

MINUTES

Mississippi Real Estate Commission

April 8, 2025

The Mississippi Real Estate Commission held its regularly scheduled monthly meeting at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, April 8, 2025, at the offices of the Mississippi Real Estate Commission, located in the LeFleur's Bluff Tower, Suite 300, 4780 I-55 North, Jackson, Mississippi. The following Commissioners were in attendance: Commission Chair Vicki Blackwell of the First Congressional District, Vice-Chair Jim Stroo of the Fourth Congressional District, Brian Gomillion of the First Supreme Court District and Commissioner Tony Jones, Member-At-Large, who joined by telephone; Staff Members in attendance included Investigator Rick Stubblefield, MREC Investigative Contract Worker Johnnie L. Phillips, MREC In-house Legal Counsel Bryan Lieb, MREC Outside Legal Counsel William Hussey, Administrative Lead Holly Hood, Administrative Assistant Michelle Little, Administrative Assistant Felisha Bracey, Accounting Director Victoria Prine and Administrative Assistant Laura Mclain.

Guests in attendance included Robert E. Praytor, Dee Denton, Kevin Blackwell, Andrea Detrick, Beth Hansen, Farrah Cox, Joe Stedman, Mark Metcalf, Ron Farris, and Robert Conwell.

Chair Vicki Blackwell called the meeting to order at 9:30 A.M, followed by a prayer. Thereafter, all present participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Oath of Office

MREC Outside Legal Counsel William Hussey administered the Oath of Office to Brian Gomillion, the Commissioner of the First Supreme Court District for the Mississippi Real Estate Commission. Commissioner Gomillion accepted the Oath of Office, which was witnessed by all in attendance.

NEW BUSINESS (Item Called Out of Regular Order)

Chair Vicki Blackwell called an item of new business out of regular order from the Meeting Agenda: Personnel Matters. Chair Vicki Blackwell recognized special invited guest, Robert E. Praytor, former Administrator of the Mississippi Real Estate Commission, and acknowledged his retirement from service to the Commission on April 7, 2025. She thanked Mr. Praytor for his dedication throughout the years to the Commission and to the real estate industry in Mississippi.

OLD BUSINESS

Previous Commission Meeting Minutes

The Commissioners reviewed the minutes of the March 11, 2025, regular meeting. A motion was made and duly seconded that the minutes be accepted and approved as presented. All voted AYE.

Financial Statement

MREC Outside Legal Counsel William Hussey presented an explanation and documentation of the following financial statement: *Period Ending: 03/31/2025 FY'25*. A motion was made and duly seconded that the financial statement be approved as presented, subject to audit. All voted AYE.

Investigative Report

MREC Outside Legal Counsel William Hussey reported there were no substantive changes from the March, 2025 Investigative Report and that a report with detailed information and current status updates regarding pending investigative matters will be provided at the next scheduled meeting of the Commission.

Legislative Report

MREC Outside Legal Counsel William Hussey reviewed and discussed SB-2086 and SB-2423 with the Commissioners, noting amendments to the statutes governing the regulation of real estate licensees approved by the Governor and effective July 1, 2025. The amendments include the deletion of the statutory repealer for certain licensing fees in effect, amendments to the processes and procedures for notification of license status changes to licensees and applicable responsible brokers, and amendments adding requirements and timelines for the processing and disposition of licensee investigation proceedings.

NEW BUSINESS

E&O Insurance

MREC Outside Legal Counsel William Hussey presented a proposal received from Rice Insurance Services Center (RISC) to extend the agreement for providing statutorily required real estate licensee Errors and Omissions coverage to Mississippi real estate licensees. The policy extension as proposed would provide available coverage for the

policy period of July 1, 2025, to July 1, 2026, at an annual premium of \$148.00 per licensee, which is the current premium rate. A motion was made and duly seconded to extend the agreement with RISC as proposed. All voted AYE.

