

North Carolina Locksmith Licensing Board
Meeting Minutes
April 3, 2024
Raleigh / Zoom Option

Members Present: Larry Mares, Jim Storie, Debbie Atkinson, Mike McCarty, Garrett Davis, Wilson Weaver, Deana Brena, Jack Walder, Diana Riddle

Staff: Barden Culbreth, Carrie Duhon, Catherine Lee, Tatiana Terry, Leroy Everhart

Call to Order and Welcome: Chair Larry Mares called the meeting to order.

Ethics Awareness Statement: Larry read the NC Ethics Awareness Statement and asked for any conflicts of interest or appearances of conflict with the business before the Board today. Hearing none, the meeting continued.

Approval of Agenda: Mike motioned to approve the agenda. Jack seconded and the agenda was approved without objection.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: Jim motioned to approve the previous meeting minutes, Jack seconded, and the minutes were approved.

Approval of Financial Report: The Financial Report for review consisted of the reconciled January bank statement which was previously sent to the Board members. Jim was recognized and asked about the credit card fees imposed on the Board. Barden reported that he would look at other vendors and see if there were better rates. Jim motioned to approve the report. Jack seconded and the report was approved. Treasurer Mike McCarty initiated the Board office copy of the report.

Examination Committee: Jim and Diane recently proctored the exam in Asheville at Ashville Buncombe Technical Community College. Barden proctored the exam in Burlington at Alamance Community College and would be proctoring one at Pitt Community College on April 13th.

Jim was recognized and spoke about the Board's past decision to move away from administering the licensing Exam at the NC Locksmiths Association. He stated that he supported the idea of offering the test at the NC Locksmiths Association in addition to the community colleges. Larry offered his support. Barden provided history of the Board's decision and that many new locksmiths were confused by the Board and the Association. He also reported that some test takers were turned away or felt forced to become members of the Association while taking the test. Jim stated this had been resolved. Debbie asked if the NCLA Board was in support and Jim said they were. Larry said he was asked about this at the recent NCLA Board meeting. Barden said he had no problem with the exam at the NCLA meetings but the schedule needed to be provided to the Board so applicants could plan appropriately. Jim made the motion that the Board now offer the licensing exam at the NCLA meeting. Jack seconded and the motion was carried unanimously.

Chair's Report: Larry shared his experience being NCLLB Chair at the NCLA meeting. He said many people had questions and he was pleased to report on the recent legal successes of the Board's attorneys.

Board Office Report: Barden reported that he is meeting with the NC Department of Revenue following several investigations showing invoices and receipts without sales tax. It's likely these unlicensed locksmith operations are not filing any taxes at all.

Legal Update: Tatiana Terry, a litigator with Hedrick Gardner Kincheloe and Garofalo, LLP, was recognized and she described the Board's recent criminal contempt case against Roy Abudram. The case was ultimately settled out of court and Abudram agreed to get licensed and pay the Board \$15,000.

Catherine Lee provided an update to the Board, including 12 injunctions that have been filed for unlicensed locksmithing, and three matters that are now scheduled for a judge's review and signature.

Mike was recognized and asked if it would help compliance by having the statute revised to require a business license. It was agreed around the table that this would be helpful but there was a question of political will; either among legislators to increase regulation or the locksmith profession as a whole to accept more fees and licensing. Barden recommended that the NCLA should try to hire a lobbyist.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: Debbie was recognized and asked that the standards for apprentice supervision be discussed. Barden advised that apprentices could operate by themselves, but their supervising locksmiths had to be aware of where they were and what job they were doing.

She advised that some apprentices were going to other areas, starting their own companies, and asked if this was allowed. Barden reported that the Board didn't have authority to regulate business structure, so technically this was not against the licensing act, but he noted that supervision requirements still applied so that could be an area for review.

Adjourn: Larry noted that there was no other business. Jack motioned to adjourn. Jim seconded and the meeting ended.

Next Meeting: June 5th, 12:00pm in Raleigh and on Zoom.