

North Carolina Locksmith Licensing Board
Meeting Minutes
Raleigh, NC
December 3, 2025

Members: Larry Mares, Jon Jeffries, Dovid Burnham, Erich Crouch, Diane Riddle, Mike McCarty, Jack Walder, Deanna Brena, Garrett Davis

Staff: Barden Culbreth, Ryan Mitiguy, Catherine Lee

Public: Liz Overby, Kenneth Wayne

Welcome and Call to Order: Chair Larry Mares called the meeting to order at 12:05pm.

Ethics Awareness Statement: Chair Larry Mares read the Ethics Awareness Statement and asked for conflicts or appearances of conflicts with any of the business before the Board today. None were announced and the meeting continued.

Rule Making Hearing: Vice Chair Jon Jeffries opened a hearing to receive comments regarding the Proposed and Petitioned Rule Changes. The hearing ran concurrent to the regular business meeting of the Board.

The public comment period continues until January 16, 2026.

Public Comment: None.

Approval of the Agenda: Jack Walder motioned to approve the agenda. Jon seconded and the agenda was approved.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: There were two sets of minutes before the Board. One was from December 4, 2024 which had missed Board approval; Jon motioned to approve these minutes. Erich Crouch seconded and the minutes were approved.

A second set of minutes from October 1, 2025 were received and reviewed by the Board. Erich motioned to approve these minutes, Jon seconded and the minutes were approved.

Financial Report: Dovid Burnham motioned to approve the Financial Report. Jon seconded and the report was approved.

Legal Report: Catherine Lee, legal counsel for the Board, reported that the Board was still accepting public comments on the Rule changes and adoptions. She reported that the Legislature is out of session.

Board Chair: Larry reported today was the last day of his chairmanship, and he has appreciated the opportunity to chair the Board.

Board Office Report: Barden shared the 93B reports, including the audit and annual report for review.

Public Hearing on Rules: Jon closed the public comment on the rules, at 12:15pm.

Barden recognized Jon Jeffries to talk about the work he has done with Certemy and the general website security. He provided information about an updated security certificate for the website.

Garrett Davis joined the meeting via Zoom.

David asked about viewership of the YouTube channel. Jon reported that most comments were constructive and staff has worked on clearing up complaints about audio.

Examination/Education Committee: Diane Riddle is proctoring the exam on the 13th in Asheville. Barden and Erich shared that they proctored an exam in Burlington recently as well.

Barden shared that an applicant has tested in South Carolina at York Technical College. He is working with them to secure a site close to Charlotte. Discussion followed.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business:

Nomination of 2026 officers:

Chair – Larry opened the nomination for chair. He nominated Jon Jeffries for chair. David seconded. No other nominations were made, and Jon was elected unanimously.

Vice Chair – Jon thanked Larry for opportunity to serve as Vice Chair. He then opened the nomination for vice chair. Jon nominated Erich Crouch for Vice Chair, Larry seconded the nomination and Erich was elected Vice Chair.

Secretary/Treasurer – Jon opened the floor for nominations. Jon nominated Dovid Burnham for Secretary/Treasurer, Jack seconded, and Dovid was elected Secretary/Treasurer.

Jon asked that the Board hold a meeting over Zoom in January (prior to the February meeting). He asked if Liz Overby would help on social media if she was so inclined. She agreed.

Presentation of Plaques: Barden noted that Larry and Mike McCarty were term limited and would not be re-appointed. Garrett Davis is also up for reconsideration by the Governor's

office. Garrett expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to participate as non-locksmith Board member and is interested in re-appointment.

Larry was presented with a plaque of appreciation.

Mike thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve and noted that he served in every officer position in his six-year tenure. Jon noted that Mike could always come back after a year.

Public Comment: Kenneth Wayne was recognized and read a statement to the Board (written and attached to bottom). He provided a USB list with a list of unlicensed persons / businesses.

Jon closed the public comment item.

Adjourn: Larry announced the meeting schedule for 2026. Dovid motioned to adjourn. Erich seconded and the meeting ended.

