



Sunset Report
**Alabama Board of
Examiners of
Landscape Architects**
Montgomery, Alabama

October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2025

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
EXAMINERS of Public Accounts

Rachel Laurie Riddle, *Chief Examiner* | 334-777-0500 | www.alexaminers.gov



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August 12, 2026

Representative Margie Wilcox
Chairman, Sunset Committee
Alabama State House
Montgomery, Alabama 36130

Dear Representative Wilcox:

This report was prepared to provide information for use by the Sunset Committee in conducting its review and evaluation of the operations of the Alabama Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects in accordance with the *Code of Alabama 1975*, Section 41-20-9.

The report contains unaudited information obtained from the management, staff, and records of the Alabama Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects in addition to information obtained from other sources.

Please contact me if you have any questions concerning this report.

Sincerely,

Rachel Laurie Riddle
Chief Examiner

Examiner
Ashleigh Wynn

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PROFILE

Purpose/Authority

The Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects (the “Board”) was created by Act Number 2396, Acts of Alabama 1971, Page 3819 to license and regulate the practice of landscape architecture. The Board operates under the authority of the *Code of Alabama 1975*, Sections 34-17-1 through 34-17-7 and Sections 34-17-20 through 34-17-27.

The following Act passed since the last sunset review has been codified in the current statutory authority.

Act Number 2022-265, Acts of Alabama, relating to the Alabama Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects to amend Sections 34-17-4, 34-17-7, 34-17-24, and 34-17-25, *Code of Alabama 1975*, to provide further for the use of the title "landscape architect" by individuals and certain business entities; to authorize the board to institute proceedings to seek injunctive relief for violations of the licensing law; to provide further for expired and inactive status licenses, and requirements for reactivation; and to provide fees for the reinstatement of a license and for maintaining an inactive status license.

<u>Characteristics</u>	
Members and Selection	Three members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. <i>Code of Alabama 1975</i> , Section 34-17-2(a)
Term	Three-year staggered terms. <i>Code of Alabama 1975</i> , Section 34-17-2(a)
Qualifications	Members must be registered landscape architects with at least two years of experience practicing in Alabama and must reside in the state. <i>Code of Alabama 1975</i> , Section 34-17-2(a)
Consumer Representation	No specific statutory requirement.
Racial Representation	No specific statutory requirement. No minority members currently serving.
Geographical Representation	No specific statutory requirement.

Other Representation	The membership of the Board should be inclusive and reflect the racial, gender, urban/rural, and economic diversity of the state. <i>Code of Alabama 1975</i>, Section 34-17-2(a)
Compensation	Board members receive no salary or other compensation for their service as members but are reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in carrying out their duties. <i>Code of Alabama 1975</i>, Section 34-17-2(b)
Attended Board Member Training	Three Board Members Executive Director Two employees of Smith Warren Management Services, Inc.
<u>Operations</u>	
Administrator	During the Sunset review period, the Board had an administrative services contract with Smith Warren Management Services, Inc. Keith Warren, President of Smith Warren Management Services, Inc., served as the Board's Executive Director. The contract amount was for \$3,000.00 per month (\$36,000.00 annually) and was set to expire on August 7, 2026. This contract was terminated. The Board entered into an interagency agreement with the Alabama Security Regulatory Board effective from June 1, 2026 through September 30, 2026 at a rate of \$3,000 per month, not to exceed \$12,000 for FY2026. This agreement stipulates that the Alabama Security Regulatory Board will provide office space, administrative employee services, and basic utilities, including telephone and internet charges to the Board.
Location	603 Interstate Park Drive Montgomery, AL 36109 Office Hours: M-F 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Real Property Ownership	The Board does not own any real property.
Employees	None.
Legal Counsel	Steven Herndon, Assistant Attorney General, an employee of the Attorney General's Office, provides legal counsel to the Board.
Subpoena Power	The Board does not have subpoena power except as provided by the Administrative Procedure Act, <i>Code of Alabama 1975</i>, Section 41-22-12 for hearings and contested cases.

Internet Presence	https://abela.alabama.gov The Board's website includes pertinent information concerning the licensing process, continuing education, uniform standards, a complaint form, a licensee search, and FAQs. The minutes of the Board's meetings are also included on the website.
<u>Financial</u>	
Source of Funds	Licensing Fees.
State Treasury	Yes, Special Revenue Fund 0366 <i>Code of Alabama 1975</i> , Section 34-17-6
Required Distributions	None.
Unused Funds	The Board retains unused funds at fiscal year-end.
<u>Licensure</u>	
Licensees	As of December 31, 2025: 322 Landscape Architects <i>Source:</i> Executive Director
Licensure Qualifications	Applicants seeking licensure must meet the following requirements: • Be at least 19 years old. • Be either a U.S. citizen or be legally present. • Graduate from a college or school of landscape architecture approved by the Board. • Provide proof of acceptable experience, including five years of combined education and practical experience. A master's or doctoral degree satisfies five years of combined education and experience, but one additional year of practical experience is required, totaling six years. Alternatively, applicants who did not graduate from an accredited college or school of landscape architecture may qualify for exemption if they have eight years of practical experience, provided this experience began before August 1, 2012. <i>Code of Alabama 1975</i>, Section 34-17-21

Examinations

Applicants for licensure are required to pass a four-part national Landscape Architect Registration Exam (LARE) prepared and scored by the Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards (CLARB). The content and structure of the LARE was changed beginning in December 2023. Examination results are presented based on LARE's Exam Transition Content Equivalency guidance. Results are shown for applicants that took parts of the exam and applied for licensure in Alabama during the review period.

Exams are administered at any PSI Test Center or via online proctoring. Candidates can test at any PSI Test Center even if it is not in Alabama. Exam fees are paid to CLARB.

Auburn University is the only school in Alabama that offers a Landscape Architecture program.