Pre-Licensing Education Providers

MREC Outside Legal Counsel William Hussey presented a report on the Commission's ongoing considerations of pass/fail rates for classroom pre-licensing education providers, the applicable statutory guidelines for continued accreditation for Commission approved providers, and proposed actions to evaluate the psychometrics (validity) of the Mississippi (State) portion of the required examination for licensure. Representatives of the Mississippi REALTORS® Institute ("MRI"), a Commission accredited pre-licensing education provider were in attendance at the meeting and provided a packet of information documenting MRI concerns regarding the validity of certain portions of the State examination based on recent Mississippi statutory amendments and regarding MRI efforts to obtain periodic reports of applicable pass/fail rates of MRI students necessary for effective successful operation of their program. Mr. Hussey informed the Commission that PSI, the Commission approved testing provider, has verified the validity of the National examination but there are ongoing discussions with PSI for necessary evaluation of the validity of the State examination. A conference with PSI Chief of Licensure Alon Schwartz will be scheduled to finalize a plan of action for the necessary comprehensive review of the current examination questions on the State exam and for the Commission to execute a plan for the review and necessary revisions of the State exam within the next 90 days. Mr. Hussey informed the Commission of the Mississippi statutory procedures for determining the continued accreditation of pre-licensing education providers, including timely and periodic written deficiencies in required examination passage percentages and attendant, reasonable opportunity for corrective action as well as hearings for providers, with full due process, prior to any adverse action affecting a provider's accreditation by the Commission.

Legal Services Contract

MREC Outside Legal Counsel William Hussey presented to the Commission for approval his firm's proposed contract for legal services to the Commission for Fiscal Year 2026 (July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026) as presented to the Attorney General for approval. The proposed contract is for a maximum of \$100,000.00 at a rate of \$125.00 per hour. A motion was made and duly seconded the proposed contract for Maxey Wann PLLC and William Hussey be approved as presented. All voted AYE.

Executive Session

A motion was made to close the meeting for a determination on the question of the need to enter an Executive Session. In the closed meeting, a motion was made and duly seconded

to enter Executive Session to discuss the transaction of business and decisions attendant employment of persons in specific positions with the Commission and the business and decisions necessary for the employment and detail of specific person(s) necessary for the continued operations of the Commission pending selection and appointment of a permanent Executive Director. The motion carried and the vote recorded as follows:

Commissioner Blackwell: AYE
Commissioner Stroo: AYE
Commissioner Jones: AYE
Commissioner Gomillion: AYE

Thereafter, it was reported in open meeting that the Commission had entered Executive Session to discuss the transaction of business and decisions attendant employment of persons in specific positions with the Commission and the business and decisions necessary for the employment and detail of specific person(s) necessary for the continued operations of the Commission pending selection and appointment of a permanent Executive Director. Following the closed meeting in Executive Session, the meeting was then reopened to the public, and it was announced that the Commission had taken the following actions:

After discussion, a motion was made and duly seconded that the Commission publish a request for applications for the vacant position of Executive Director of the Commission for a period of thirty (30) days and following said application period the Commission endeavor to select and appoint a permanent Executive Director, all according to Mississippi State Personnel Board procedures and the necessary confirmation by the Mississippi State Senate in the 2026 legislative session as provided in state law. The motion carried and the vote recorded as follows:

Commissioner Blackwell: AYE
Commissioner Stroo: AYE
Commissioner Jones: AYE
Commissioner Gomillion: AYE

Thereafter, a discussion was had regarding the necessary business and decisions necessary for the Commission's employment and detail of specific person(s) to maintain the efficient continuity of day-to-day operations of the Commission pending the selection of a permanent Executive Director for the Commission. Following discussion, a motion was made and duly seconded that the Commission order and approve the following actions:

That Bryant P. Lieb, In-House Counsel for the Commission, be detailed to Special Duty as Acting Executive Director for the Commission until such time as a permanent Executive

