar. Since assuming the office of President, Garner stated she has participated in the following events: attendance at the NCBP/SCBP meeting in Chicago; Huntsville Bar Association meeting wherein Pam Shepard was presented the previously awarded Jesse Price Evans III Award; Stamped for Success Tour in Auburn in

which over 103 members registered and participated in the programming; and finally a commissioner reception which was held at the home of commissioner Kelly Davidson. Garner also thanked Jeff Bowling, Joel Connally, Christy Crow, Brian Strength, and the Litigation Section for their participation and support of the Auburn events. President Garner provided an overview of upcoming September events and encouraged everyone to attend the October BBC meeting as a photographer would be present for a group photo.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Terri Lovell spoke of the successes of the bar in the previous bar year. She pointed to the passage of agency status legislation, the successful administration of the July bar exam, the strength of the year end final reports, and the positive discussions and interactions at the executive council retreat. Lovell discussed her goals for the upcoming year as they relate to internal operations, information and technology audits within the bar, implementation of the NextGen bar exam, and revisions to the strategic plan. She concluded her remarks stating the staff development plan this year would focus on helping the bar staff be their best to better serve our members by offering learning sessions to improve technology skills, productivity, and well-being.

GENERAL COUNSEL REPORT

General Counsel Roman Shaul stated he would have two trial terms before the end of the year and announced there would be five (5) disciplinary board spots open for appointment and two subject to reappointment. He encouraged any that were interested to submit nominations prior to October 5th for their names to be properly vetted by the Alabama Supreme Court. Shaul announced a Pro Hac Vice rule would be voted on later in the meeting and thanked Cathy Sue McCurry, Licensing and Regulatory Manager, for her work on the revisions. He concluded his remarks regarding expected rule changes arising out of the work of the OGC Summit and spoke briefly regarding recent social media posts involving his office.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL REPORT

Vice President Hunter Compton provided an overview of the recent Executive Council retreat. Compton spoke about the bar being a "Partner in Practice" to the members and encouraged those in attendance to consider attending one of the following three events: Oral Arguments before the Alabama Supreme Court which will be held in Dothan on September 17th; the 50-year Milestone Celebration which will be held in Montevallo on September 17th; or the Alabama Bar Leadership Institute meeting which will be held in Birmingham on September 25th.

YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION REPORT

Curtis Seal provided an update on the YLS and highlighted the Admission Ceremony, Pre-Law Conference, Orange Beach CLE, and New Lawyer Boot Camps as just a few of the activities the section is undertaking this bar year.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Finance Director Merinda Hall stated the FY 2028 budget would be submitted to the commissioners prior to the next board meeting. As such, there was no financial report to provide.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

DISCIPLINARY BOARD APPOINTMENT

There will be five (5) vacancies on the Disciplinary Board and two (2) additional vacancies which are eligible for reappointment. October 5th will be the deadline for applying and all applications should be submitted to Roman Shaul.

COURT OF JUDICIARY ALTERNATE APPOINTMENT

There is currently a vacancy on the Court of Judiciary. It was announced that the Executive Council proposed the position be filled by Walter McGowan.

- *A motion to suspend the rules and move this matter to an action item was made by Raymond Bell, seconded by Mark Debro, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*
- *A motion to appoint Walter McGowan and further close nominations was made by Leila Watson, seconded by Josh Hayes, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*

ACTION ITEMS:

HALL OF FAME NOMINEES:

The 2026 proposed Hall of Fame Nominees are as follows: Joe Cassady, Hugh Maddox, Rick Manley, Demetrius Newton, and Laurence Lipscomb (100-year member).

- *A motion to approve the nominees was made by Pratt Austin-Trucks, seconded by Lisa Cooper, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*

ARGA RULE VII AMENDMENT TO PRO HAC VICE RULE:

The proposed amendment had been previously provided to the commission members in advance of the meeting.

- *A motion to approve the proposed amendment was made by David Holt, seconded by Steven Savarese, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*

FINANCIAL POLICY MANUAL REVISIONS

A discussion was held regarding proposed revisions to the Financial Policy Manual with a noted change that BBC approval would be sought in advance for out of state travel as it relates to an Executive Council retreat and that travel of the ASB President could be reimbursed as it relates to requests made by member associations for the President to speak at their meetings.

- *A motion was made to adopt the Financial Policy Manual revisions with the noted modifications by Mark Debro, seconded by Josh Hayes, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*

STAFF COMPENSATION APPROVAL FOR 2027

Commissioner Randy Bozeman recused from any discussions regarding staff compensation and exited the board meeting. Staff of the Alabama State Bar also exited the board meeting.

A discussion was held regarding the proposal for staff compensation for 2027 as previously submitted to the Executive Council which would further include a 2% cost of living adjustment.

- *A motion to approve the proposed staff compensation for 2027 was made by Jorja Loftin, seconded by Carmen Howell, and approved by unanimous voice vote.*

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further old or new business, President Jana Garner adjourned the meeting at 10:32 a.m.

Jana Russell Garner, President
Alabama State Bar

ATTEST:

Terri B. Lovell, Secretary
Alabama State Bar