

**MINUTES**  
**Montgomery County Bail Bond  
Board**

**Alexis van De Ven, Vice  
Presiding Officer**

Thursday, December 17, 2020

THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY BAIL BOND BOARD CONVENED AT 12:01 P.M. ON THE DATE LISTED AT THE TOP OF THIS AGENDA, IN THE ALAN B. SADLER COMMISSIONER'S COURT BUILDING, 501 N. THOMPSON, 4<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, CONROE, TX 77301.

In the absence of Darin Bailey, Presiding Officer, Alexis van de Ven, Vice Presiding Officer will preside over this meeting.

- I. CALL TO ORDER TIME: 12:01P.M.
  
- II. ROLL CALL

Board members present: Melisa Miller, District Clerk, Alexis van de Ven, Surety Representative and Vice Presiding Officer, Vanessa Windham. Designee for Brett Ligon, District Attorney, Amanda Webb, Defense Attorney Representative, Jamie Meinkowsky, Designee for Mark Keough, County Judge, Melanie Bush, County Treasurer.

Board members not present: Lt. Jeremiah Richards, Designee for Sheriff Rand Henderson, Paul Damico, Designee for Judge Phil Grant, 9<sup>th</sup> Dist. Court, Representative for District Courts and Judges, Judge Claudia Laird, CCL#2, Representative for County Courts and Judges, Judge Wayne Mack, Justice of the Peace, Pct. 1, Representative for Justice Courts and Judges, Darin Bailey, Designee for Mark Turnbull, County Clerk, and Presiding Officer.

Non Board members present: John McKinney, Asst. County Attorney and Legal Counsel to the Board, Jan Avery, Bail Bond Board Administrator.

- III. PUBLIC COMMENT  
(Note: Public must sign registration prior to the start of meeting in order to address the Board. Comments are limited to 3 minutes per speaker.)

Georgette Whatley – spoke about how some bondsmen are contacting family members, how are the phone numbers obtained and stated that there are programs such as TLO

that the website can only be used to verify accuracy of records provided, skip tracing of fugitives that have missed court and is used in the daily business of private investigators.

Mari van de Ven – spoke about the TLO which they are a member of, in their legal agreement it states that the database can't be used to solicit individuals to offer services.

Elliott Sondag – owner of AAAA Betterway Bail Bonds, also Godfathers Bail Bonds in Harris County and has a private investigator license. He uses TLO daily solely for the purpose of picking up fugitives that have missed court, the service is not used for the purpose of obtaining information for the business of writing bonds.

#### IV. MINUTES

- A. Approve the minutes for the meeting November 19, 2020.

Melanie Bush moved to approve the minutes for the November 19, 2020 meeting, Amanda Webb seconded. All were in favor the motion passed.

#### V. TREASURER

- A. Consider acceptance and take action on the Treasurer's Report.

Melisa Miller moved to approve the Treasurer's report, Amanda Webb seconded. All were in favor, the motion passed.

#### VI. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

- A. Review funds received for the month of November 2020. The fees collected for the month of November was \$1000.00 for renewals. Report attached.
- B. Consider:
  1. Updated list of Licensed Surety companies for posting, December 09, 2020 posting date.
  2. License Expiration Report – updated 11/30/2020.
  3. Copy of Calendar attached for 2021 – 1<sup>st</sup> meeting in January will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month ( January 21, 2021) the remaining meetings will take place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 12:00 noon.

No action is required on the Administrator's report.

## VII. PRESIDING OFFICER

Alexis passed this item to Melisa Miller for transparency purposes as she is related to Mari van de Ven.

- A. Hearing for license renewal application: Mari van de Ven dba A-1 Discount Bail Bonds, License 0078.

Swear in Mari van de Ven if present and proceed to a)

Melisa Miller swore in Mari van de Ven

- a) Conduct hearing on license renewal application for Mari van de Ven License 0078.

Jan Avery stated that all documents appeared to be in order and the recommendation was for approval of the license renewal.