Construction Documentation and Administration 2023

Year	# Taken	# Passed	% Passed
2022	2	1	50%
2023	2	2	100%
2024	3	3	100%
2025	5	2	40%

Inventory, Analysis and Project Management

Year	# Taken	# Passed	% Passed
2022	3	2	67%
2023	3	1	33%
2024	2	2	100%
2025	11	7	64%

Planning and Design

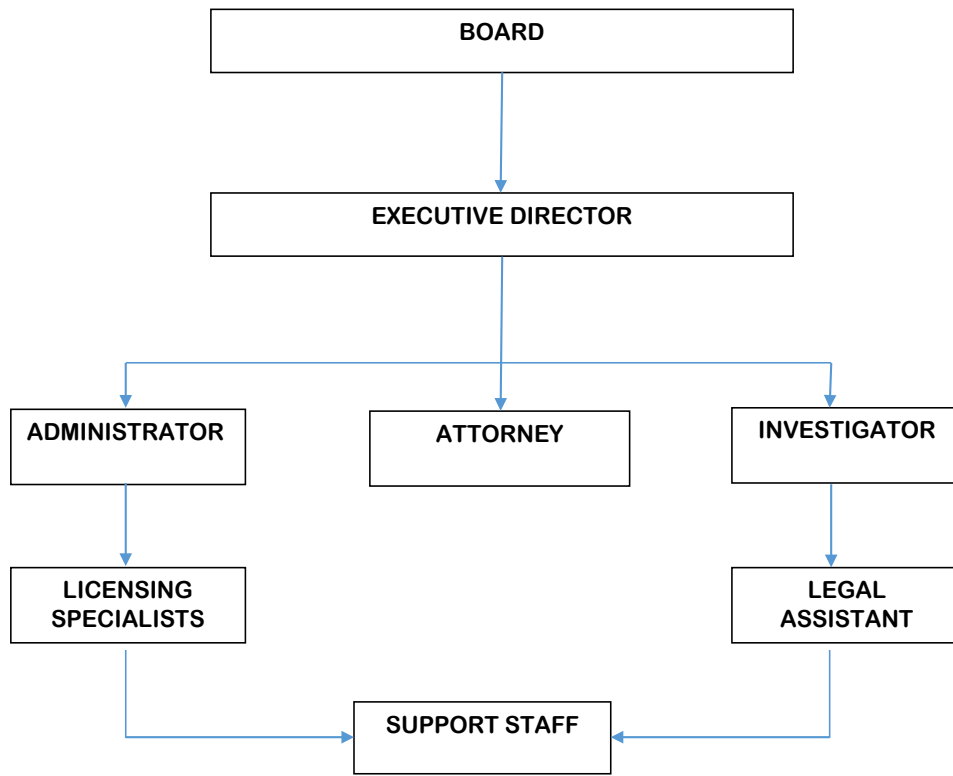
Year	# Taken	# Passed	% Passed
2022	2	0	0%
2023	8	3	38%
2024			
2025	6	4	67%

Grading, Drainage, and Stormwater Management

Year	# Taken	# Passed	% Passed
2022	3	1	33%
2023	13	5	38%
2024	2	1	50%
2025	2	0	0%

Examinations (continued)	Additionally, applicants must pass a supplemental, open-book exam on Alabama landscape architecture laws, administered by the Board. Exam fees for this examination are paid directly to the Board, and this exam must be completed during the application process. <table><tr><th>Fiscal Year</th><th># Taken</th><th># Passed</th><th>%Passed</th></tr><tr><td>FY 2022</td><td>36</td><td>36</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>FY 2023</td><td>30</td><td>30</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>FY 2024</td><td>23</td><td>23</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>FY 2025</td><td>17</td><td>17</td><td>100%</td></tr></table> <i>Code of Alabama 1975</i>, Section 34-17-22 <i>Administrative Rule</i> 500-X-2-.04 <i>Source:</i> Executive Director	Fiscal Year	# Taken	# Passed	%Passed	FY 2022	36	36	100%	FY 2023	30	30	100%	FY 2024	23	23	100%	FY 2025	17	17	100%
Fiscal Year	# Taken	# Passed	%Passed																		
FY 2022	36	36	100%																		
FY 2023	30	30	100%																		
FY 2024	23	23	100%																		
FY 2025	17	17	100%																		
Reciprocity	A landscape architect licensed in another state or country may become licensed in this state if the qualifications and exams in the other state are substantially equivalent to those required here, and if they reciprocate recognition for this state's licenses. <i>Code of Alabama 1975</i>, Section 34-17-26																				
Renewals	Licenses are renewed annually on January 1 and are delinquent after January 31. A license is deemed expired if the license fee and delinquent penalty are not paid before March 15. Online renewal is available. 88% of licensees renewed online in 2025. <i>Code of Alabama 1975</i>, Section 34-17-24																				
Licensee Demographics	Data not collected by the Board.																				
Continuing Education	Licensed landscape architects must obtain 12 hours of continuing education annually. <i>Code of Alabama 1975</i>, Section 34-17-20(b) <i>Administrative Rule</i> 500-X-2-.14(4)(a)																				

ORGANIZATION



Source: Executive Director

PERSONNEL

The Board does not employ personnel. The Board contracts with Smith Warren Management Services, Inc. for administrative services. Keith Warren, President of Smith Warren Management Services, Inc., serves as the Board's Executive Director. The current contract compensates Smith Warren Management Services, Inc. \$36,000 annually to be paid in monthly installments of \$3,000. The current contract is for twelve months and expires on August 7, 2026.

Legal Counsel

The Board has an agreement with the Attorney General's Office for Assistant Attorney General Steven Herndon, an employee of the Attorney General's Office, to provide legal assistance for the day-to-day issues presented for review. The current agreement is effective from May 1, 2026 through March 31, 2029. The pay rate is \$150.00 per hour for attorneys and \$50.00 per hour for paralegal services for all time spent providing legal services to or on behalf of the Board. The agreement also stipulates the Board agrees to compensate the Attorney General's Office for travel at the same rate as state employees.

PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS

Number of Licensees for the Past Four Fiscal Years

Landscape Architects	Fiscal Year			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
In-State	*	110	109	110
Out-of-State	*	197	209	214
Total	304	307	318	324

*Board did not provide the breakdown between in-state versus out-of-state for FY2022.

Operating Disbursements per Licensee (FY 2025) – \$224.07

Fines/Penalties as a Percentage of Operating Receipts

There were no fines or penalties assessed during the Sunset review period.

Notification of Board Decisions to Amend Administrative Rules

The Board complied with notification procedures prescribed in the Administrative Procedure Act, which includes publication of proposed rules in the Administrative Monthly, and public hearings on proposed rules. Notice of proposed rule changes is also posted on the Board's website.

COMPLAINT HANDLING

Initial Contact/Documentation	Complaints must be written, signed, and notarized on the Board's form. Any person may file a complaint, including Board members. The complaint form is available on the Board's website. The Board acknowledges receipt of complaint by mail.
Anonymous Complaints Accepted	No.
Investigative Process / Probable Cause Determination	Complaints are investigated by an investigator employed by Smith Warren Management Services, Inc., and the Board chair to determine probable cause. The Board chair recuses himself/herself from further proceedings related to the complaint.
Negotiated Settlements	Yes, negotiated settlements are accepted with guidance from the Board's Attorney.
Notification of Resolution to the Complainant	Complainants are notified of the Board's resolution by mail.

