

**South Carolina Real Estate Commission
Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 10:00 am
110 Centerview Dr., Kingstree Building, Upstate Conference Room
Columbia, South Carolina 29210

Public notice of this meeting was properly posted at the S.C. Real Estate Commission Office, Synergy Business Park, Kingstree Building, Commission website, and provided to all requesting persons, organizations, and news media in compliance with Section 30-4-80 of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

Commissioners Present:

John Rinehart, Chair – 5th Congressional District
David Burnett, Vice-Chair – 4th Congressional District
Daniel Moskowitz – 1st Congressional District
Allen Wilkerson – 2nd Congressional District
William “Andy” Lee – 3rd Congressional District
Janelle Mitchell – 6th Congressional District
Gary A. Pickren, Esq. – At-Large Member
Johnathan Stackhouse – Public Member
Thomas Dugas, Esq. – Public Member

SCLLR STAFF PRESENT:

Erica Wade, Commission Executive
Ashlynn Brown, Administrative Coordinator
Brandy Duncan, Esq., Office of Advice Counsel
Shannon Davis, Esq., Office of Disciplinary Counsel
Wattie Wharton, Lead Investigator Office of Investigations and Enforcement
Chuck Waters, Office of Investigations and Enforcement
Chuck Turkal, Office of Investigations and Enforcement
Kasey Williams, Office of Investigations and Enforcement
Jennifer Farmer, Office of Investigations and Enforcement
Jennifer Stillwell, Program Manager II Office of Investigations and Enforcement

PRESENT:

Sean Cary, Court Reporter
Austin Smallwood, Esq., SCR
Louis Dettorre, Esq., SCR
Hamlin O’Kelley, Esq.
Joel Barber
Nicole Varn
Donald Hazzard
Kevin Mills
Margaret McBride
Gregory Harrelson
Rick Elliott

Zach Hayes
Brandon Cox

CALLED TO ORDER: Mr. Rinehart called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

INVOCATION

Mrs. Mitchell gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF

Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF EXCUSED ABSENCES

None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: To approve the agenda.

Mr. Wilkerson made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Mr. Dugas. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion: To approve the November 19, 2025 and November 20, 2025 meeting minutes.

Mr. Moskowitz made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Mr. Lee. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

COMMISSION PURPOSE & CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

The purpose of the Real Estate Commission is to regulate the real estate industry so as to protect the public's interest when involved in real estate transactions. The Commission also investigates complaints and conducts application and disciplinary hearings in accordance with State statutes and regulations.

Mr. Rinehart expressed his appreciation to Commission Members and staff for their time and dedication to the profession and protecting the public.

Mr. Burnett shared with the Commission that Investigator Wharton became the Chairman for the Investigator/Auditor Resource Committee of the ARELLO Regulatory Investigations Seminar.

STAFF REPORTS

a. Office of Investigations and Enforcement (OIE) Report

Mr. Wharton reported that from January 1, 2025, to December 05, 2025, 700 complaints have been filed. OIE currently has 84 active investigations, 9 citations have been issued, and 60 cases have been closed during that time period.

b. Investigative Review Conference (IRC) Report

Mr. Wharton reported that the IRC met on November 25, 2025, via WebEx. The IRC recommends the following: 16 cases for dismissal, 1 case for a letter of caution, 0 cases for Cease and Desist, and 8 formal complaints.

Motion: To enter into closed session

Moved by Mr. Burnett and seconded by Mr. Lee the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Motion: To return to open session

Moved by Mr. Pickren and seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Motion: To accept the IRC recommendations as presented.

Moved by Mr. Lee and seconded by Mrs. Mitchell The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

c. Office of Disciplinary Counsel (ODC) Report

Mrs. Davis reported as of November 25, 2025, there are 81 open cases of which 20 are pending hearings and agreements, 0 pending closure, 0 appeals, and 0 have been closed since the last report.

d. Board Executive Report

Mrs. Wade reported there are currently 7,016 active broker-in-charge licensees; 4,788 active broker licensees; 33,961 active associate licensees; 1,578 active property manager-in-charge licensees; and 2,109 active property manager licensees. The Commission was also presented the totals for timeshare salesperson registrants, real estate or property management office registrations, and initial application volume from 2015 to present.

The Commission's current account balance as of October 31, 2025, is \$5,094,546.33. The Cash balance report for the Education and Research Fund as well as the Timeshare Recovery Fund were included in the meeting materials.