- b) 1704.159 – Enter an order on action taken on the license renewal application of Mari van de Ven, License 0078

Melanie Bush moved to approve the license renewal, Amanda Webb seconded. Alexis van Ven abstained, all other members were in favor. The motion passed.

- B. Hearing for license renewal application: Wisam Muharib, agent Financial Casualty & Surety, dba All Access Bail Bonds, License 0094.

Swear in Wisam Muharib, and representative for Financial Casualty & Surety if present and proceed to a)

Melisa Miller swore in Wisam Muharib.

- a) Conduct hearing on license renewal application for Wisam Muharib, agent for Financial Casualty & Surety, License 0094.

Jan Avery stated that all documents were in order and the recommendation was for approval of the license renewal.

- b) 1704.159 – Enter an order on action taken on the license renewal application of Wisam Muharib, agent for Financial Casualty, License 0094.

Melisa Miller moved to approve the license renewal, Jamie Meinkowsky seconded. All other Board members were in favor, the motion passed.

- C. Complaint - Consider, discuss and take action, if any on the complaint filed by Robby Lilly Johnson against Derrick Dixon and 1<sup>st</sup> Choice Bail Bonds.

Melisa Miller swore in Robby Lilly Johnson.

Amanda Webb asked Ms. Johnson what time her and the other family members were contacted. Ms. Johnson said it was during the day, she believed around noon. Ms. Johnson started talking about previous bonds and contact in detail, at which time Melanie Bush stated point of order the Board was only reviewing the facts to do with the complaint filed by Ms. Johnson against Derrick Dixon and 1<sup>st</sup> Choice Bail Bonds at this time. Ms. Johnson could not remember the person's name that contacted her or others as this had occurred several months ago, but her concern is how are the phone numbers of family member's being obtained.

John McKinney stated to the Board that the County Attorney's office can have an investigator contact the complainants to obtain additional information and bring any results back to the Board as they have done in the past.

- D. Complaint - Consider, discuss and take action, if any on the complaint filed by Robby Lilly Johnson against Jason Ayala and 1 Way out Bail Bonds.

Melanie Bush moved on Item C and D to have the County Attorney's office investigate the complaints and report back to the Board. In light of the holidays Melanie Bush added to the motion that this would be deferred to the February meeting for the results from the investigation and would like the investigation to include where the numbers are being obtained from. Amanda Webb seconded the motion, all other Board members were in favor, the motion passed.

- E. Complaint – Consider, discuss and take action, if any, on the complaint filed by Mari van de Ven on behalf of 2 clients, Luke Dobrosky and Sarah Herring, against Derrick Dixon and 1<sup>st</sup> Choice Bail Bonds

John McKinney stated that he has concerns about this particular complaint as complaints should be submitted by the individuals and not someone submitting on behalf of their clients. Melanie Bush moved to defer this complaint to see if the clients will come forward and submit individual complaints. If individual complaints are received from Luke Dobrosky and Sarah Herring, the Board's recommendation is to start investigation on those individual complaints by the County Attorney's office without having to come back to the Board first. Amanda Webb seconded, Alexis van de Ven abstained. All other Board members were in favor, the motion passed.

John McKinney then stated that it was up to the Board if they wanted to accept any additional Public Comments before adjourning.

Steven Bell who is the attorney for Lexington National Insurance and representative for Derrick Dixon stated that although he was sympathetic to the local bonds the code that several of the Bondsman referred to 1704.109 was declared unconstitutional except for a small portion several years ago after the Pruett vs. Harris County Bail Bond Board. He understood we have the authority to investigate, and he cautioned the Board that he wanted his client well represented and received, they are not doing anything outside what the law allows. He stated there had been many suggestions as to how the numbers were being obtained none of which were correct, that we all have freedom of speech and this issue has been litigated previously.

#### VIII. ADJOURN

Melisa Miller moved to adjourn the meeting, Melanie Bush seconded. All Board members were in favor, the meeting adjourned at 12:29:28.

**The Agenda is on this bulletin board and may be obtained in the County Clerk's office on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Court's building at 210 West Davis, Conroe, TX 77301 and in the Commissioner's Courtroom on the day of the meeting.**