Source: Executive Director

Administrative Rule 500-X-2-.13(2)

Complaint Data

The Board did not have receive any complaints during the Sunset review period.

REGULATION IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER ENTITIES

None.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Source of Funds

Application fees, license fees, and penalties are deposited into the Alabama Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects' Special Revenue Fund maintained in the State's Treasury.

Schedule of Fees

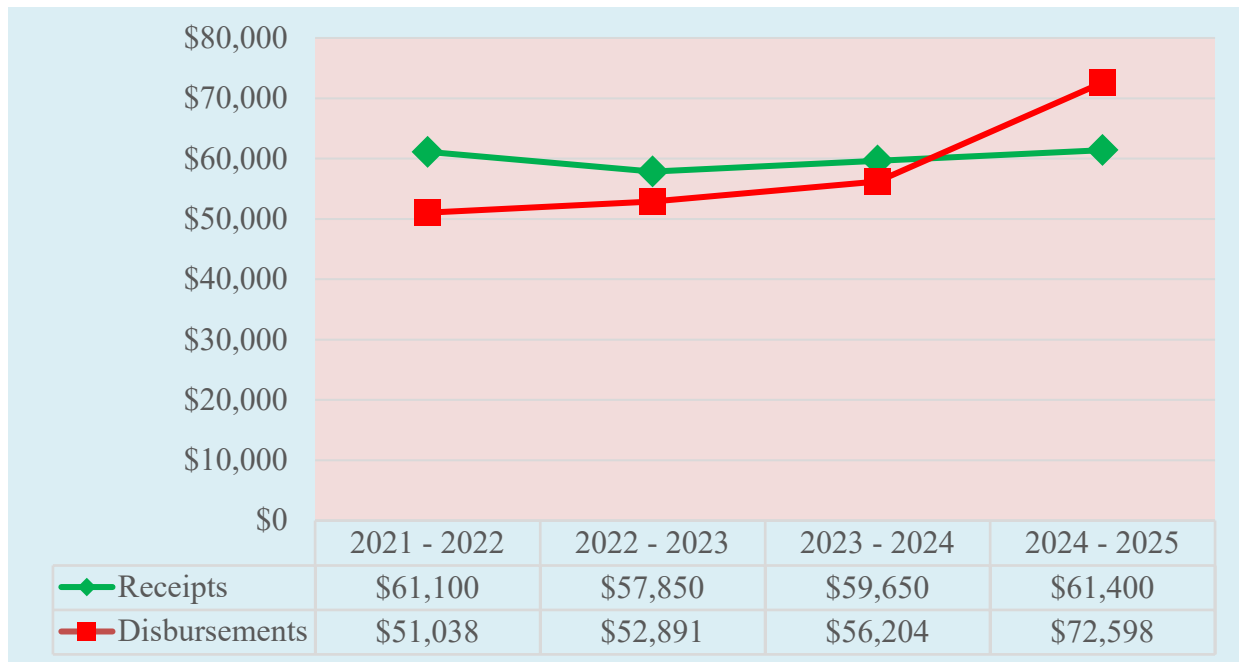
Fee Type/Purpose	Statutory Authority	Amount Authorized	Amount Collected
Application Fee	34-17-25(1)	\$150.00	\$150.00
Original Certificate Fee	34-17-25(3)	\$50.00	\$50.00
Duplicate Certificate Fee	34-17-25(4)	\$50.00	\$50.00
Annual License Fee	34-17-25(5)	\$150.00	\$150.00
Delinquent Fee	34-17-25(6)	\$50.00	\$50.00
Supplemental Exam Fee	34-17-25(7)	\$150.00	\$150.00
Reinstatement Fee	34-17-25(8)	\$300.00	\$300.00
Inactive Status Fee	34-17-25(9)	\$75.00	\$75.00

Schedule of Receipts, Disbursements and Balances

October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2025

	<u>2021-2022</u>	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>
<u>Receipts</u>				
Licensing Fees	\$ 61,100.00	\$ 57,850.00	\$ 59,650.00	\$ 61,400.00
Total	61,100.00	57,850.00	59,650.00	61,400.00
<u>Disbursements</u>				
Travel, In-State	2,651.80	4,037.32	1,649.04	2,229.97
Travel, Out-of-State		2,064.94		1,718.50
Utilities & Communications	176.42	475.54	292.05	358.47
Professional Services	41,217.82	37,954.85	45,870.04	60,910.18
Supplies, Materials, & Operating Expenses	6,992.20	8,358.12	8,392.93	7,380.39
Total	51,038.24	52,890.77	56,204.06	72,597.51
Excess (Deficiency) of Receipts over Disbursements	10,061.76	4,959.23	3,445.94	(11,197.51)
Cash Balance at Beginning of Year	79,230.37	89,292.13	94,251.36	97,697.30
Cash Balance at End of Year	89,292.13	94,251.36	97,697.30	86,499.79
Reserved for Year-End Obligations	(10,750.00)	(10,925.51)	(9,381.85)	(8,067.00)
Unobligated Cash Balance at End of Year	\$ 78,542.13	\$ 83,325.85	\$ 88,315.45	\$ 78,432.79

