

**MEETING OF THE
LOUISIANA HORTICULTURE COMMISSION**

November 20, 2025

9:30 A.M.

**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY
VETERANS MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM
5825 FLORIDA BOULEVARD
BATON ROUGE, LA 70806**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Todd Parker at 9:33 a.m.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called by Marissa Smith.

Members present: Rob Barry, Cole Sims, Mitch Mayes, Rebekah O'Quin, Rusty Ruckstuhl, Todd Parker, Dr. Ansel Rankins, Sr., Dr. Ed Bush.

A quorum was present.

Others present: Angela Jackson, LDAF Legal Counsel; Tina Peltier, LDAF; Marsha Dugas; LDAF; and Marissa Smith, LDAF.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Mr. Ruckstuhl made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 17, 2025, meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sims and passed unanimously.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

The next Horticulture Commission meeting will be held on February 26, 2026, at 9:30 a.m., July 23, 2026, at 9:30 a.m., and November 19, 2026, at 9:30 a.m.

REINSTATEMENT REQUESTS

Octave Ferrer requested to have his landscape irrigation contractor license reinstated.

Motion: Mr. Mayes made a motion to allow the reinstatement of Mr. Ferrer's license. This motion was seconded by Mr. Ruckstuhl and passed unanimously.

Charlette Carollo requested to have her landscape irrigation contractor, landscape horticulture and arborist license reinstated.

Motion: Mr. Sims made a motion to allow the reinstatement of Ms. Carollo's licenses. This motion was seconded by Mr. Ruckstuhl and passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

ADJUDICATORY HEARING

Stipulated cases:

Travis Soileau

Case No. 25-HORT-003

D/b/a Soileau's Lawn Care LLC
599 Rozas Road
Eunice, LA 70535

One (1) violation of R.S. LA 3:3804 (C) for advertising in a regulated profession (arborist) without the proper license.

The stipulation was presented by Ms. Jackson.

Respondent admits to the violations and agrees to pay the penalty of \$1,500.00.

Motion: Mr. Mayes made a motion to accept the stipulation and penalty.

This motion was seconded by Mr. Sims and passed unanimously.

T.J. Stewart

Case No. 25-HORT-004

2113 Desota Street
Robeline, LA 71469

Two (2) violations of LA R.S. 3:3804 (C) for advertising in a regulated profession (arborist) without the proper license. One (1) violation of LA R. S. 3:3810 (A)(2) for violating a written stop order in a regulated profession (arborist) without the proper license.

The stipulation was presented by Ms. Jackson.

Respondent admits to the violations and agrees to pay the penalty of \$1,500.00.

Motion: Mr. Parker made a motion to accept the stipulation and penalty.

This motion was seconded by Mr. Barry and passed unanimously.

Victor Amaya

Case No. 25-HORT-005

D/b/a Victor's Tree Service/Two Brothers Tree Service
17037 Faller Road
Tickfaw, La, 70466

One (1) violation of R.S. LA 3:3804 (C) for advertising in a regulated profession (arborist) without the proper license.

The stipulation was presented by Ms. Jackson.

Respondent admits to the violations and agrees to pay the penalty of \$1,000.00.

Motion: Dr. Rankins made a motion to accept the stipulation and penalty.

This motion was seconded by Mr. Parker and passed unanimously.

Gerald Etheridge

Case No. 25-HORT-007

D/b/a Etheridge Tree Service, LLC

117 Burket Street

Converse, La 71419

Three (3) violations of LA R.S. 3:3804 (C) for advertising in a regulated profession (arborist) without the proper license. Two (2) violations of R.S. 3:3804(A)(2) for violating a written stop order and notice of noncompliance in a regulated profession(arborist) without the proper license.

The stipulation was presented by Ms. Jackson.

Respondent admits to the violations and agrees to pay the penalty of \$1,500.00.

Motion: Dr. Rankins made a motion to accept the stipulation and recommended a penalty of \$1,500.00.

This motion was seconded by Mr. Parker and passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Director's Report:

Mrs. Peltier gave an update: In September, Mark Earl, Nursery and Apiary Coordinator, attended the Horticulture Inspection Society Southern Chapter annual meeting in Savannah, GA. This year's meeting focused on the Yellow Legged Hornet response plan. The newly formed Louisiana Arborist Association began offering arborist seminars for our arborist licensees which gained positive feedback. The new exam platform Everblue was launched, applicants now have the option to test online, but the Baton Rouge office will still offer in person testing. Ms. Peltier gave an update on the fall compliance inspection for P. ramorum and on CAPS surveys. All surveys have been completed except Forest Pest. The Cotton Pest Survey produced a new pest find for Louisiana, Amrasca biguttula, referred to as either the cotton jassid or two-spotted leaf hopper.

Increase License /Permit Fees 2026

Mrs. Peltier informed the Board of the adjustments being made to permit and licensing fees. With the approval and support from Commissioner Strain and the Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association, the Board supported the adjustments pending legislative process which will begin next month. This process may take up to 4-6 months to complete.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Dr. Rankins made a motion to adjourn at 10:34 a.m. This motion was seconded by Mr. Mayes and passed unanimously.