

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
OF THE STATE BAR OF ARIZONA**

September 18, 2026

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Doreen N. McPaul, President, Gilbert; Kelsi Lane, President-Elect, Tempe; D. Christopher Russell, Vice President, Sierra Vista; Louis S. Fidel, Secretary-Treasurer, Tucson; J. Damon Ashcraft, Phoenix; Rebecca Baker, Phoenix; Heather Baker-Mushkatel, Sun City; Interim Dean Angela Banks, Ex-Officio Member, ASU;; Cedric Dave, Public Member, Chandler; Jena Decker-Xu, Phoenix; Russell Duerksen, Chino Valley; Denis M. Fitzgibbons, Casa Grande; Amy P. Hernandez, Tucson; Mignonne Hollis, Public Member, Sierra Vista; David J. Johns, Flagstaff; Dean Jason Kreag, Ex-Officio Member, UofA; Jack Lunsford, Public Member, Phoenix; Robert J. McWhirter, Phoenix; Preston L. Pollock, Globe; David B. Rosenbaum, Phoenix; Thomas Ryan, Chandler; Samuel J. Saks, Board Advisor, Tempe; Jeff Schrade, Deputy Director, Substitute for David K. Byers, Phoenix; SJ Shannon, YLD President; Cortez W. Smith, Public Member, Casa Grande; Jimmie Dee Smith, Yuma; Charles Thomson, SLD President, Chloé R. Woods, Phoenix

BOARD MEMBERS WITH EXCUSED ABSENCES: David K. Byers, At-Large Member, Scottsdale; John W. Graham, At-Large Member; Scottsdale; Justice Kathryn King, Supreme Court Liaison, Phoenix

STAFF: Joel England, Chief Executive Officer; Genna Barela, Board Operations Manager; Shanice Brazwell, Administrative Assistant III; Deanna Commack, Executive Assistant; Tim Eigo, Chief Communications Officer; Jennifer Fite, Lawyer Assistance Programs Director; Betty Flores, Lead Online Communities & Sections Administrator; Jessica Fotinos, General Counsel; Jessica Iennarella, Chief Financial Officer; Tanner Johnson, IT Support Specialist; Caitlin Kelly, Program Coordinator; Lori Maxwell, Chief Information Officer; Trish McCarty, Human Resources Director; Kendra Owens-Johnson, Membership Administration Services Manager; Richard Palmatier, Deputy General Counsel; Fabiola Perez, Public Service Center Manager; Amy Rehm, Deputy Chief Bar Counsel; Patricia Seguin, Legal Services Manager; Danny Shapiro, Public Relations Manager; Roberta Tepper, Chief Member Services Officer; Kenzie Tkach, Multimedia Content Producer; Maret Vessella, Chief Bar Counsel

GUESTS: Ernest Calderón, ABA Arizona Bar Delegate; Vanessa Pineda, ASU Director of Public Interest

1. Call to Order: Doreen McPaul

President Doreen McPaul called the Board meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Call to the Public: Doreen McPaul

President McPaul made a Call to the Public and hearing nothing, moved on to the next item on the agenda.

3. President's Report: Doreen McPaul

- President McPaul attended the National Conference of Bar Presidents (NCBP) in Chicago in early August and enjoyed the presentations. She attended an Artificial Intelligence session that

she found to be both very interesting and beneficial and was amazed at how much technology has advanced.

Secretary-Treasurer Fidel attended the most recent Board Leadership Institute (BLI) Retreat in Tubac September 11-13. He spent some afternoons and evenings chatting with participants and really enjoyed interacting and communicating with them. He participated in the DISC training, learning a lot about himself and the participants.

4. CEO's Report: Joel England

CEO Joel England recognized and reported on the following:

- Employee of the Quarter: Fabiola Perez for reviving the State Bar's in-person Law Day program for the first time in eight years and transforming it into a statewide coordinated effort. Fabiola also represented the Public Service Center at the National Association of Bar Professionals (NABE)'s annual meeting held in Chicago in August where she received the NABE Community & Educational Outreach Award on behalf of the State Bar.
- Team of the Quarter: Jennifer Fite, Emma Schlenker, Kendra Owens-Johnson, Meredith Vivona, Tim Eigo, Kenzie Tkach, Danny Shapiro, Betty Flores, Mabel Ramirez, and Fabiola Perez for their support and participation in the Arizona Supreme Court Admissions Swearing In Ceremony.
- Facility Manager Mike Vallone and his team for the boardroom upgrades, i.e. carpet, table, cabinets, and paint.
- Senior Leadership Team Retreat
 - The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) met as a group on August 28 to discuss issues of significance to the State Bar and engaged in follow-up discussions on matters addressed at the Board of Governors' retreat. The SLT spent most of the retreat focused on strategic planning.
- 2027 Budget Planning
 - Staff are in the middle of working on budget planning. Employee health benefits are being looked at carefully, as there is a significant increase in costs; up 49% from last year. Negotiations with broker are ongoing. Additional information will be provided at the next Board meeting.
- Joined Secretary-Treasurer Fidel at BLI retreat in Tubac and enjoyed ethical decision-making session and participated in discussions.

5. State Bar Program Spotlight Pro Hac Vice: Shanice Brazwell

Pro Hac Vice Program Manager Shaniece Brazwell provided a program spotlight on the definition, annual report numbers, requirements, application process, court order, and resources for completion. Of note, we will surpass 2025 numbers with 823 applications processed to date and 1056 completed applications as of December 31, 2025. The numbers have consistently increased each year since 2021.

The floor was open for discussion, and questions from Board members were answered by staff.