Operating Receipts vs. Operating Disbursements

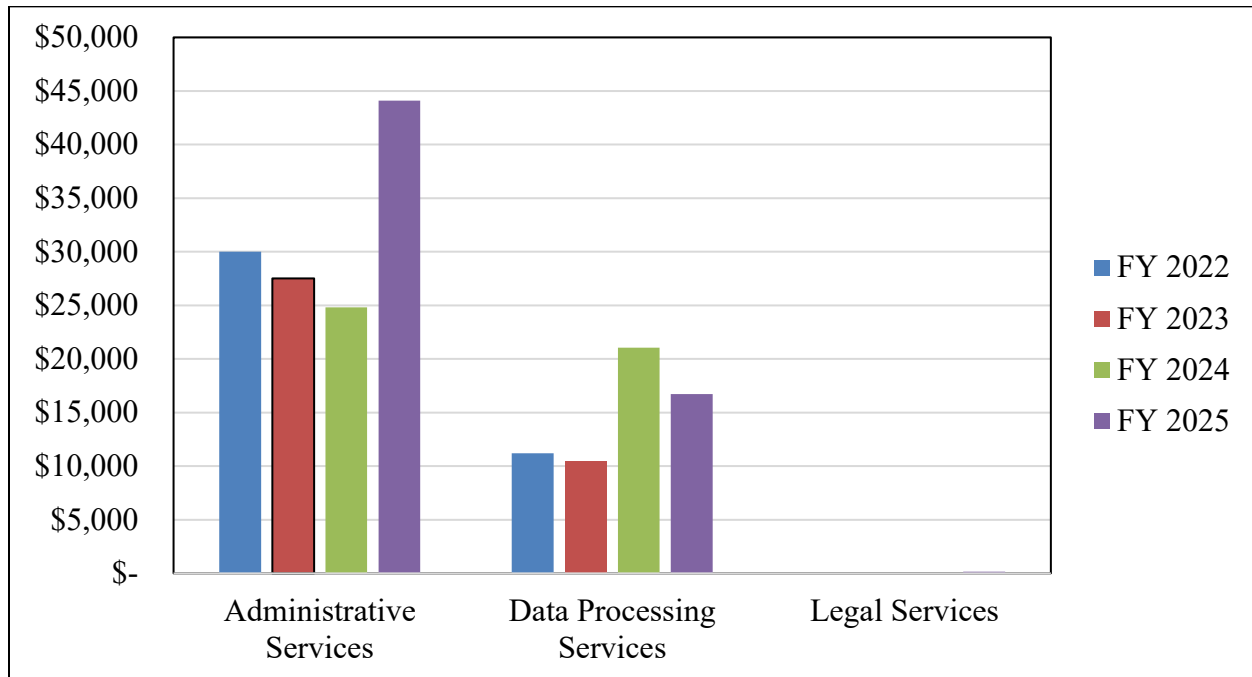


Summary Schedule of Professional Services Disbursements*

As of September 30 th				
Type of Service	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Administrative Services	\$ 30,014.05	\$ 27,516.10	\$ 24,825.54	\$ 44,041.93
Data Processing Services	11,203.77	10,438.75	21,044.50	16,718.25
Legal Services				150.00
Total	\$ 41,217.82	\$ 37,954.85	\$ 45,870.04	\$ 60,910.18

*Detailed information presented in Appendix II of this report.

Professional Services Disbursements



SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

There are no new significant issues.

STATUS OF PRIOR FINDINGS/SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

All prior findings/significant issues have been resolved, except for the following:

Prior Finding 2023-001: The Board did not notify the Secretary of State of vacancies occurring as a result of the expiration of three members' terms at least 45 days before the terms expired. As a result of not posting notices timely, potential candidates may not receive sufficient notice and cause the Board to not receive input from all interested parties to fill the vacancy.

The *Code of Alabama 1975*, Section 36-14-17 (c)(1) states, “The chair of an existing board shall notify the Secretary of State by electronic means of a vacancy scheduled to occur on the board as a result of the expiration of a term at least 45 days before the vacancy occurs.”

Current Status: **Unresolved.** The Board did not notify the Secretary of State of a vacancy occurring as a result of the expiration of one member’s term at least 45 days before the term expired.

MATTERS OF CONCERN FROM QUESTIONNAIRES

There were no matters of concern noted from the survey responses.

QUESTIONNAIRES

Board Member Questionnaire

A letter was sent to all three members of the Alabama Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects requesting participation in our survey. Two participated in our survey. The percentages are based on the number who responded to the question.

1. What do you consider the most significant issue(s) currently facing the Alabama Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects and how is the Board addressing these issues?

Board Member #1 – “Our purpose statement encompasses our significant issues: “safeguard public welfare, health and property and to promote public good” by examining evidence and determining who is qualified to practice and be called a Landscape Architect.”

Board Member #2 – “We are working with our national organization on a uniform national standard for licensing.”

2. What, if any, changes to the Board’s laws are needed?

Board Member #1 – “We have been working to update our statute to align to the new CLARB Uniform Standard which enhances public protection, regulatory consistency, and professional mobility. In the previous legislative session, it was submitted as HB594 but did not make it out of committee due to being too far down the schedule. We are currently working to get this on this session's agenda.”

Board Member #2 – “For over 2 years our Board has been working on updating our statutes to be in line with our proposed national uniform standards. Our proposed statute changes have been held up in committee due to other more pressing issues. We are waiting on them to bring to House for a vote.”

3. Do you think the Board is adequately funded?

Yes	2	100%
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4. Do you think the Board is adequately staffed?

Yes	2	100%
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5. Does the Board receive regular reports on its operations from the Executive Director?

Yes	2	100%
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6. Has the Board experienced any significant change to its operations?

No	2	100%
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7. Does the Board plan to make any significant changes to its operations?

No	2	100%
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8. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make?

Board Member #1 – “I feel like our Board and Executive Director does a great job. This is based on my interactions at our national meetings/conferences where we compare notes with those from other states about each other’s performance as Boards/board members/Exec Directors. Based on that, I also feel like our board structure (independent board of only LAs) is the best of the multiple structures that are utilized across our nation.”

Board Member #2 – “No.”

Licensee Questionnaire

A letter was sent to 100 licensees requesting participation in our survey. Twenty-two participated in the survey. The percentages are based on the number who responded to the question.

1. What do you consider the most significant issue(s) facing your profession in Alabama?

Respondent #1 – “Limiting Development rights and overly burdened development regulations”

Respondent #2 – “N/A”

Respondent #3 – “A lack of understanding of what landscape architect do and the value of our work.”

Respondent #4 – “None come to mind.”

Respondent #5 – “Complex storm water, municipal ordinances, ever increasing complexity of projects, utilities, coordination of disciplines, etc.”

Respondent #6 – “General public knowledge and understanding of what a landscape architect is and does. It is not as respected as architecture or civil engineering.”

Respondent #7 – “I currently don't see any issues.”

Respondent #8 – “Deregulation which poses a threat to the public’s health, safety, and welfare”

Respondent #9 – “Health safety and welfare is of utmost importance, but providing sound sustainable design is also very important to our professional work.”

Respondent #10 – “Unlicensed designers and contractors being allowed (encouraged) to perform work that that don't have the expertise to perform.

Respondent #11 – “Other professions doing work that should be done by Landscape Architects.”

Respondent #12 – “Education for the profession and the general public about the profession”

Respondent #13 – “The economy and hobby landscape designers.”

Respondent #14 – “Unknown”

Respondent #15 – “As with many many situations, a limited knowledge of the role and benefits of Landscape Architects taking leading roles in project development by potential clients and relegated the profession to aesthetics and planting/irrigation designs.”

Respondent #16 – “Harnessing AI as a tool to improve the profession in a safe and responsible manner.”

Respondent #17 – “The publics lack of knowledge re: what a Landscape Architect is and how we directly impact their lives, on a day-to-day basis.”