Next Meeting: February 4

Addendum (Public Comment, Kenneth Wayne):

Members of the Board, I appreciate the opportunity to address the critical issue of compliance and enforcement, especially given the Board's stated challenges of being a "small fish in a big pond"; with limited resources.

Firstly, I must address the discussion regarding the compliance statistics. The Board stated that my figure of 27.93% compliance among online advertisers may be flawed, yet the Board itself has no official data on the total number of licensed locksmiths, the percentage who are institutional, or the number who own businesses.

"You cannot manage what you do not measure."

Without basic licensee data, the Board cannot accurately assess the scope of the problem or properly allocate its budget. I also acknowledge Mr. Jeffries' crucial point: the market is flooded with unlicensed, scamming entities. This reality makes the public's ability to distinguish a legitimate locksmith essential. The current low compliance rate among our licensees is actively enabling this fraudulent activity. The Board must reconcile its stated belief that it cannot address "children that are not theirs"; with its actual legal authority.

NC General Statute § 74F-12(b) requires all advertisements for locksmith services to include a valid license number.

For both licensed and unlicensed individuals, advertising without that number is a self-evident violation.

While prosecuting an unlicensed individual for the act of providing services is a costly investigative measure, the Board has the authority to issue Cease and Desist letters and seek civil injunctions to stop the unlicensed advertising itself. The violation is visible on the screen, requiring no costly field investigation. The Board is financially constrained, yet it is choosing to ignore this self-evident violation. To maximize the Board's limited budget and provide immediate consumer protection, I propose a shift from a reactive, victim-based investigation model to a proactive, two-pronged enforcement strategy:

(Licensed Locksmiths)

I will provide the Board with a list of online advertisers that I had compiled from several North Carolina cities. This list includes both licensed and likely unlicensed locksmiths, and crucially, it clearly identifies all businesses that are not displaying a license number in their advertisement.

The Board can use this list to cross-reference and isolate its own licensees who are non-compliant with NCGS 74F-12(b)(advertising without a license number). The Board then uses a low-cost compliance letter to force these individuals to comply.

This is the most fiscally responsible and immediate action the Board can take to clean up its own house and raise compliance far more efficiently than spending thousands on a single victim investigation.

(Unlicensed Scams)

The Board can, and should, dedicate minimal administrative time to sending Cease and Desist letters to the clear, self-evident violations by unlicensed advertisers who lack the required number.

This simple action provides a low-cost deterrent and begins the official enforcement process that can lead to a civil injunction without the full, immediate cost of a complex victim investigation.

The goal is simple: By enforcing the advertising statute where the violation is self-evident, we immediately raise compliance among licensees and provide a low-cost deterrent against unlicensed activity, finally providing the consumer with the protection the licensing law was designed to offer. Finally, to maximize the effectiveness of this proactive strategy and deliver real consumer protection, the Board must address the issue of deliberate obscurity and empower the public.

During our research, we found that even compliant license numbers were often difficult to locate, buried in fine print. A hidden license number defeats the purpose of the law.

I formally recommend the Board adopts a three-part administrative and technical update:

The Board should adopt a new Administrative Rule requiring the valid license number to be displayed in a predominant and easily accessible location on the website (e.g., the header, footer, or Contact Us page). This defines a clear standard for compliance.

The Board should immediately prioritize and simplify its public-facing license verification process. Since scammers can easily post fake numbers, the public must be able to instantly and reliably confirm a license's validity. This simple technological improvement is the final, essential step to ensuring the public can trust the license number they see.

To multiply the Board's limited enforcement resources, the Board should publicly acknowledge and promote a simple process for both licensed practitioners and consumers to report suspected advertising violations. By making compliance easy to check and non-compliance easy to report, the Board could leverage a statewide network of licensed practitioners and consumers to assist its enforcement efforts.

By adopting this unified and proactive approach, the Board can immediately raise compliance among its licensees, provide a low-cost deterrent against unlicensed activity, and finally give the consumer the clear protection the licensing law was designed to offer.