

**MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTANCY
MINUTES
March 24, 2023**

The Mississippi State Board of Public Accountancy met on March 24, 2023, beginning at 10:00 a.m. The following record of that meeting was maintained.

Board Members Present by Video Conference

William Kelly
Willie Sims, Jr.

Board Members and Staff Present at Board Office

Charles Prince, Chair
Annette Pridgen, Vice-Chair
Gary Walker, Secretary
David Bridgers
Rick Elam
Andy Wright, Executive Director
Sharee Brewer, Associate Director, Investigations
Vicki Snowden, Licensing Administrator

Others Present at Board Office

Ed Wiggins, Attorney General's Office
Kristen Love, Hearing Officer
Karen Moody, MSCPA CEO
Jerry Goolsby, MSCPA Chair-Elect

Others Present by Video Conference or Telephone

Kelly Powell, Court Reporter
Josh Norris, MSCPA Liaison

I. General

1. The Board opened the meeting with an invocation from Jerry Goolsby.
2. The minutes from the January 27, 2023 meeting were approved.
3. Previously approved licenses are available for signature at the Board Office.

I. General (Continued)

5. Reviewed proposed dates and times for future meetings/conferences:

2023 Proposed Dates:

May 5	10:00 a.m. Board Meeting
May 6	New CPA Ceremony at New Capitol Building, Room 216
May 31-June 2	NASBA Regional Meeting, Savannah, GA
June 15	10:00 a.m. Board Meeting
June 22-25	MSCPA Convention, Destin, FL
June 27-29	NASBA West Regional Meeting, Kansas City, MO
August 10	10:00 a.m. Board Meeting
September 21	10:00 a.m. Board Meeting at Jackson State University
Oct 29-Nov 1	NASBA Annual Meeting, New York, NY
November 9	10:00 a.m. Board Meeting
December 15	10:00 a.m. Board Meeting

II. National Regulatory Concerns

1. The South Carolina Association of CPAs comments on the pipeline were discussed.
2. Journal of Accountancy article regarding NASBA reaffirming support for 150 hours was discussed.
3. The NASBA revised exposure draft regarding proposed amendment changes to the UAA Model Rules was discussed. The Board, by unanimous vote, expressed its support for a change to 36 months for passing CPA Exam grades expirations.
4. The draft letter from Society CEOs regarding exam grades was discussed.
5. A memo from NASBA Chair regarding the pipeline was noted.
6. A recap of the NASBA Executive Directors Conference was heard.
7. NASBA letter to the Minnesota Society of CPAs was discussed.

III. Administration (continued)

1. Cash in Treasury, Funds 3845 and 3850 as of February 28, 2023 was reviewed.
2. The FY2023 Budget to Actual Comparison – Fund 3845, for the eight months ended February 28, 2023 was reviewed.
3. No Statement of Revenues and Expenditures was presented (quarterly only).
4. Additional per diem days were approved.

IV. CPA Examination, Licensing & Firms

1. The Board noted staff approval of 115 candidate applications (38 initial, 77 reexam) for 161 Sections of the computerized CPA examination received since the January 27, 2023 meeting.
2. The following actions on applications for CPA licenses, reciprocals, reinstatements, and CPA firm permits were unanimously approved/ratified by the Board unless otherwise noted:

Applications for Original CPA License

Name	Number	Action
Destiny Rae Chafin	8390	Approved
Nathan Evan Drury	8391	Approved
Nichole N. Floyd	8392	Approved
Latonya Yvette Gandy	8393	Approved
Kelcie M. Hayes	8394	Approved
Aaron Robert McDaniel	8395	Approved
Maurice Rush O’Keefe	8396	Approved
Ragan Anna-Lee Riley	8397	Approved
Phillip Roy Tran	8398	Approved
Samuel Earnest Yeager	8399	Approved

Applications for Reciprocal CPA License Approved & Issued by Staff

Name	Number	Action
James Brian Brigham	R8382	Approved
Tao Huang	R8383	Approved
Huilian Lin Ye	R8381	Approved