Director is selected and appointed by the Commission; that he be authorized to perform all actions and with all authority as provided by Mississippi law necessary to make administrative decisions for the agency in its staff operations and the execution of the licensure and regulatory functions of the agency, to sign for and bind the agency in furtherance of any and all day-to-day operations of the agency and as otherwise necessary for the efficient and proper continuity of all Commission functions; that he be awarded a temporary salary award of 10% (ten percent) compensation above his detailed current salary for the period of time he provides services for the agency in Special Duty Detail capacity, otherwise pursuant to State Personnel Board policy; and

That it be clarified as the instruction of the Commission that Holly N. Hood be recognized and expressly designated as the direct report to Bryan P. Lieb in the chain of command for administrative staff supervision and agency operations, and as the designated Officer for report by Commission staff as is her recognized and effective current role in staff leadership and team lead supervision in the day-to-day operations of the agency; and

That William H. Hussey, Legal Counsel for the Commission be expressly instructed and authorized to provide special and specific counsel to Bryan P. Lieb and Holly N. Hood for the necessary, proper and compliant administrative functions and day-to-day operations of the agency during the period of Special Duty Detail of Bryan P. Lieb as Acting Executive Director, including specific discretionary authority for the disposition and procession of licensee and other agency investigation matters, subject to applicable approval of the Commission and otherwise in compliance with applicable statutes and Commission rules and regulations; and

That Bryan P. Lieb, Holly N. Hood and William H. Hussey seek and receive necessary guidance, input and specific authorization for action from the Commission when necessary for the efficient and compliant continuity of Commission operations and regulatory functions, and to prepare and provide such necessary and timely reports to the Commission as requested, and as necessary that the Commission be informed of the efficient continuity of operations and functions of the agency as is the Commission's duty and charge. The motion to approve the authority granted and the instructions ordered and detailed by the Commission as described was carried and the vote recorded as follows:

Commissioner Blackwell: AYE
Commissioner Stroo: AYE
Commissioner Jones: AYE
Commissioner Gomillion: AYE

Thereafter, the purposes for which the Commission entered into Executive Session, being discussions of the necessary business and decisions attendant employment of persons in specific positions with the Commission, and the business and decisions necessary for the employment and detail of specific person(s) necessary for the continued operations of the Commission pending selection and appointment of a permanent Executive Director having been respectively concluded and made, a motion was made and duly seconded that the Executive Session be concluded. The motion was carried and the vote recorded as follows:

Commissioner Blackwell: AYE
Commissioner Stroo: AYE
Commissioner Jones: AYE
Commissioner Gomillion: AYE

Thereafter, the meeting was reopened to the public wherein the actions taken by the Commission in Executive Session were reported as recorded herein.

Next Meeting

Upon discussion of the important matters pending before the Commission for necessary future attention, consideration and action, it was agreed the Commission would convene its next regular meeting on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, at 9:30 a.m., and a next successive meeting to be convened thereafter on Monday, May 19, 2025 at 9:30 a.m. at the Commission offices.

Thereafter, Chair Vicki Blackwell invited the Commission staff to join the meeting for introductions to the Commissioners and the guests in attendance. Chair Blackwell thanked the Staff for their continued commitment to fulfill the duties attendant their individual positions in operation of the Commission and expressed the Commission's continued support of their contributions. Thereafter, the staff in attendance introduced themselves and described their specific roles in the operation of the Commission.

Upon discussion and determination there being no further business to come before the Commission, a motion was made and duly seconded that the meeting be adjourned. All voted AYE.


Vicki Blackwell, Chair

Jim Stroo, Vice-Chair

ATTEST:


Holly N. Hood

Thereafter, the purposes for which the Commission entered into Executive Session, being discussions of the necessary business and decisions attendant employment of persons in specific positions with the Commission, and the business and decisions necessary for the employment and detail of specific person(s) necessary for the continued operations of the Commission pending selection and appointment of a permanent Executive Director having been respectively concluded and made, a motion was made and duly seconded that the Executive Session be concluded. The motion was carried and the vote recorded as follows:

Commissioner Blackwell: AYE
Commissioner Stroo: AYE
Commissioner Jones: AYE
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Vicki Blackwell, Chair

Jim Stroo, Vice-Chair

ATTEST: _____

Holly N. Hood