

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

February 20, 2026

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Samuel J. Saks, President, Tempe; Doreen N. McPaul, President-Elect, Gilbert; Kelsi Lane, Vice President, Tempe; David J. Johns, Flagstaff; Amy P. Hernandez, Tucson; Cedric Dave, Public Member, Chandler; Cortez W. Smith, Public Member, Casa Grande; Heather Baker-Mushkatel, Sun City; Justice Kathryn King, Supreme Court Liaison, Phoenix; David B. Rosenbaum, Phoenix; Mignonne Hollis, Public Member, Sierra Vista; Russell Duerksen, Chino Valley; Louis S. Fidel, Tucson; J. Damon Ashcraft, Phoenix; Preston L. Pollock, Globe; Thomas Ryan, Chandler; Jena Decker-Xu, Phoenix; David K. Byers, At-Large Member, Scottsdale; Denis M. Fitzgibbons, Casa Grande; D. Christopher Russell, Secretary-Treasurer, Sierra Vista; Ted Schmidt, Tucson; Jack Lunsford, Phoenix; Rachel Romaniuk, YLD President, Chandler; Interim Dean Jason Kregg, Ex-Officio Member, UofA; Mary Helen Maley Maynard, Santa Cruz.

BOARD MEMBERS WITH EXCUSED ABSENCES: Rebecca Baker, Phoenix; Robert J. McWhirter, Phoenix; Chloé R. Woods, Phoenix; Jimmie Dee Smith, Yuma; John W. Graham, Scottsdale; Dean Stacy Leeds, Ex-Officio Member, ASU.

STAFF: Joel England, Chief Executive Officer; Noah Coakley, Chief of Staff & Director of Community Impact; Tim Eigo, Chief Communications Officer; Jessica Iennarella, Chief Financial Officer; Trish McCarty, HR Director; Lori Maxwell, Chief Information Officer; Amy Rehm, Deputy Chief Bar Counsel; Roberta Tepper, Chief Member Services Officer; Maret Vessella, Chief Bar Counsel; Jessica Fotinos, General Counsel; Genna Barela, Manager of Board Operations; Deanna Commack, Executive Assistant; Maggie Duran, Legal Administrative Assistant; Richard Palmatier Jr., Assistant General Counsel; Patricia Seguin, Legal Services Manager; Chris Wyatt, Information Technology Lead; Danny Shapiro, Public Relations Manager; Steve Little, Senior Bar Counsel, LOMAP; Manuel Espinoza, Trust Account Examiner; Marlene Cartusciello, Investigator; Kenzie Tkach, Multimedia Content Producer; Jackie Brokaw, Paralegal; Amy Ihrke, South Regional Office Manager; Melissa Duarte, Lead Legal Secretary.

GUESTS: Ernie Calderon and Eric Knott.

1. Call to Order

President Sam Saks called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Call to the Public

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

3. CEO's Report

CEO Joel England recognized the following:

- Employee of the Quarter: Richard Palmatier, Jr., for serving in the General Counsel role during the vacancy while the State Bar recruited and hired a new General Counsel, and for continuing to fulfill his Assistant General Counsel responsibilities.
- Team of the Quarter: Marlene Cartusciello, Jackie Brokaw, Manuel Espinoza, Teri Baldonado,

Lori Palmer, Steve Little, Yvette Penar, and Melissa Duarte, for their support and participation in the development of the Legal Regulation Office case management system, eProsecutor.

- Employee of the Year: Amy Ihrke, for exceptional leadership and collaboration with stakeholders and the community.

CEO Joel England reported that he met with Arizona Senate President Peterson, Senate Majority Whip Kavanagh, and Senator Finchem to discuss pending legislation and foster working relationships. He noted his intent to meet with House members as legislation opposed by the State Bar moves to the House.

CEO England reported that he received helpful feedback regarding the Rule of Law Day event and thanked Ted Schmidt and all who participated. A video produced by the State Bar's Communications Department was presented to the Board. President Saks and Justice King also thanked State Bar staff who volunteered at the event.

4. Consent Agenda

President Saks asked if there were any matters that needed to be removed from the Consent Agenda. He noted that the direction of an apostrophe changed on the Keller Refund Request letter, listed as item c).

- a) Approval of Resignations in Good Standing
- b) Approval of Reinstatement of Member(s) suspended for Non-Compliance with MCLE Requirements (Rule 45, Ariz. R. Sup. Ct.)
- c) Keller Refund Request
- d) Appellate Section Bylaws Update
- e) Policy Manual Working Group, BOG Attendance Policy Language Update

MOTION to approve the Consent Agenda made by Kelsi Lane

Seconded by David Johns

Motion passed

5. Policy Manual Working Group

Doreen N. McPaul thanked Ernie Calderon and the Board members who attended the prior meeting to discuss policies under review by the Policy Manual Working Group, including the ABA House of Delegates Travel Policy. She reported that the Working Group revised the policy regarding law school dean and public member appointments and recommended sunseting these policies, as the content is now codified in Rule 32(e), Ariz. R. Sup. Ct.

MOTION to sunset the policies made by Jack Lunsford

Seconded by David Johns

Motion passed

The Policy Manual Working Group consolidated three existing policies regarding the election of Board of Governors members from Arizona's geographic districts, consistent with Rule 32(e)(2), Ariz. R. Sup. Ct. Richard Palmatier, Jr. explained the rationale for the consolidation and outlined modifications to the current language.