IV. CPA Examination, Licensing & Firms (continued)**Applications for Reinstatement of CPA License**

Name	Number	Action
John Patrick Baldwin	3647	Approved
Christopher R. Berry	8087	Approved
Trina R. Cochran	5639	Approved
Marion Patrick Dickson	8308	Approved
Bonnie N. Egerton	4649	Approved
James A. Foster	7633	Approved
Shelby H. Lott	6019	Approved
William Lancaster McCord	R7723	Approved

Applications for CPA Firm Permit to Practice

Name	City, State	Number	Action
Tennille Ayers, CPA	Greenville, MS	8384	Approved
Lori Garrett CPA LLC	Soso, MS	8385	Approved
Hallowell CPA	Tallahassee, FL	8386	Approved
John S. Heath, CPA	Gulfport, MS	8387	Approved
David Pray, CPA	Brandon, MS	8388	Approved
J. Winston, CPA	Tupelo, MS	8389	Approved

Amendments to Registered Firms

No.	Name	City, State	Change
F0966	Maloney & Associates PLLC	Ridgeland, MS	Address Change
7446	Belinda K. McLain CPA PLLC	Laurel, MS	Address Change
7875	Jamie Steen, CPA	Hernando, MS	Address Change

Application for Reinstatement of a CPA Firm Permit to Practice

Number	Name	City, State	Action
7210	Karen Brown CPA	Clinton, MS	Approved
F0329	Marion Gilmer, CPA	Bentonia, MS	Approved
F1380	Michelle Morris, CPA	Hernando, MS	Approved
7037	Lindsey Parker & Martin PA	Jackson, MS	Approved
F0688	William R. Stanway CPA	Hattiesburg, MS	Approved

V. Continuing Professional Education

1. The Board members unanimously authorized the following actions on CPE Sponsor programs applications submitted for approval.

Sponsor/Title	Dates	Hours	Action
Harper, Rains, Knight 1. Busy Season Points and Procedures	1/18/2023	1	Approved
2. 25 Common Preparation and Review Mistakes	2/1/2023	1	Approved
USM School of Accountancy 1. Annual CPE Event – School of Accountancy and Beta Alpha Psi	5/17/2023	8	Approved
CCIM Mississippi Chapter 1. CI 101 Financial Analysis for Commercial Investment Real Estate	3/27-30/2023	32	Approved
Petroleum Accountants Society of MS 1. Legislative Process	3/28/2023	1	Approved
Patterson School of Accountancy 1. Accountancy Weekend	4/28/2023	2 Ethics (1 General 1 Rules)	Approved
Brown, Ewing and Co., CPAs 1. Risk Assessment	1/17/2023 1/31/2023	16	Approved

VI. Rules and Regulations

1. Rules Committee's Final Recommendation for Potential Rules Revisions/Reductions (all except below) was discussed – no action taken.
2. For Special Consideration - Proposed New & Existing Rule 2.2.1.
3. For Special Consideration - Proposed New & Existing Rule 4.1.5.
4. For Special Consideration - Proposed New & Existing Rule 2.2.10.

VII. Regulatory Matters

1. The Board heard a report from Associate Director Sharee Brewer regarding the regulatory activities from January 28, 2023 to March 24, 2023:

Activity	Number
Cases Opened Beginning of Period	32
Cases Opened	3
Cases Closed ①	19
Cases Open End of Period	16
Open Cases Referred to Members	0

① Cases Closed:

Case 2020.029 involved a firm permit holder who received a 2nd Pass with Deficiencies rating on their peer review. Investigative Committees in the past have closed similar cases with orders which were not considered discipline against the firm. A decision was made, in light of the Board’s desire for the peer review program to not be punitive, to close this case, and future similar such cases which don’t involve rule violations, with a strongly worded letter advising that if the firm receives a 3rd consecutive peer review with a deficient rating, the Board may require pre-issuance reviews or an accelerated peer review. Matter was closed.

VII. Regulatory Matters (continued)

Case 2021.083 involved an out of state firm permit holder who received a fail rating on their peer review where the firm stated their intention to no longer perform the highest level of reviewed work in the State of Mississippi. Investigative Committees in the past have closed similar cases with orders which were not considered discipline against the firm. A decision was made, in light of the Board's desire for the peer review program to not be punitive, to close this case, and future similar such cases which don't involve rule violations, with a strongly worded letter advising that if the highest level of reviewed work resumes in the State of Mississippi, the Board is to be notified to implement a pre-issuance review or an accelerated peer review. Matter was closed.

