

SOUTHERN COUNCIL OF OPTOMETRISTS, INC.

ACTIONS TAKEN BY VOTES OF THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES PRESENT AT THE 67th ANNUAL MEETING

Atlanta, Georgia

March 1, 2025

DRAFT MINUTES

Presiding: Horace Deal, O.D., President

I. CALL TO ORDER

The President, Dr. Horace Deal, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 1st.

II. STATEMENT OF QUORUM

Dr. Brad Lane, the Secretary, called the role and declared a quorum:

States Present

Alabama
Arkansas
Florida
Georgia
Kentucky
Louisiana
Mississippi
North Carolina
Oklahoma
South Carolina
Tennessee
Virginia
West Virginia

III. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

Dr. Deal welcomed the participants to the 67th annual meeting and appointed Dr. Joel Byars as Parliamentarian. The Southern Council of Optometrists' Officers, Board of Trustees, and Past Presidents were acknowledged. Dr. Deal then thanked and acknowledged the SECO volunteers and staff.

Dr. Deal recognized the following groups, asking each to stand for acknowledgment:

- 2025 SECO Executive Committee officers (names displayed on screen)
- SECO Board of Trustees (representatives from all 13 member states)
- SECO Past Presidents in attendance
- SECO volunteers, staff, and industry partners

- American Optometric Association (AOA) Board of Trustees
- Armed Forces Optometric Society (AFOS) members
- National Academy of Opticianry (NAO) representatives
- International associate members
- Deans, presidents, and faculty from optometry schools: Southern College of Optometry; Northeastern State University, Oklahoma College of Optometry; Nova Southeastern University; University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry; University of Pikeville, Kentucky School of Optometry
- State presidents, board members, and executive directors from member states

IV. MOMENT OF SILENCE

Dr. Dave Rouse, Vice President led a moment of silence for departed colleagues from the member states of the Southern Council of Optometrists. The list of names of the departed was entered into the permanent records of the association. Names were displayed on screen. From the floor, Dr. Sam Galloway was added to the list, along with Dr. James Mack Brown of Madisonville, Kentucky (added later during Good and Welfare.)

V. ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Dr. Brad Lane drew the attention of the House of Delegates to the draft minutes of the 2024 House of Delegates meeting and requested modifications from the floor. There being none, the House moved:

MOTION 2025-03-01-HoD: MSC That the minutes of the previous House of Delegates meeting be adopted as presented.

VI. TREASURER'S REPORT

Dr. Matt Burchett reviewed the total liabilities and net assets as well as our financial position and noted the information is also included in the annual report.

VII. AOA UPDATE

The American Optometric Association President, Dr. Steven Reed, provided a brief update.

VIII. ANNUAL REPORT

Dr. Horace Deal informed the group that the SECO Annual Report, inclusive of all SECO reports, is available for download.

IX. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Awards Committee Chair, Dr. Max Raynor presided, assisted by committee members Dr. Richard Durocher and Dr. Christine Cook, and SECO staff liaison Bonny Fripp. The following awards were presented:

- Paraoptometric of the South Amy Robinson, Optical Manager, Spring Hill Eyecare (TN)
- Young OD of the South Dr. Emily Eisenhower Baxter (TN)
- Optometrist of the South Dr. Mark Roy III, Thibodaux, LA
- Optician of the South Russ Toler, LDO, ABOC, FNAO (NC)
- SECO Executive Director Award Dr. Rob Janot, Executive Director, Optometry Association of Louisiana

An AFOS organizational recognition was also presented; Dr. Adam Preston and Dr. Megan Elkins accepted on behalf of the organization.

The 2024 Clinical Excellence Award winners were also recognized (names displayed on screen). Past award recipients in attendance were asked to stand.

X. PRESIDENT’S AWARD & DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

Dr. Deal then bestowed the President’s Award to Dr. Jonathan Shrewsbury of Kentucky and the inaugural, Paul C. Ajamian OD Distinguished Service Award to Dr. Paige Bush of Georgia.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

XII. NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Dr. Deal then requested that Dr. Michelle Cooper present the Nominating Committee’s report.