MOTION to accept the recommendation of the Working Group and adopt the consolidation renamed “Rules for Election to the Board of Governors” made by Jack Lunsford
Seconded by J. Damon Ashcraft
Motion passed

6. Finance & Audit Committee

- a) 2025 Annual Cash Surplus Reserve Allocation (vote)

CFO Jessica Iennarella presented on the allocation of the 2025 surplus.

MOTION to recommend funding the reserves as recommended by the Finance & Audit Committee. Capital reserve to be funded as the net between depreciation expense and actual capital funding, with the remaining 2025 operating surplus split 86% to the annual fees reserve and 14% to the opportunity reserve to approve the allocation made by David Rosenbaum
Seconded by Rachel Romaniuk
Motion passed

7. Appointments Committee

Kelsi Lane encouraged the Board to solicit applications for open committee positions and noted that the current application deadline is February 25, 2026. She explained the roles of the appellate and trial court commissions, as well as certain legal requirements for recommended appointees. The Board discussed the high number of vacancies on these commissions and emphasized the importance of filling them.

- a) Foundation for Natural Resources and Energy Law

The Appointments Committee approved Mr. Matt Bingham from MGB Law, PLLC for an appointment to the Foundation of Natural Resources and Energy Law Trustee Council.

MOTION to approve the appointment of Matt Bingham (MGB Law PLLC) of Tucson, Arizona as the State Bar of Arizona’s Trustee to the Foundation of Natural Resources and Energy Law Trustee Council made by Thomas Ryan
Seconded by David Rosenbaum
Motion passed

8. Special Constitutional Appointments Committee

Arizona Commission on Appellate Court Appointments

Two candidates were approved by the Special Constitutional Appointments Committee to be nominated to serve on the Arizona Commission on Appellate Court Appointments: Mr. Stephen Silverman and Mr. Brandon Kavanagh.

MOTION to nominate Stephen Silverman (Independent, Maricopa County) of the Arizona Attorney General’s Office and Brandon Kavanagh (Independent, Coconino County) of Mangum, Wall, Stoops & Warden, PLLC, unranked, to the Governor for appointment to the Commission on Appellate Court Appointments made by Thomas Ryan
Seconded by Heather Baker-Mushkatel
Motion passed

b) Maricopa County Commission on Trial Court Appointments

The Special Constitutional Appointments Committee approved Mr. Jerry Keenan for nomination for an appointment to the Maricopa County Commission on Trial Court Appointments.

MOTION to nominate Jared Keenan (Independent, Maricopa) of Arizona Center for Law in the Public Interest to the Governor for appointment to the Maricopa County Commission on Trial Court Appointments made by Thomas Ryan

Seconded by David Rosenbaum

Motion passed

9. ABA House of Delegates Update

Ernie Calderon, former State Bar President, thanked the Board for their service and reported on the ABA House of Delegates Midyear Meeting. He noted that many resolutions addressed the current presidential administration's relationship with law firms that previously worked for the prior administration, as well as human rights issues. He further reported a focus on protecting judicial independence and the increasing need for enhanced security for judges nationwide. The ABA encouraged states to increase funding for judicial branch security.

Mr. Calderon also reported that Young Lawyer Divisions of bar associations across the country are facing increased challenges and emphasized the need to support young lawyers. He noted that this is a reapportionment year for the ABA House of Delegates and that he will participate in the reapportionment process for the remainder of his term. Mr. Calderon further noted his intent to seek one additional term as an ABA delegate to complete this work.

The Board took a recess from 9:50 a.m. to 10:09 a.m.

10. Lawyer Referral Working Group

Mignon Hollis identified gaps in the current intake and referral process and emphasized the need to regularly share, verify, and update resource information, both internally within the State Bar and externally. She noted that additional training is needed and should be structured and comprehensive. She further observed that the current process lacks a reliable method to quantify how many members of the public are successfully assisted and provided an example of a member of the public who was unable to effectively navigate the State Bar's phone system.

Louis Fidel agreed that a more robust evaluation and tracking approach is needed, noting that current metrics do not capture the full scope or success of the process and that existing contact information is often outdated.

11. Financial Planning Working Group Introduction

CFO Iennarella presented. A working group is developing a reserve spending plan which should be completed as the 2027 budgeting process begins. Goal is to present a draft plan at the 2026 Board Retreat.

12. Young Lawyer Bridge Task Force

Doreen McPaul reported that the Arizona Supreme Court requested assistance in assessing whether the State Bar should take additional steps to support practice readiness for young lawyers. She noted that the

Task Force is working to identify potential ways the State Bar can assist new admittees with practice readiness and that the Task Force is expected to provide its recommendations by June 2026.

13. SharePoint Demonstration

Genna Barela presented the SharePoint system that will be used for future Board meetings. She reviewed how meeting materials will be displayed and accessed, as well as the availability of additional resources. She noted that meeting dates and other Board-related events will be posted on the site.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION

CEO Evaluation and Consideration of Executive Compensation Council

MOTION to move into executive session made by Preston L. Pollock

Seconded by Jack Lunsford

Motion passed

MOTION to return to regular session made by Preston L. Pollock

Seconded by Mignonne Hollis

Motion passed

MOTION to approve the CEO/Executive Compensation for Joel England made by Kelsi Lane

Seconded by Jack Lunsford

Motion passed

15. ADJOURNED at 11:27 a.m.