

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

May 15, 2026

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Samuel J. Saks, President, Tempe; Doreen N. McPaul, President-Elect, Gilbert; Kelsi Lane, Vice President, Tempe; J. Damon Ashcraft, Phoenix; Rebecca Baker, Phoenix; Dave K. Byers, At-Large Member, Scottsdale; Cedric Dave, Public Member, Chandler; Russell Duerksen, Chino Valley; Louis S. Fidel, Tucson; Amy P. Hernandez, Tucson; Mignonne Hollis, Public Member, Sierra Vista; Justice Kathryn King, Supreme Court Liaison, Phoenix; Jack Lunsford, Phoenix; Robert J. McWhirter, Phoenix; Preston L. Pollock, Globe; Rachel Romaniuk, YLD President, Chandler; Thomas Ryan, Chandler; Cortez W. Smith, Public Member, Casa Grande.

BOARD MEMBERS ON ZOOM: Heather Baker-Mushkatel, Sun City; David J. Johns, Flagstaff; Mary Helen Maley Maynard, Santa Cruz; David B. Rosenbaum, Phoenix; D. Christopher Russell, Secretary-Treasurer, Sierra Vista; Ted Schmidt, Tucson; Dean Jason Kreag, Ex-Officio Member, UofA.

EXCUSED ABSENCES: Jena Decker-Xu, Phoenix.

ABSENT: Denis M. Fitzgibbons, Casa Grande; John W. Graham, Scottsdale; Dean Stacy Leeds, Ex-Officio Member, ASU; Jimmie Dee Smith, Yuma; Chloé R. Woods, Phoenix.

STAFF: Joel England, Chief Executive Officer; Noah Coakley, Chief of Staff & Director of Community Impact; Deanna Commack, Executive Assistant; Maggie Duran, Legal Administrative Assistant; Tim Eigo, Chief Communications Officer; Jessica Fotinos, General Counsel; Jessica Iennarella, Chief Financial Officer; Tanner Johnson, IT Support Specialist; Caitlin Kelly, Program Coordinator; Lori Maxwell, Chief Information Officer; Richard Palmatier Jr., Assistant General Counsel; Mabel Ramirez, Board of Legal Specialization Administrator; Amy Rehm, Deputy Chief Bar Counsel; Patricia Seguin, Legal Services Manager; Roberta Tepper, Chief Member Services Officer; Maret Vessella, Chief Bar Counsel.

GUESTS: None

1. Call to Order - Sam Saks

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

2. Call to the Public - Sam Saks

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

3. CEO's Report – Joel England

- Employee of the Quarter: Mabel Ramirez
 - Recognized for her work supporting the BLS Task Force and Working Group, helping develop an automated BLS Certification application process, promoting specialist recognition, and consistently demonstrating professionalism and teamwork.
- Tribal Wills Project (Chinle, AZ)
 - The State Bar supported the weeklong project with 40 volunteers. Participants described the experience as highly impactful, and the State Bar plans to participate again in 2027.
- Law Day – May 2

- The first in-person Law Day event since 2018 served 167 consumers with assistance from 56 attorneys, providing 157 hours of pro bono service. Survey responses reflected high satisfaction with the professionalism of attorneys and staff.
- Arizona Legal Access Fellowship Program
 - The State Bar fully funded 10 law students to participate in the Arizona Legal Access Fellowship Program in partnership with the Arizona Supreme Court.

4. Rules Review Committee – David Johns

- a) Proposed Comment to R-25-0059, Petition to Adopt Arizona Rules for Court-Ordered Mental Health Proceedings
- The Petition proposes a standalone set of procedural rules for court-ordered mental health proceedings under Title 36.
- The Civil Practice and Procedure Committee supports the Petition and the framework developed by the Court's Task Force, while recommending limited revisions to enhance due process protections, procedural clarity, consistency with existing rules, and practical administration.
- The Rules Review Committee recommended approval of the proposed comment in support of the Petition, incorporating the recommended revisions.

MOTION to approve proposed comment for filing made by Cedric Dave
 Seconded by Doreen McPaul
 Motion passed

5. Consent Agenda – Sam Saks

- President Saks 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) Approval of Reinstatement of Member(s) suspended for Non-Compliance with 2025-26 MCLE Requirements
- d) April 2026 Meeting Minutes
- e) BOG Annual Awards Recipients
- f) Proposed Amended Petition to R-26-0017, Petition to Amend Various Rules of Civil Procedure and Adopt New Rule 7.5

MOTION to approve the Consent Agenda made by Mignonne Hollis
 Seconded by J. Damon Ashcraft
 Motion passed

6. Policy Manual Working Group – Rebecca Baker

- Presented on the following policies:
- a) Board of Governors' Code of Conduct

- b) Removal of Governor for Cause
- c) Public Statement Policy
 - o This policy is new and was prepared at the request of President Saks. The Board discussed the purpose of the policy as relates to how requests for public statements from the State Bar are to be evaluated, in light of *Keller*, as well as the response timeframe. The Board agreed that the draft policy should be amended to provide that the drafting of a response statement is not limited to State Bar staff.
- d) Board of Governors' Reimbursement Policy
 - o The Board had healthy discussion about the proposed changes, especially as relates to what the State Bar will cover for Board members who want to attend the Annual Convention, regardless of where it is being held (Phoenix versus Tucson). Jack Lunsford, on behalf of the Policy Workgroup, stated that the portions of this policy that related expenses incurred by the State Bar that relate to Board members should be reviewed every 3 years, to ensure economic feasibility and determine Board member benefit.