6. Financial Policies & Processes Manual Revisions: Jessica Iennarella and Louis Fidel

Vote to approve changes as written by the Reserve Planning Working Group and approved by the Finance & Audit Committee.

MOTION to approve the Financial Policies and Processes Manual revisions made by
Cedric Dave
Seconded by Mignonne Hollis
Motion passed

7. 2027 Budget Guidelines Memorandum: Joel England, Jessica Iennarella and Louis Fidel

2027 budget guidelines presented as approved by Finance and Audit Committee. Discussed changes to metrics in memo as compared to 2026's Budget Guidelines memo. Includes operational deficit driven primarily by increases in health insurance costs.

MOTION to approve the 2027 Budget Guidelines Memorandum made by
Jack Lunsford
Seconded by Rebecca Baker
Motion passed

8. Arizona Legal Access Fellowship Program: Joel England and Jessica Iennarella

The Arizona Supreme Court, Arizona State University Law School (ASU), and University of Arizona Law School (UofA) requests the Board of Governors to designate the Arizona Legal Access Fellowship Program as a regularly funded annual initiative of the State Bar of Arizona.

- Chief Justice Ann Timmer requests continued financial support, as well as applauding the fellowship program for its community impacts, student success, and overall access to justice initiative.
- Jeff Schrade, Administrative Office of the Courts, UofA Dean Jason Kreag, ASU Interim Dean Angela Banks, and ASU staff member Vanessa Pineda all spoke about the success of the program and recommended future support.
- Secretary-Treasurer Fidel presented the Finance and Audit Committee's approved recommendation to fund the program at \$7,500 per student for up to ten students for another 2 years out of the Opportunity Reserve Fund.
- Mignonne Hollis asked whether the communities and agencies in which the students serve have been surveyed about the benefits of the Fellowship Program and stated that the Board should know how the communities in which the students work assess or rate the success of the Program.

MOTION to approve funding of the program from the Opportunity Reserve Fund for \$75K a year for two years made by
David Rosenbaum
Seconded by Jack Lunsford
Opposed by Mignonne Hollis
Motion passed

9. Consent Agenda: Doreen McPaul

- President McPaul asked if there were any matters that needed to be removed from the Consent Agenda.
 - a) Approval of Resignations in Good Standing
 - b) Approval of Reinstatement of Member(s) suspended for Non-Compliance with Annual

- Membership Fees and/or Trust Account Compliance Rule 32(c)(10) and/or Rule 43, Ariz. R. Sup Ct.)
- c) July 2026 Meeting Minutes

MOTION to approve the Consent Agenda made by
Rebecca Baker
Seconded by Damon Ashcraft
Motion passed

10. ABA House of Delegates: Ernest Calderón

State Bar Delegate Calderón reported on the House of Delegates Annual Meeting held in Chicago on August 3rd and 4th. There were approximately fifty (50) detailed resolutions presented to the House for discussion and debate. The three major items discussed at the meeting,

- Resolution 400 in support of the rule of law,
- ABA accreditation of law schools, and
- Rule 516 regarding development and publishing policies with clear deadlines governing the portability of Uniform Bar Examination and NextGen Bar Exam scores.

11. Arizona Foundation for Legal Services and Education Board of Directors: Jessica Fotinos and Kelsi Lane

Two State Bar vacancies exist on the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services and Education (AFLSE) Board of Directors due to the completion of terms by President-Elect Kelsi Lane and the Honorable Brian Furuya.

In accordance with historical practice, the State Bar Board of Governors may appoint two Governors to serve three-year terms on the AFLSE Board, as well as vote to suspend the Appointments Policy. Kelsi and Damon Ashcraft shared positive reflections regarding their service on the AFLSE Board. Interested members were instructed to submit a brief statement of interest prior to the next Executive Council meeting. Action to suspend the Appointments Policy and vote on nominations will be taken at the October Board meeting.

12. Rules Cycle: Jessica Fotinos

General Counsel Fotinos presented an update on the Supreme Court's August 25, 2026, Rules Agenda. The State Bar filed five rule change petitions. Ultimately, it withdrew one petition. The State Bar filed a total of 16 comments to rule change petitions filed by others, including departments and divisions of the Administrative Office of the Courts.

General Counsel Fotinos reported on the following petitions:

- R-26-0018: The State Bar filed a petition asking that Supreme Court Rule 32(a) be amended to include that the mission of the State Bar includes promoting confidence in the Rule of Law. The Supreme Court amended Rule 32(a) to provide that mission of the State Bar includes promoting public understanding of and confidence in our justice system.

- R-26-0006: Petition to amend Supreme Court Rule 34(e) to create an easier path for lawyers licensed in other jurisdictions to become authorized to practice law in Arizona. The State Bar filed a comment in opposition. The Court denied the petition.
- R-26-0011: Petition to amend Rule 3 of the Rules of Procedure for Special Action to further clarify that the questions that may be raised in statutory special action are not limited to those specified in the rules for other special actions derived from common law writs. The State Bar opposed this petition on the grounds that Rule 4 already addresses statutory special actions. The Court granted the petition.

The Court's next Rules Agenda is scheduled for December 2026.

13. Finance and Audit Committee: Jessica Iennarella and Louis Fidel

- Jessica Iennarella presented the consolidated 2025 financial statements and related audit report. Unmodified opinion received.
- CEO England reiterated the audit results noting we received the most favorable type of independent audit opinion possible and applauded the finance team for their efforts.

14. Correspondence/Reports: Doreen McPaul

President McPaul provided and discussed information on upcoming events and ticket availability.

15. ADJOURNED at 11:18 a.m.