Case 2022.034 involved a licensee who potentially made a false statement on their firm permit renewal application. Investigation determined there was no false statement made on the firm's firm permit renewal application. Matter was closed.

Case 2022.037 involved a licensee who potentially was practicing without a firm permit. Investigation determined the licensee was not practicing without a firm permit. Matter was closed.

Case 2022.118 involved an out of state licensee residing and primarily employed in the State of Mississippi who did not understand how mobility worked. This out of state licensee was contacted and filed for licensure with the Board. Matter was closed.

Cases 2022.163, 2022.189, 2022.190, 2022.221, 2022.241, and 2022.290 all involved licensees who had their cases heard at a formal hearing during the January Board meeting. Licensees were charged with not filing their CPE report as required by rule. Board revoked all individual licenses and set a financial penalty of \$1,000 plus administrative costs of \$200. Matters were closed.

Case 2022.250 involved licensee who failed to report 40 hours of CPE for the 2022 compliance period and requested retirement of their license. Matter was closed.

Cases 2022.162, 2022.184, 2022.211, 2022.254, 2022.270, and 2022.280 all involved licensees who requested informal settlement after the issuance of final notice letters by regular mail and email. All notices were sent to the addresses of record in the licensure file. All these cases were settled with stipulation and consent orders at the January Board meeting. Matters were closed.

Case 2022.316 involved a set of falsified financial statements presented to a lender with CPA firm letterhead art fraudulently included on statements to indicate they were prepared by a CPA firm. CPA firm art was from a firm licensed with the Board. Addresses and phone numbers associated with were determined to be bogus and no lending of bank funds took place. No actional information found as to who prepared and submitted the falsified financial statements to the bank. Matter was closed.

2. Ms. Brewer then discussed the open cases presented on the active case log.

VII. Trial Board Hearing

Trial Board Hearing:

Case 2022.199 was heard after being sent a Notice of Hearing and Complaint for a Trial Board Hearing to be held January 27, 2023 and a Continuation Order until March 24, 2023 to address CPE deficiencies for the 2022 compliance period. The licensee for this case has made no actionable response to any correspondence or other attempts made by Board staff or Executive Director to reach an offer of informal settlement.

The respondent for this case was not in attendance. The Board heard evidence from Sharee Brewer, Associate Director, Investigations, concerning the respondent's alleged violations mentioned above. Ms. Brewer testified that legal and proper notice was sent to the respondents at their address of record on file with the Board. After hearing testimony and closing arguments, the Board unanimously voted as necessary to close the meeting and enter Executive Session.

Within the Executive Session, the Board took the following actions: The Board determined, based upon clear and convincing evidence, to accept the findings of fact presented to the Board that the respondents had indeed violated the Board Rules and Regulations as charged. Motion made and voted unanimously (Elam recused) to revoke the respondent's CPA license and assess civil penalties at \$1,000 plus administrative costs of \$200, assessment of the 40 necessary CPE hours for the 2022 period plus an additional 40 penalty CPE hours.

Upon conclusion of this business, the Board unanimously voted to come out of Executive Session and resumed the open meeting. The Board came out of Executive Session and resumed the open meeting by announcing the actions and votes it had taken in Executive Session.

Continuation Order 2022.113 was approved.
(Kelly Recused)

Stipulation and Consent Order:

Stipulation and Consent Order was approved for **Cases 2022.114** involving an individual licensee who failed to maintain documentation of their Continuing Professional Education for the 2021-2022 year. Order requires licensee to obtain 40 hours of CPE and 40 hours of penalty CPE and document to the Board as well as paying a \$500 financial penalty for failing to maintain documentation for five years per rule. Documentation of the CPE and financial penalty are due to the Board office by April 25, 2023.
(Elam Recused)

These minutes were adopted by unanimous vote of the Board Members present at the May 5, 2023 Board Meeting.

For the Board:

Gary Walker
Board Secretary