

MINUTES
SC Soil Classifiers Advisory Council Meeting
March 10, 2026 at 10 a.m.
Synergy Business Park, Kingstree Building
110 Centerview Drive, Pee Dee Conference Room
Columbia, SC

Call to Order and Introduction of Council Members and All Other Persons Attending

Chairman Thorp called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Council members participating in person included, John Thorp, Chairman; Christopher Fincham, Vice-Chairman; Randall Fowler; M. Lance Brewington; and Jason Goff.

Staff attending in person included, Mary League, Office of Advice Counsel, Chris Elliott, Office of Disciplinary Counsel; Wattie Wharton, Office of Investigations and Enforcement, Johnnie Rose, Board Executive, and Sherri Moorer, Administrative Coordinator.

Others attending included, Dennis DeFrancesco; Travis Brown; Andrew Cornelius; Jay Gay; David Vaughn; and Elizabeth Janiske (Creel Court Reporting).

Statement of Public Notice

Mr. Thorp stated that Public notice of this meeting was properly posted at the S.C. Soil Classifiers Advisory Council Office, Synergy Business Park, Kingstree Building, 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. Members of the public who wish to observe may do so by live streaming at: <https://llr.sc.gov/soil/videos.aspx>

Adoption of Agenda

MOTION: **Mr. Fincham** moved to move the application hearings before the staff reports on the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Goff, which was unanimously approved.

Approval of Excuses Absences

There were no absences.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: **Mr. Goff** made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2025, meeting. Mr. Fowler seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Chairman's Remarks

Mr. Thorp stated that South Carolina is the fastest growing state in the nation, which has resulted in an increased workload for the professional soil classifiers and the Department of Environmental Services. He is glad to see more applicants, as there is a need for more qualified, ethical professionals in the State.

Application Hearings

1. Mr. Jan Gay appeared before the Council for an Application Hearing. He was not represented by counsel. All persons testifying were sworn in by the court reporter. Application hearings are recorded by a certified court reporter in the event a verbatim transcript is necessary.

MOTION: **Mr. Fowler** made a motion to enter executive session for legal advice, with staff remaining. Mr. Fincham seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

MOTION: **Mr. Goff** made a motion to exit executive session. Mr. Fowler seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

MOTION: **Mr. Brewington** made a motion to approve Mr. Gay for licensure based on the information presented and the testimony given. Mr. Fowler seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

2. Mr. Andrew Cornelius appeared before the Council for an Application Hearing. He was not represented by counsel. Mr. Travis Brown served as a witness. All persons testifying were sworn in by the court reporter. Application hearings are recorded by a certified court reporter in the event a verbatim transcript is necessary.

MOTION: **Mr. Goff** made a motion to approve Mr. Cornelius for licensure. Mr. Brewington seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Board Executive Report

Mr. Rose gave the Board Executive's Report:

- Mr. Rose stated that all contact from the public should be directed to Council staff to prevent the need for recusal in matters that might arise for future meetings.
- Mr. Rose stated that the second regular session of the 126th South Carolina General Assembly convened on Tuesday, January 13, 2026. There are no bills that will affect the Council at this time. The Governmental Affairs Team at LLR provides weekly legislative updates that includes bill introductions, committee and floor actions, and upcoming committee meetings relevant to all areas of service at LLR. Scheduled hearings that require a Council representative will be coordinated directly with the Council Chairman.
- Mr. Rose thanked Council for the opportunity to speak to the SC Onsite Wastewater Association (SCOWA) on February 9-10, 2026.
- Mr. Rose stated that the Statement of Economic Interest filing is due by noon on March 30, 2026, to avoid penalties.
- The Council had 53 licensed soil classifiers. No licenses have been issued since the last Council meeting.
- The Soil Science Society of America second quarter exams will be offered April 8-22, 2026. Registration is open until March 30, 2026.

Financial Report

Mr. Rose stated that the Council had a cash balance of \$58,472.25 as of January 31, 2026.

Office of Investigations and Enforcement Report

Mr. Wharton stated that there is no report from the Office of Investigations and Enforcement.

Investigative Review Conference Report

Mr. Wharton stated that there is no Investigative Review Conference Report.

Office of Disciplinary Counsel Report

Mr. Elliott stated there is one active case in the Office of Disciplinary Counsel.

New Business

- 1. Board Member Training.** Mr. Wharton, Mr. Elliott, and Mrs. League provided Board Member Training that gave the Council Members an extensive overview of the complaint and disciplinary process.

MOTION: **Mr. Fincham** made a motion to enter Executive Session for legal advice. Mr. Goff seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

MOTION: **Mr. Fowler** made a motion to exit Executive Session. Mr. Brewington seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- 2. Review and Discussion of CE Broker.** Mr. Rose stated that the Agency has entered an agreement with CE Broker. This will provide a streamlined process for Board staff to conduct and collect documentation for the audits. The 2027 renewal cycle will introduce a “soft launch” to integrate CE Broker with the renewal process. Mr. Rose asked that the Council approve the mandatory use of CE Broker by licensees for CE reporting.

MOTION: **Mr. Goff** made a motion to approve mandatory use of the CE Broker program for CE reporting. Mr. Fincham seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3. Discuss and Vote on Date for Special Called Meeting.

MOTION: **Mr. Thorp** made a motion to schedule a special called meeting on May 19, 2026, with the date to be adjusted as necessary, to conduct the Disciplinary Hearing. Mr. Fincham seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

There being no further business:

MOTION: **Mr. Brewington** made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Goff seconded the motion, which unanimously passed.

The meeting adjourned at 12:57 p.m.