Respondent #18 – “The ongoing conflicts between Civil Engineering and Landscape Architecture.”

Respondent #19 – “Defending licensure”

Respondent #20 – “It has been my experience that city mayors and county commissioners are unaware of the capabilities of landscape architects and, therefore they do not look beyond architects and engineers when enlisting design services for their respective, governmental entities.”

Respondent #21 – “Competition of services from engineers who think they are landscape architects”

Respondent #22 – “Lack of real professional advocacy and control for regulations and standards for Landscape Architects. Threats due to deregulation of the professional importance.”

2. Do you think regulation of your profession by the Alabama Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects is necessary to protect the public welfare?

Yes	22	100%
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3. Do you think any of the Board's laws, rules, or policies are an unnecessary restriction on the practice of your profession?

Yes	2	9%
No	20	91%

4. Are you adequately informed by the Board of changes to and interpretations of the Board's positions, policies, rules, and laws?

Yes	20	90%
No	1	5%
Unknown	1	5%

5. Do you consider mandatory continuing education necessary for the competent practice of your profession?

Yes	18	82%
No	4	18%

6. Does the Board respond to your inquiries in a timely manner?

Yes	19	86%
No	1	5%
Unknown	2	9%

7. Has the Board performed your licensing and renewal in a timely manner?

Yes	22	100%
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8. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make?

Respondent #1 – “No.”

Respondent #2 – “N/A.”

Respondent #3 – “The change proposed last year to bring the required number of continuing education hours down making it in line with other state requirements was very welcomed.”

Respondent #4 – “None.”

Respondent #5 – “It is absolutely essential to the public good that landscape architects be registered. Our office is constantly providing complex grading, drainage and structural design services as well as applying ever more restrictive ordinances. This requires serious education and qualifications!”

Respondent #6 – “No.”

Respondent #7 – “No.”

Respondent #8 – “The board is very responsive and helpful with the renewal process. Continuing education is imperative for practitioners to stay current of best practices to best serve the public.”

Respondent #9 – “I have found ABELA licensing one of the most helpful of my four licenses in Florida, Texas and South Carolina. I appreciate the professional work and very friendly staff that has always been available to provide assistance.”

Respondent #10 – “I have been licensed in Alabama since before mandatory continuing education was a requirement. I feel the mandatory continuing education is the best improvement that has been made to licensing and strongly encourage its continued improvement.”

Respondent #11 – “No.”

Respondent #12 – “No.”

Respondent #13 – “No.”

Respondent #14 – “None.”

Respondent #15 – “LA makes a great hobby, but a hard way to be respected as a true design professional.”

Respondent #16 – “Like many licensed professions, Landscape Architects are continually challenged with meeting the traditional expectations of their field while also adapting to changing technologies and interests. AI is changing all design professions and a framework for safe and responsible incorporation into practice should be considered.

Respondent #17 – “I recognize that this line of questioning is coming in direct response to the Federal re-classification of certain degrees away from 'Professional'.

Please note that those of us that practice the profession of Landscape Architecture understand how intimately we impact the day-to-day lives of people within the State of Alabama and the whole of the United States. We understand the need for movement; for moments of rest; for safe and comfortable gathering spaces; for the ability to move throughout the day as safely and efficiently as possible. We design the spaces that allow for and encourage this movement or rest, as needed by the individual. Then we detail them, making sure that they meet all legal and code requirements and are using the best practices available for people and the environment. Once the construction documents are ready, we then supervise the construction of these spaces - ensuring that the drawings are followed, and the safe spaces that we created on paper become a reality.

It takes years of practice, dedication, education and very strong willingness to learn and serve to become truly proficient.

We do this in partnership with municipalities, developers, private citizens, and the public at large. Working in the public/private sphere also opens up the practitioner to a great deal of personal and professional liability at every step along the way. Liability that is only mitigated by our ability to purchase Professional Liability Insurance. In removing the 'Professional' status from our work, it reduces our ability to protect our livelihoods, and therefore the public.

If you think Landscape Architecture is only about selecting plants, please spend quality time researching our profession. The AL Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects would be an excellent place to start. Auburn University has world renowned LA degree programs that are closely linked with its Urban Design and Real Estate Development courses. In short, Landscape Architecture is a blend of architecture, civil engineering, planning, horticulture, arboriculture, geotechnical, environmental, and construction science. It is the interface between people and nature.”

Respondent #18 – “None at this time.”

Respondent #19 – “N/A”

Respondent #20 – “At present, neither the Board or NCLRB make any accrediting requirements of the formal, L.A. academic programs to include any basic business education, not even in a seminar form, outside of structured course curriculum.”

Respondent #21 – “The ABELA staff has always been helpful over the years to answer questions and address issues in a timely manner. Thank you.”

Respondent #22 – “We need more defense of licensure. Model regulation on the practice of the knowledge based application of standards.”

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Applicable Statutes

Section 34-17-1 Definitions

For purposes of this chapter, the following words and phrases shall have the respective meanings ascribed by this section:

(1) BOARD. The Alabama State Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects.

(2) LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT. A person who is engaged or offers to engage in the practice of landscape architecture, as hereinafter defined in this state.

(3) LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE. The performance of professional services such as consultation, investigation, research, planning, design, preparation of drawings and specifications and responsible supervision in connection with the development of land areas where, and to the extent that the dominant purpose of such services is the preservation, enhancement, or determination of proper land uses, natural land features, planting, naturalistic and aesthetic values, the settings and approaches to structures or other improvements, the setting of grades and determining drainage and providing for standard drainage structures, and the consideration and determination of environmental problems of land including erosion, blight, and other hazards. This practice shall include the design of such tangible objects and features as are incidental and necessary to the purpose outlined herein but shall not include the design of structures or facilities with separate and self-contained purposes such as are ordinarily included in the practice of engineering or architecture and shall not include the making of land surveys of final plats for official approval or recordation. Nothing contained herein shall preclude a duly licensed landscape architect from performing any of the services described in the first sentence of this subsection in connection with the settings, approaches, or environment for buildings, structures, or facilities. Nothing contained in this chapter shall be construed as authorizing a landscape architect to engage in the practice of architecture, engineering, or land surveying as these terms are defined in Section 34-17-27.

(Acts 1971, No. 2396, p. 3819, § 1.)

Section 34-17-2 Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects -- Creation; composition; compensation.

