



BOARD OF LEGAL SPECIALIZATION

State Bar of Arizona
4201 N. 24th Street, Suite 100
Phoenix, Arizona 85016

Wednesday, October 09, 2024 - 4:00 p.m.
via **Zoom**

MINUTES

Approved November 13, 2024

MEMBER ATTENDANCE:

P = Present; Z = Present via Zoom; T = Present Telephonically; A = Absent

Jeff Neff - Z

Phoebe Moffatt – Z

Michael Goldberg – Z

Cynthia Braun - Z

Eric Awerkamp – Z

Kristin Gentile White – Z

Omer Ramiro Gurion - Z

Aaron Howard – Z

Jennifer Settles - Z

State Bar Staff: Mabel Ramirez

Minutes taken by: Mabel Ramirez

1. Call to Order (Quorum Present)

Meeting was called to order by BLS Chair, Jeff Neff
4:00 p.m.

2. Call to the Public –

Public Member: No public members present

3. Approval of minutes

The minutes of the April 10, 2024, General Session meeting was reviewed.

Motion for approval by: Cynthia Braun

Second by: Phoebe Moffatt

Chair calls for vote: Unanimous, motion passes

The minutes of the April 10, 2024, Executive Session meeting was reviewed.

Motion for approval by:

Second by: Cynthia Braun

Chair calls for vote: Unanimous, motion passes

4. Initial Certifications and Denials

Criminal Law Advisory Commission's Recommendation to take initial certification exam for applicant:

1. Bradlee Rideout

Motion made by: Omer Ramiro Gurion
Second by: Jennifer Settles
Chair calls for recusals: none
Chair calls for discussion: none
Chair calls for vote: Unanimous, motion passes

Consideration of Real Estate Advisory Commission's applicants for initial certification:

1. Jason E. Smith

Motion made by: Michael Goldberg
Second by: Aaron Howard
Chair calls for recusals: none
Chair calls for discussion: none
Chair calls for vote: Unanimous, motion passes

Jason Smith joined the meeting; Jeff confirmed his initial confirmation. Jason thanked the board.

Consideration of Family Law Advisory Commission's applicants for initial certification:

1. Elisabeth Benavidez
2. Kain Fisher
3. Michael Lincoln
4. Lisa Monnette
5. Wilcox Jacob Daniel
6. Brian Winter
7. Kaytlyn Yrun-Duffy

Motion made by: Michael Goldberg
Second by: Omer Ramiro Gurion
Chair calls for recusals: none
Chair calls for discussion: none

Family Law Advisory Commission's Recommendation to deny initial certification for applicants:

1. Ariel Cohn
2. Jennifer Booth Ruben
3. Giancarlo Sapelli

Motion made by: Michael Goldberg

Second by: Omer Ramiro Gurion

Chair calls for recusals: none

Chair calls for discussion: none

Chair calls for vote: Unanimous, motion passes

Consideration of Estate and Trust Advisory Commission's applicant for initial certification:

1. Debra Polly

Motion made by: Aaron Howard

Second by: Jennifer Settles

Chair calls for recusals: none

Chair calls for discussion: none

Chair calls for vote: Unanimous, motion passes

Estate and Trust Advisory Commission's recommendation to approve 2023 applicant to postpone exam for the following cycle:

1. Melissa Ahlers

Motion made by: Omer Ramiro Gurion

Second by: Cynthia Braun

Chair calls for recusals: none

Chair calls for discussion: none

Chair calls for vote: Unanimous, motion passes

5. Discussion of Vice Chair Role

Open discussion regarding the Vice Chair Role, Phoebe indicated she would like to fill the vice chair seat, Jeff approved and asked for a motion to approve vice chair nomination of Phoebe Moffat.

Motion made by: Cynthia Braun

Second by: Jennifer Settles

Chair calls for discussion: none

Chair calls for vote: Unanimous, motion passes

6. Discussion regarding the BLS Task Force recently appointed by Board of Governors, President Ted Schmitd.

Jeff Neff explained to the group that he, along with several advisory commission chairs, had recently been appointed to a task force charged with examining two key areas of the specialization program:

- Strategies to promote specialization and enhance its value and appeal to Arizona attorneys.
- Ways to increase public awareness and recognition of board-certified specialists.

Jeff reported that during the task force's previous two meetings, members discussed the overall decline in the number of certified specialists across most practice areas, with Family Law being the notable exception. The task force is exploring opportunities to strengthen the program, improve recruitment and retention of specialists, and enhance public understanding of the benefits of hiring a certified specialist.

14. Date of next meeting: **November 13, 2024**

15. Adjourn –4:49 pm