MINUTES

ALABAMA STATE BAR
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING & RETREAT

Alabama State Bar
August 21-22, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

ASB President Fred Helmsing convened the meeting of the Alabama State Bar Executive Council at 8:52 a.m. at the University of Alabama School of Law at 101 Paul W. Bryant Drive in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

ROLL CALL

The Secretary, Terri Lovell, took the roll of the Executive Council, and the following were present:

Raymond Bell, Jeff Bowling, Christen Butler, Devan Byrd, Joel Connally, Jana Garner, Fred Helmsing, Will Lee, and George Parker.

The following staff members were present:

Terri Lovell, Roman Shaul, Chad Coker, Merinda Hall, Melissa Warnke and Robyn Bernier.

The following members were absent:

Mark Boardman and Tom Perry

QUORUM PRESENT

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA FOR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING OF AUGUST 21-22, 2025, WAS MADE BY RAYMOND BELL, SECONDED BY JANA GARNER, AND APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE.

MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING OF JUNE 19, 2025, WAS MADE BY WILL LEE, SECONDED BY JEFF BOWLING, AND APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Presentations of the staff to the Executive Council consisted of the following:

Terri Lovell- Executive Director:

Reviewed the ASB Strategic Action Plan and provided a summary of successes this past bar year. Lovell stated communication with the staff through the Bar Buzz had been beneficial in communicating the importance of customer service. While not perfect, the ASB audit findings were an improvement over the prior findings as attention to compliance continues to be a priority. Finally, Lovell listed a multitude of events that were successes over the past year: Fred Gray Courtyard celebration, Hall of Fame luncheon, and Lawyers in the Classroom.

Lovell's goals for the upcoming year will be seeking a legislative revision to determine agency status, planning a future bar leadership summit, and seeking full integration of the ASB database while availing our members of all the features it offers.

Roman Shaul- General Counsel

Provided an overview of his department, his staff, and the disciplinary process. Shaul identified ongoing needs of his department as it relates to personnel. He stated his goals for the upcoming year would be to update ethics opinions on the website and to begin a probationary docket for attorneys involved with the OGC. Mark Moody, as Assistant General Counsel and Compliance Counsel, will be heavily involved in these two projects.

Merinda Hall- Finance Director

Presented on the financial and budgetary structure of the Alabama State Bar. Prior to fiscal year 2017, the ASB had run budget deficits for eight consecutive years. Since that time, surpluses have occurred through budgeting and careful attention being paid to expenditures. Hall further provided an expense analysis for the foundation budget and long-range planning which encompasses replacement of the elevator, roof, and painting of the second and third floors.

Melissa Warnke- Communications Director

Warnke spoke regarding the improvements made to The Alabama Lawyer along with the enhanced financial viability of the magazine since changes have been made regarding the number of issues and means of circulation/distribution. She also provided information regarding the increase in advertising since assuming this responsibility.

Chad Coker- Director of Operations

Provided an overview of staffing levels, current vacancies, and difficulties in finding suitable candidates to interview and hire. Coker highlighted the success of the Toolbox Tour and 50-year Milestone Luncheon. Stated goals for the year would be to hire for all current vacant positions and expand upon new avenues for building relationships with members of the Alabama Supreme Court.

Fred Helmsing- President

President Helmsing discussed his presidential priorities for the coming bar year and particularly mentioned the NextGen bar exam and ongoing preparations being made by bar staff to implement a state component in July 2028. Helmsing referenced that Alabama would host the Southern Conference of Bar Presidents meeting in October 2026. Finally, he took time to praise the work of past president Tom Perry regarding his Harvesting Hope initiative and how it remains at the forefront of all access to justice efforts nationwide.

MOTION TO RECESS UNTIL AUGUST 22, 2025, AT 8:45 A.M. WAS MADE BY JOEL CONNALLY, SECONDED BY JEFF BOWLING, AND APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE.

RECONVENED MEETING

President Fred Helmsing reconvened the Executive Committee on August 22, 2025, at 8:45 a.m. at the Alamite Hotel Conference Room, 2321 6th Street, Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401.

Following reflections from the previous day, President Helmsing proceeded with the agenda.

ACTION ITEMS:

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 5, 2025, BOARD OF BAR COMMISSION AGENDA

Discussions were held regarding the Board of Bar Commission Agenda. It was determined that a Finance Director's report could be omitted, and proposal of the FY 27 Budget was necessary. President Helmsing indicated that Ralph Holt had expressed an interest in serving as the ABA House of Delegate Appointment and that an appointment would be available for the Alabama Law Foundation Board.

MOTION BY JOEL CONNALLY TO APPROVE BBC AGENDA AS AMENDED OF SEPTEMBER 5, 2025, WAS SECONDED BY JEFF BOWLING, AND APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE.

BUDGET & STAFF PROPOSAL

Finance Director Merinda Hall gave an overview of the Alabama State Bar finances, staff compensation proposals, and projections for FY 2026 and FY 2027. The board conferred between themselves and with the Executive Director and General Counsel.

MOTION MADE BY JANA GARNER RECOMMENDING TO THE BOARD OF BAR COMMISSIONERS A 1% MERIT INCREASE ACROSS THE BOARD WHILE RESERVING THE VALUE OF AN ADDITIONAL 1% FOR FUTURE DISTRIBUTION BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND GENERAL COUNSEL, WAS SECONDED BY JEFF BOWLING AND APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

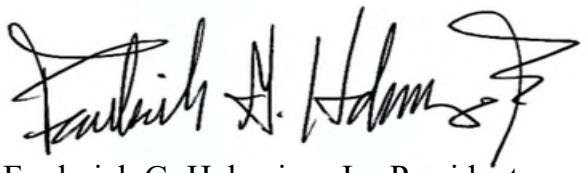
Old Business:
There was no old business.

New Business:
Tom Heflin, a current ASB appointment to the Alabama Law Foundation Board, has announced his resignation. A discussion was held regarding a replacement for that position.

MOTION MADE BY RAYMOND BELL TO RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF BAR COMMISSIONERS THE APPOINTMENT OF JOSH HAYES TO THE ALABAMA LAW FOUNDATION BOARD WAS SECONDED BY JEFF BOWLING AND APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS ROLL CALL VOTE.

MEETING ADJOURNED

President Helmsing asked if there was any further business to come before the Executive Council. There being no further business to come before the board, President Helmsing adjourned the meeting on August 22, 2025, at 10:46 a.m.



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

ATTEST:



Terri B. Lovell, Secretary
Alabama State Bar