(a) There is created the Alabama Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects which shall consist of three members. The board shall be appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. In appointing members to the board, the Governor shall select those persons whose appointments, to the extent possible, ensure that the membership of the board is inclusive and reflects the racial, gender, urban/rural, and economic diversity of the state. The members of the board, after the appointment of the original board, shall be registered landscape architects of recognized standing having engaged in the practice of landscape architecture in the State of Alabama for a period of two years or more at the time of their appointments and shall be citizens of this state. The terms of office of the members shall be three years, of which one term expires each year. Any vacancy occurring at any time in the membership of the board shall be filled by the Governor appointing a successor for the unexpired term.

(b) The members of the board shall receive no salary or other compensation for their services as members but shall be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in carrying out their duties.

(c) The board shall elect annually from its members a chair and a secretary, and the board shall hold at least two or more meetings each year.

(d) Each member of the board shall take the oath of office as prescribed by the Constitution of Alabama of 1901.

(Acts 1971, No. 2396, p. 3819, § 7; Act 2003-60, p. 91, § 3; Act 2011-166, p. 315, § 3.)

Section 34-17-3 Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects -- Powers and duties generally.

- (a) The board shall have the powers and duties listed in this section.
 - (b) The board shall have such employees as may be provided in the annual state budget.
 - (c) The board may make, adopt, and amend such rules and regulations as it deems necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter.
 - (d) The board shall hold at least one meeting per year for the purpose of examining candidates for registration as landscape architects. It may hold such other meetings and hearings as required for the proper performance of its duties under this chapter.
 - (e) The board may adopt a seal for use in transacting its official business.
 - (f) The board shall keep a record of its proceedings and shall make an annual report thereon to the Governor.
 - (g) For the purpose of enforcing the provisions of this chapter, the board:
 - (1) May conduct investigations and hold hearings concerning any matter covered by this chapter at any time or place within the State of Alabama.
 - (2) May administer oaths and affirmations, examine witnesses, and receive evidence.
- (Acts 1971, No. 2396, p. 3819, § 8.)*

Section 34-17-4 Practice Deemed Personal Right; Final Drawings, Etc., to Bear Signature and Seal; Formation of Corporation, Limited Liability Company, or Partnership as Vehicle for Practice; Use of Title.

- (a) The right to engage in the practice of landscape architecture is a personal right, based upon the qualifications of the individual evidenced by his or her license and is not transferable. All final drawings, specifications, plans, reports, or other papers or documents involving the practice of landscape architecture, as defined in Section 34-17-1, when issued or filed for public record, shall be dated and bear the signature and seal of the landscape architect or landscape architects who prepared or approved them.
- (b) A corporation, limited liability company, or partnership may be formed as a vehicle for the practice of landscape architecture, and may use any form of the title "landscape architect" in connection with the name of the business entity if both of the following conditions are satisfied: (1) One or more of the corporate officers in the case of a corporation, one or more of the managers or members in the case of a limited liability company, or one or more of the partners in the case of a partnership, is designated as being responsible for the professional services described in Section 34-17-1 of the business entity and is a landscape architect under this chapter. (2) All personnel of the business entity, who act in its behalf as landscape architects, are licensed under this chapter.
- (c) An individual desiring to use any form of the title "landscape architect" in connection with the name of a business entity shall file with the board, as part of his or her application for licensure or any subsequent renewal, a listing of relevant information, including the names and addresses of all officers and members of the corporation, managers and members of the limited liability company, or officers and partners of the partnership, and shall indicate those individuals duly licensed to practice landscape architecture in this state who shall be in responsible charge of the practice of landscape architecture in this state through the business entity, and any other information required by the board. A form, giving the same information, shall accompany the annual renewal fee to be determined by the board. In the event there is a change in any of these individuals during the year, the change shall be designated on the same form and filed with the board within 30 days after the effective date of the change. If all of the requirements of this section are satisfied, the business entity may contract for and collect fees for landscape architectural services.

(d) No business entity shall be relieved of responsibility for conduct or acts of its agents, employees, or officers by reason of its compliance with this section, nor shall any individual practicing landscape architecture as defined in Section 34-17-1 be relieved of responsibility for landscape architectural services performed by reason of his or her employment or relationship with the business entity.

(Acts 1971, No. 2396, p. 3819, § 10; Acts 1995, No. 95-283, p. 523, § 3. Act 2022-265, §1.)

Section 34-17-5 Grounds for disciplinary actions.

(a) Each of the following facts shall constitute a ground for disciplinary action:

(1) That the holder of a certificate of registration is practicing in violation of this chapter or the rules of the board.

(2) That the holder of a certificate has obtained the certificate by fraud or misrepresentation, or that the person named in the certificate has obtained it by fraud or misrepresentation.

(3) That the holder of a certificate is impersonating a landscape architect or former landscape architect of the same or similar name, or is practicing under an assumed, fictitious, or corporate name.

(4) That the holder of a certificate has aided or abetted in the practice of landscape architecture any person not authorized to practice landscape architecture under this chapter.

(5) That, in the practice of landscape architecture, the holder of a certificate has been found guilty of fraud or deceit.

(6) That, in the practice of landscape architecture, the holder of a certificate has been found guilty of negligence or willful misconduct.

(7) That the holder of a certificate has been found guilty of gross incompetence.

(8) That the holder of a certificate has affixed his or her signature to plans, drawings, specifications, or other instruments of service which have not been prepared by him or her or under his or her immediate and responsible direction or has permitted his or her name to be used for the purpose of assisting any person, not a landscape architect, to evade this chapter.

(b) For violations of the preceding subsection, or for violations of this chapter, or for violations of board rules, the board shall have the following disciplinary powers:

(1) To reprimand a board licensee.

(2) To levy an administrative fine against a licensee of the board not to exceed two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) per violation.

(3) To refuse to issue a certificate to an applicant of the board.

(4) To suspend a licensee's certificate for a definite period of time.

(5) To revoke the certificate of a licensee.

(c) The board, by rule, shall adopt a disciplinary code.

(Acts 1971, No. 2396, p. 3819, § 12; Acts 1991, No. 91-152, p. 191, § 3; Act 2019-186, § 1.)

Section 34-17-6 Landscape Architect's Fund

The secretary of the board shall receive and account for all moneys derived under the provisions of this chapter and shall not later than the tenth day of each month pay all such moneys collected during the previous month to the State Treasurer, who shall keep such moneys in a separate fund to be known as the "Landscape Architect's Fund." Such fund shall be kept separate and apart from all other moneys in the Treasury and shall be paid out for the expenses and compensation of the board and for enforcing this chapter only by warrant of the Comptroller upon the Treasurer, upon itemized vouchers, approved by the president and attested by the secretary of the board; provided, that no funds shall be withdrawn or expended except as budgeted and allotted according to the provisions of Article 4 of Chapter 4 of Title 41 of this Code. Under no circumstances shall the total amount of warrants issued by the Comptroller in payment of the expenses and compensation of the board and of enforcing this chapter exceed the amount provided therefor by the Legislature in the general appropriation bill.