Dr. Cooper, Immediate Past President and Chair of the Nominating Committee presented the Nominating Committee report. The committee, comprised of trustees from each affiliate state, met on Wednesday, February 26, 2025 and presented the proposed slate of officers for 2025-2026:

President	Dr. Tim Barry (LA)
President-Elect	Dr. David Rouse (FL)
Vice President	Dr. Matt Burchett (KY)
Treasurer	Dr. Brad Lane (WV)
Secretary	Dr. Patricia Walker (TN)
Immediate Past President	Dr. Horace Deal (GA)

Dr. Cooper asked for further nominations from the floor, and after receiving none, requested the House to move to adopt the slate of officers. The House moved:

MOTION 2025-03-02-HoD: MSC That the slate of officers proposed by the Nominating Committee for the 2025-2026 administrative year be accepted as presented.

Dr. Cooper was escorted back to the South Carolina delegation with thanks for her service on the Executive Committee.

XIII. PRESIDENT'S REPORT AND OUTGOING REMARKS

As outgoing President, Dr. Horace Deal gave brief final remarks.

XIV. INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Dr. Steven Reed, President of the American Optometric Association, then installed the Officers.

XV. PASSING OF THE GAVEL

Past Presidents of the Council gathered to participate in the Passing of the Gavel ceremony to mark the investiture of the newly elected President, Dr. Tim Barry.

Dr. Barry presented a plaque to Dr. Deal in honor of his year as President and the many years of service to the Southern Council of Optometrists/SECO International.

XVI. REMARKS FROM INCOMING PRESIDENT

Dr. Tim Barry, Incoming President, addressed the House of Delegates.

XVII. GOOD and WELFARE

The following announcements were made from the floor:

- Dr. Joe Ellis (KY): Dr. Lori Hauser (SC) will run for SECO Secretary in 2026. Dr. Belinda Starkey (AR) is stepping down from the AOA Board due to family matters; her dedication and service to AOA was publicly acknowledged.
- The President, Virginia Optometric Association: Announced the candidacy of Dr. Mari Reed (AFOS/VA) for another three-year term on the AOA Board of Trustees at the June meeting in Minneapolis.
- Chad Robinson, Executive Director, West Virginia: Read a resolution adopted by the Southern Caucus granting a Lifetime Achievement Award to Dr. James D. Sandefur, Executive Director Emeritus, Optometry Association of Louisiana, for over six decades of service. The award was presented in session.
- Dr. Christine Cook (VA): Announced the candidacy of Dr. Joe Droter for SECO Secretary in 2028.
- Ryan Wally, President, Mississippi Optometric Association: Congratulated Arkansas on its legislative victory against vision benefit managers.
- Dr. Seth Williams (AL): Announced Dr. Howard Day's candidacy for SECO Secretary in 2030.
- Dr. Laura Suppa, President, West Virginia: Thanked colleagues for hospitality to AOA Trustee candidate John Peterson (CO); congratulated southern AOA candidates Dr. Marie Reed and Dr. Amy Puerto.

- Leslie Cecil, President, KOA: Requested that Dr. James Mack Brown (Madisonville, KY) be added to the memorial list.
- Dr. Andy Cook, Past President, SECO (NC): Announced the candidacy of Mike Haines for SECO Secretary in 2027.
- South Carolina Trustee: Announced that South Carolina officially has a House Bill and Companion Senate Bill filed for scope expansion.
- Florida delegate: Announced Dr. Brian Stam's candidacy for SECO Executive Committee in 2029; invited attendees to the Florida annual convention at Loews Sapphire Falls Resort, Universal Studios Orlando, July 17–19.
- Dr. Steven Reed (AOA President): Expressed appreciation for Dr. Belinda Starkey's service; announced his candidacy for Immediate Past President in June.
- Dr. Megan Elkins (AFOS): Promoted the upcoming SECO/AFOS joint meeting in San Antonio ("SECO Goes West"); details and dates forthcoming.

XVIII. ADJOURN

There being no further business before the House, Dr. Tim Barry adjourned the meeting *sine die* at 5:45 p.m. on Saturday, March 1st, 2025.

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS ADOPTED

MOTION 2025-03-01-HoD: MSC That the minutes of the previous House of Delegates meeting be adopted as presented.

MOTION 2025-03-02-HoD: MSC That the slate of officers proposed by the Nominating Committee for the 2025-2026 administrative year be accepted as presented.