Mrs. Wade also reported that staff is in the process of prepping for 2026 license renewals, they are completing the review of the renewal applications and documents for 2026 licensure Renewals. Staff is continuing to clean and maintain ReLAES records.

e. Education Report

Mrs. Middleton reported that the Commercial Core Course will be taught by the Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM) on April 22, 2026 and May 12, 2026 for licensees renewing in 2026. She also reported that the Instructor Development Workshop will be taught by Pinnacle Academy on May 6, 2026 and June 9, 2026. Mrs. Middleton also reminded the Commission that there is a Special-Called WebEx meeting on December 17, 2025 for the Commissioners to review and discuss the 2026-2028 Residential Core Course material. Mrs. Duncan inquired if Commissioners have questions or concerns

before the Special-Called meeting, Mrs. Middleton would like them to be sent to Erica. Mrs. Middleton replied yes, if the Commissioners have questions or concerns prior to the December 17th WebEx meeting, to email them to Erica.

DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS

a. 2025-158 Nicole Varn & b. 2024-801 Donald Hazzard

The purpose of this hearing was to consider the Memorandum of Agreement (“MOA”) for Case No. 2025-158 and 2024-801. Mrs. Varn and Mr. Hazzard appeared before the Commission and were not represented by counsel. Mrs. Varn and Mr. Hazzard were sworn in. After opening statements were made, Mrs. Davis, with the Office of Disciplinary Counsel presented the MOAs. Mrs. Varn and Mr. Hazzard testified and answered questions posed by the Commission.

Disciplinary hearings are recorded by a certified court reporter in the event a verbatim transcript is necessary.

Motion: To enter into closed session.

Moved by Mr. Moskowitz and seconded by Mr. Stackhouse, the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Motion: To enter into executive session for legal advice where no votes will be taken.

Moved by Mr. Pickren and seconded by Mr. Dugas, the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Motion: To exit executive session and return to closed session.

Moved by Mr. Pickren and seconded by Mr. Lee the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Motion: To return to open session.

Moved by Mr. Pickren and seconded by Mr. Moskowitz, the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Motion: With respect to Cases No. 2025-158 and 2024-801, the MOAs are accepted with the following sanctions: Respondents each be issued a public reprimand and each fined \$3,000 per violation to be paid within 60 days from the date of the final order. However, for each respondent, \$2,500 will be suspended if both respondents stay on Inactive status for the entirety of the year 2026. Should Mrs. Varn decide to return to Active status after the year 2026 and wish to become a Broker-in-Charge again, she will need to retake the Broker-in-Charge course.

Moved by Mr. Pickren and seconded by Mr. Dugas, the motion carried by unanimous vote.

c. 2022-96 & 2022-756 Joel Barber

The purpose of this hearing was to consider the Formal Complaints for Case No. 2022-96 and 2022-756. The licensee appeared before the Commission and was represented by Hamlin O'Kelley Esq. The licensee was sworn in. Mr. O'Kelley requested the cases be heard in closed session. The Commission agreed to have the hearing for both cases in closed session. After opening statements were made, Mrs. Davis, with the Office of Disciplinary Counsel presented the State's case.

Disciplinary hearings are recorded by a certified court reporter in the event a verbatim transcript is necessary.

Mr. Stackhouse and Mr. Wilkerson left the meeting at 3:40pm.

Motion: To enter into executive session for legal advice where no votes will be taken.
Moved by Mr. Pickren and seconded by Mr. Lee, the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Motion: To exit executive session and return to closed session.
Moved by Mr. Lee and seconded by Mr. Pickren, the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Motion: To return to open session.
Moved by Mr. Pickren and seconded by Mr. Lee, the motion carried by unanimous vote.

As stated on the meeting Agenda, Any Old or New Business Agenda Topic Not Discussed by 4:00pm Will Automatically Roll Over to the Next Meeting Date at the discretion of the Commission. The Commission, Respondent, and Respondent's Counsel agreed to pause the hearings for cases 2022-96 & 2022-756 and continue the hearings at the January 21, 2026 Commission meeting.

Motion: For Agenda topics 10a. and 11b. be placed on the January 21, 2026 meeting agenda after the continued Disciplinary hearings for 2022-96 and 2022-756
Moved by Mr. Dugas and seconded by Mr. Pickren, the motion carried by unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: To adjourn.
Moved by Mr. Pickren and seconded by Mrs. Mitchell. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 4:20pm