(Acts 1971, No. 2396, p. 3819, § 15.)

Section 34-17-7 Penalties; Injunctive Relief.

(a) Any individual who, without possessing a valid, unrevoked certificate as provided in this chapter, uses the title or term "landscape architect" in any sign, card, listing, advertisement, or in any other manner implies or indicates that he or she is a landscape architect, as defined in this chapter, shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished as provided by law. All fines collected pursuant to this section shall be remitted by the court or officer collecting them to the State Treasurer and credited to the Landscape Architect's Fund in the State Treasury.

(b)(1) The board may institute proceedings in a court of law to enjoin any individual or business entity from violating this chapter. The proceedings shall be brought by the board in the circuit court of the city or county in which the alleged violation occurred or in which the defendant resides.

(2) Upon a showing by the board that the individual or business entity has engaged in any activity, conduct, practice, or performance of any work prohibited by this chapter, the court shall grant injunctive relief enjoining the individual or business entity from engaging in the unlawful activity, conduct, practice, or performance of work.

(3) Upon the issuance of a permanent injunction, the court may fine the offending party up to five thousand dollars (\$5,000) plus costs, including investigative costs and attorney fees for each offense. A judgment for a civil fine, attorney fees, and costs may be rendered in the same order in which the injunction is made absolute.

(Acts 1971, No. 2396, p. 3819, § 11; Act 99-91, p. 107, § 3. Act 2022-265, § 1.)

Section 34-17-20 Required

(a) In order to safeguard public welfare, health, and property and to promote public good, any person practicing or offering to practice landscape architecture, privately or in public service, shall be required to submit evidence that he or she is qualified to practice as hereinafter provided. It shall be unlawful for any person to practice landscape architecture or to use the term or title "landscape architect" or "registered landscape architect" unless duly licensed under the provisions of this chapter.

(b) The state board shall adopt a program of continuing education for its licensees not later than October 1, 1993, and after that date no licensee shall have his or her active license renewed unless, in addition to any other requirements of this chapter, the minimum continuing annual education requirements are met. It is further provided that the continuing education program herein required shall not include testing or examination of the licensees in any manner.

(Acts 1971, No. 2396, p. 3819, § 12; Acts 1991, No. 91-152, p. 191, § 3; Act 2012-431, p. 1188, § 1.)

Section 34-17-21 Qualifications of applicant

For licensing as a landscape architect, the following evidence shall be submitted that the applicant:

(1) Is at least 19 years of age.

(2) Has, before making application to the board, completed the course of study in and been graduated from a college or school of landscape architecture approved by the board. The application for examination shall be accompanied by proof of actual practical experience in landscape architectural work of a grade and character satisfactory to the board. Each complete year of study in an approved college or school of landscape architecture shall be accepted in lieu of one year of practical experience, and the applicant shall submit evidence of sufficient additional acceptable experience to total five years of combined education and practical experience. The master's or doctoral degree in landscape architecture shall fulfill the requirements for five years combined education and practical experience. The applicant shall also submit proof of one additional year of practical experience sufficient to total six years of combined education and practical experience. In lieu of graduation from an accredited college or school of landscape architecture, and the practical experience in addition thereto, an applicant may be admitted to the examination upon presenting evidence of at least eight years of actual practical experience in landscape architectural work of a grade and character satisfactory to the board. In order to qualify for the exemption from the requirement to obtain a degree in landscape architecture based on eight years of practical experience, an applicant must have begun accepting practical experience prior to August 1, 2012.

(3) Is a citizen of the United States or, if not a citizen of the United States, is a person who is legally present in the United States with appropriate documentation from the federal government.

(Acts 1971, No. 2396, p. 3819, § 3; Acts 1991, No. 91-152, p. 191, § 3; Acts 1995, No. 95-283, p. 523, § 3; Act 2011-166, p. 315, § 3; Act 2012-431, p. 1188, § 1; Act 2013-210, p. 478, § 1(b).)

Section 34-17-22 Examinations -- Schedule; conduct

Examinations for the license shall be held by the board at least once each year. The board shall adopt rules and regulations covering the subjects and scope of the examinations, shall publish appropriate announcements and shall conduct the examinations at the times designated. Except as hereinafter provided in this chapter to the contrary, every applicant for licensing as a landscape architect shall be required, in addition to all other requirements, to establish by a board approved examination, which may be digital, his or her competence to plan, design, specify, and supervise the installation of landscape projects. Each board approved examination may be supplemented by such oral examinations as the board shall determine.

(Acts 1971, No. 2396, p. 3819, § 4; Act 2012-431, p. 1188, § 1.)

Section 34-17-23 Examinations -- Exemptions

The board may exempt from examination an applicant who holds a license of certificate to practice landscape architecture issued to him or her upon examination by a legally constituted board of examiners of any other state or Washington, D.C. or any other territory or possession under the control of the United States; provided, that such requirements of the state in which the applicant is registered are equivalent to those of this state.

(Acts 1971, No. 2396, p. 3819, § 5.)

Section 34-17-24 Payment of Fees; Expiration and Reinstatement of License; Inactive Status.

(a) Every landscape architect shall pay an annual license fee to the board. The fee shall be due and payable on the first day of January of each year and shall become delinquent after the thirty-first day of January.

(b) If the annual license fee is not paid before it becomes delinquent, a delinquent penalty fee shall be added to the amount thereof per year.

(c) If the annual license fee and penalty are not paid before the fifteenth day of March in the year in which they become due, the landscape architect's license shall be deemed expired. A landscape architect may reinstate an expired license for up to five years after the date of the original expiration by submitting to the board a complete renewal application, proof of completion of any required continuing education, payment of any accrued license fees and delinquent penalty fees, and payment of a reinstatement fee. The holder of a license that is expired for five or more years may only reinstate a license by submitting a new license application and fulfilling all then current license requirements.

(d) A landscape architect may place his or her license on inactive status by annually submitting to the board, between January 1 and January 31, a request for inactive status and an inactive status fee. The holder of an inactive status license may reactivate his or her license by submitting to the board a renewal form, current license fee, and one year of continuing education credits. (e) The board shall issue a receipt to each landscape architect promptly upon payment of the annual license fee.

(Acts 1971, No. 2396, p. 3819, § 13; Acts 1982, No. 82-345, p. 498, § 4; Act 2012-431, p. 1188, § 1.; Act 2022-265, §1.)