MOTION to approve and adopt the policies, with a delayed effective date of the Board of Governors' Reimbursement Policy for the Convention provisions only until June of 2027, and a 3-year review of the Convention provisions by Jack Lunsford
 Seconded by Russell Duerksen
 Motion passed

7. Appointments Committee – Kelsi Lane

- Presented on the applicants for the following sections:
 - a) ABA House of Delegates
 - o Recommend the re-appointment of Ernest Calderon and Melissa Ho to the ABA as State Bar Delegates for a 2-year term.
 - b) Arizona Supreme Court Committee on Character and Fitness
 - o Recommend the appointment of Ashley N. Marshall and Sabrina Ayers Fisher.
 - c) Arizona Supreme Court Committee on Examinations
 - o Recommend the appointment of Ashley N. Marshall and Sabrina Ayers Fisher.
 - d) Board of Legal Specializations
 - o Recommend incumbents Michael Goldberg and Cynthia Braun for their final 4-year term on the BLS to the Supreme Court for its consideration for reappointment.
 - o Recommend to the BOG to nominate BLS Chair Jeffrey Neff for a second 2-year Chair appointment for the BLS to the Supreme Court for its consideration for reappointment.
 - e) State Bar of Arizona Board of Governors Public Member
 - o Recommend Cortez Smith for a final 3-year term as a public member of the BOG to the Supreme Court for its consideration for reappointment.

MOTION to approve the recommended nominees made by J. Damon Ashcraft
 Seconded by Thomas Ryan
 Motion passed

8. Special Constitutional Appointments Committee – Kelsi Lane

- Presented on the applicants for the following commissions:

- a) Commission on Appellate Court Appointments
 - Recommend to nominate Adena Bernstein.
- b) Maricopa County Commission on Trial Court Appointments
 - Recommend to nominate Adena Bernstein and Sabrina Ayers Fisher.
- c) Pima County Commission on Trial Court Appointments
 - Recommend to nominate S. John Trachta.

MOTION to approve the recommended nominees made by Thomas Ryan
 Seconded by Mignonne Hollis
 Motion passed

Board Member Dean Jason Kreag left the meeting.

9. State Bar Member Survey Results – Tim Eigo

- Presented the 2026 Member Survey results.
 - Presented the results of the 2026 State Bar Member Survey, which received 1,895 usable responses (10.4% response rate).
 - Overall member satisfaction increased from 75.9% in 2023 to 78.1% in 2026, while dissatisfaction decreased from 24.1% to 21.9%.
 - Respondents reported an average of 21 years of State Bar membership, consistent with prior surveys.
 - Several member services showed increased value ratings, including the Ethics Helpline, Trust Account Helpline, Practice 2.0 Helpline, and Member Assistance Program.
 - Technology remained the top area of interest for members, and use of the Ethics Hotline increased since 2023.
 - Member ratings of the State Bar’s responsiveness and quality of service improved across all measured categories.
 - Annual Convention attendance declined compared to 2023, though reasons for attending remained largely unchanged.
 - Satisfaction with State Bar sections increased modestly, while newsletter ratings saw slight declines.
 - Career satisfaction among attorneys increased from 86.7% to 88.1%.
 - Stress as a reported professional challenge decreased, while concern regarding threats to judicial independence increased significantly.

Overall, most survey measures remained stable or showed modest improvement compared to the 2023 survey.

The Board made suggestions on how to improve the survey for better results.

BREAK: 10:21 a.m. to 10:34 a.m.

[Out of agenda order - President Saks spoke about the upcoming events]

10. Finance and Audit Committee – Jessica Iennarella

- a) Q1 2026 Financial Update
 - Operating surplus of \$70K relative to a budgeted deficit of \$273K. Investment activity

for the first quarter is a deficit of \$208K. Total change in net assets for Q1 2026 is 138K deficit.

- Revenue totals \$5,460K for Q1. Annual fee collections are materially in line with budget.
- Expenses total \$5,390K for Q2. Expenses include items approved to be paid from the Opportunity Reserve.
- Start projections after Q2 when Convention has occurred.

11. Correspondence/Reports – Doreen McPaul

- Presented on the upcoming Board of Governors Schedule:
 - a) 2026-2027 Board Meeting Schedule
- Executive Council meeting in September will be moved to another date because it is currently scheduled on Labor Day. Updated schedule will be posted on SharePoint.
- Because it is the 20th anniversary of the Bar Leadership Institute, it would be a wonderful gesture to invite the 20th annual class to the Board's holiday party in December.

12. ADJOURNED at 10:42 a.m.