Section 34-17-25 Amount of Fees.

The fees prescribed by this chapter shall be in the following amounts:

(1) The fee for application to the board is one hundred fifty dollars (\$150).

(2) The fee for examination or reexamination shall be in an amount as established by the board in order to cover all costs of examination, but in no event shall the fee exceed the actual cost of preparing and administering the examination.

(3) The fee for an original certificate is fifty dollars (\$50).

(4) The fee for a duplicate certificate is fifty dollars (\$50).

(5) The annual license fee is one hundred fifty dollars (\$150).

(6) The delinquent penalty fee is fifty dollars (\$50).

(7) The fee for administration of the supplemental examination on the statutes laws governing the practice of landscape architecture in Alabama is one hundred fifty dollars (\$150).

(8) The reinstatement fee is three hundred dollars (\$300).

(9) The inactive status fee is seventy-five dollars (\$75).

(Acts 1971, No. 2396, p. 3819, § 14; Acts 1982, No. 82-345, p. 498, § 4; Acts 1987, No. 87-157, p. 217, § 3; Acts 1991, No. 91-152, p. 191, § 3; Acts 1995, No. 95-283, p. 523, § 3; Act 2003-60, p. 91, § 3; Act 2012-431, p. 1188, § 1; Act 2019-186, § 1; Act 2022-265, §1.)

Section 34-17-26 Reciprocity

The board, subject to the provisions of this chapter and the rules and regulations of the board promulgated thereunder prescribing the qualifications for a landscape architect license, may permit the practice of landscape architecture in this state under a landscape architect license issued under the laws of any other state or country, upon payment of the current fee established by the board, and upon submission of all of the following evidence satisfactory to the board:

- (1) That the other state or country maintained a system and standard of qualifications and examinations for a landscape architect license which were substantially equivalent to those required in this state at the time the license was issued by the other state or country.
- (2) That the other state or country gives similar recognition and endorsement to landscape architect licenses of this state.

(Acts 1971, No. 2396, p. 3819, § 6; Acts 1995, No. 95-283, p. 523, § 3)

Section 34-17-27 Exemptions

This chapter shall not be construed to require licensing in the following cases:

- (1) The practice of landscape architecture by any person who acts under the supervision of a registered landscape architect or by an employee of a person lawfully engaged in the practice of landscape architecture and who in either event does not assume responsible charge of design or supervision;
- (2) The practice of architecture by a duly registered professional architect and the doing of landscape architectural work by a registered architect or by an employee under supervision of a registered architect, when such work is incidental to their practice;
- (3) The practice of engineering by a duly registered professional engineer and the doing of landscape architectural work by a registered engineer or by an employee under supervision of a registered engineer, when such work is incidental to their practice;
- (4) The practice of surveying by a duly registered professional land surveyor and the doing of landscape architectural work by a registered professional land surveyor or by an employee under supervision of a registered professional land surveyor, when such work is incidental to their practice;
- (5) The practice of landscape architecture by employees of the United States government while engaged within this state in the practice of landscape architecture for the government;
- (6) The practice of planning as customarily done by regional or urban planners;
- (7) The practice of arborists, foresters, gardeners, home builders, and horticulturists; or
- (8) The practice of any nurseryman, general or landscape contractor, such practice to include design, planning, location, and arrangements of plantings or other ornamental features.

(Acts 1971, No. 2396, p. 3819, § 9.)

Appendix II: Professional Services by Vendor

	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
<u>Administrative Services</u>				
<i>Accounting and Auditing</i>				
Smith Warren Management Services, Inc.	\$30,000.00	\$27,500.00	\$22,500.00	\$
<i>Managerial Services</i>				
Smith Warren Management Services, Inc.			2,322.58	44,041.93
<i>Mailing Services</i>				
Department of Finance	14.05		16.10	
Total Administrative Services	30,014.05	27,500.00	24,838.68	44,041.93
<u>Legal Services</u>				
<i>Legal Services</i>				
Legislative Services Agency				150.00
Total Legal Services				150.00
<u>Data Processing Services</u>				
<i>Data Processing Personnel Services</i>				
Alabama Interactive LLC				150.00
Office of Information Technology	737.25	674.75	11,960.50	2,537.25
Key Asset Lifecycle Management Services	9,750.00	9,000.00	8,250.00	13,125.00
<i>Comptroller Services</i>				
Department of Finance	716.52	764.00	834.00	906.00
Total Data Processing Services	11,203.77	10,438.75	21,044.50	16,718.25
Total Professional Services	\$41,217.82	\$37,938.75	\$45,883.18	\$60,910.18

Appendix III: Board Members

ALABAMA BOARD OF EXAMINERS OF
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

December 1, 2025

Ashley Wynn
Examiners of Public Accounts
Post Office Box 302251
Montgomery, AL 36130-2251

Dear Ms. Wynn,

Please find the following individuals that have served on the Board during the examination period.

Chad Watkins, Chair
Foley, Alabama
Expiration: 1/3/2026

Julie Stephens, Secretary
Huntsville, Alabama
Expiration: 1/3/2025

Lea Ann Macknally, Member
Birmingham, Alabama
Expiration: 1/3/2027

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you need any additional information or have any questions.

Sincerely,



Keith E. Warren
Executive Director

Appendix IV: Board's Response

ALABAMA BOARD OF EXAMINERS OF
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

July 20, 2026

Dixie B. Thomas
Director of Operation Audits
Examiners of Public Accounts
401 Adams Avenue, Suite 280
Montgomery, Alabama 36104-4338

Dear Mrs. Thomas,

Please find the response to the Prior Finding/Significant Issue below.

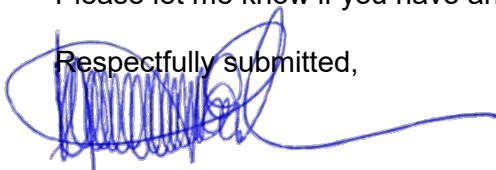
Prior Finding 2023-001:

The notice was submitted incorrectly following a staffing change and a reassignment of responsibility within the office. The updated process now includes review by two staff members to help ensure compliance. All other board member expirations have been submitted timely, and the finding has been resolved.

The Board and staff are pleased that the survey responses identified no new findings or matters of concern. We remain committed to complying with all state laws, policies, and procedures to ensure our operations are professional, ethical, and financially responsible.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Respectfully submitted,



Keith E. Warren
Executive Director

Post Office Box 305004, Montgomery, Alabama 36130-5004

Phone: 334-262-1351 www.abela.alabama.gov landscapeboard@alstateboard.com