

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

June 23, 2025

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ted Schmidt, President, Tucson; Samuel J. Saks, President-Elect, Tempe; Doreen N. McPaul, Vice-President, Gilbert; David J. Johns, Flagstaff; Preston L. Pollock, Globe; Amy P. Hernandez, Tucson; Jena Decker-Xu, Phoenix; Robert J. McWhirter, Phoenix; Robyn M. Austin, Public Member, Tucson; Cedric Dave, Public Member, Chandler; Cortez W. Smith, Public Member, Casa Grande; Heather Baker-Mushkatel, Sun City; Kelsi Lane, Secretary-Treasurer, Tempe; Justice Kathryn King, Supreme Court Liaison, Phoenix; David B. Rosenbaum, Phoenix; Jimmie Dee Smith, Yuma; Benjamin Taylor, Ex-Officio Member, Phoenix; and Chloé Woods, Phoenix. Diandra Day Benally, Fountain Hills; Mignonne Hollis, Public Member, Sierra Vista; D. Christopher Russell, Sierra Vista; Interim Dean Jason Kreag, Ex-Officio Member, UofA; Vice Dean Angela Banks, Ex-Officio Member on behalf of Dean Stacy Leeds, ASU; Russell Duerksen, Chino Valley.

BOARD MEMBERS WITH EXCUSED ABSENCES: John W. Moody, Phoenix; David K. Byers, At-Large Member, Scottsdale; Louis S. Fidel, Tucson; Denis M. Fitzgibbons, Casa Grande; Mike Baumstark, At-Large Member, Scottsdale.

STAFF: Joel England, CEO/Executive Director; Jessica Iennarella, Chief Financial Officer; Tim Eigo, Chief Communications Officer; Lori Maxwell, Chief Information Officer; Trish McCarty, HR Director; Lisa Panahi, Chief Legal and Compliance Officer; Maret Vessella, Chief Bar Counsel; Noah Coakley, Chief of Staff & Director of Community Impact; Genna Barela, Manager of Board Operations; Deanna Commack, Executive Assistant; Riley McLaughlin, BOG Administrative Assistant, Roberta Tepper, Chief Member Services Officer

GUESTS: Ernie Calderon, Rebecca Baker, Jack Lunsford, Thomas Ryan, J. Damon Ashcraft.

1. Call to Order – Ted Schmidt

President Schmidt called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

2. Call to the Public – Ted Schmidt

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

3. President's Report – Ted Schmidt

- President Schmidt and Joel England attended Justice Cruz's Investiture in Yuma.
- President Schmidt opened the floor to introduce the incoming new members of the Board:
 - a) J. Damon Ashcraft
 - b) Rebecca Baker
 - c) Russell Duerksen
 - d) Thomas Ryan
 - e) Jack Lunsford

4. CEO's Report – Joel England

- CEO England reported attending the All Hands Meeting alongside President Ted Schmidt, and Chief of Staff/Director of Community Impact Noah Coakley. Discussions focused on access to justice, a letter signed by President Schmidt in support of LSC (Legal Services Corporation) funding, and strategies to improve legal representation and resources for individuals unable to afford legal services.
- CEO England announced to the Board that the New Member Orientation that took place at the State Bar of Arizona office/hybrid on June 12th was successful
- CEO England encouraged the Board members interest for the upcoming vacancy, replacing Diandra Day Benally's BOG seats on the Foundation's board and the ABA House of Delegates.

5. Nominating Committee/ Election of Officers – Benjamin Taylor

Genna Barela, Manager of Board Operations, presented on behalf of Benjamin Taylor. The Board was prepared to vote via ballot to determine the upcoming Secretary/Treasurer for the Board of Governors 2025- 2026, this vote included two candidates, Robert McWhirter and D. Christopher Russell.

The Board did not move forward with a ballot vote as Robert McWhirter withdrew his candidacy at the June 23 Board meeting, leaving D. Christopher Russell as the one remaining candidate for the Secretary/Treasurer officer position.

MOTION to move forward with the nomination of Doreen McPaul as the upcoming President-Elect, Kelsi Lane as the upcoming Vice President, and D. Christopher Russell as the upcoming Secretary/Treasurer by Sam Saks.

Seconded by: Kelsi Lane

Unanimous.

6. Appointments Committee – Doreen McPaul

Doreen McPaul presented the Appointment Committee's unofficial recommendation to the Board for American Bar Association (ABA) House of Delegates (HOD), with the two vacancies, one specific to Young Lawyers Division (YLD).

The committee brought forward Tiffany Tom (Incumbent) (Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, Pima County) and Chelsi Lynch (Rue Law LLC, Pinal County) as a District 1 representative of the YLD for the ABA HOD.

MOTION to approve the unofficial recommendation for appointment for ABA HOD vacancies, Sam Saks.

Seconded by: Mignonne Hollis

Unanimous.

7. Rule of Law Working Group – Kelsi Lane

Kelsi Lane presented two action items to the Board. The working group recommends the State Bar organize and manage a Rule of Law Day event in coordination with the court. The event would include various speakers and attending lawyers would be invited to gather on the courthouse steps and retake the oath they swore upon being admitted to the practice of law.

The working group also recommends to the State Bar of Arizona Board of Governors that the general public would benefit from State Bar organized opportunities for civic education by developing an

Arizona Lawyer Civic Ambassador Program. These attorney ambassadors would have a pre-prepared program to educate the public regarding our system of government, including the important role that courts play in maintaining a civil society (Rule of Law Task Force Working Group Final Report, 2025). The Working Group will be reaching out to the Foundation for assistance with the materials.

MOTION to approve these action items by Benjamin Taylor

Seconded by: David Rosenbaum

Unanimous.

8. Consent Agenda – Ted Schmidt

- a) Approval of Resignations in Good Standing
- b) Resignations in Lieu of Reinstatement
- c) Approval of Reinstatement of Member(s) suspended for Non-Compliance with Annual Membership Fees and/or Rule 43, Ariz. R. Sup. Ct.)
- d) Approval of Reinstatement of Member(s) suspended for Non-Compliance with MCLE Requirements (Rule 45, Ariz. R. Sup. Ct.)
- e) YLD Bylaws Revision
- f) Suspension of Members for Non-Payment of 2025 Membership Fee

Preliminary List; Fees close June 20th. An updated list to be provided prior to June 23rd meeting.

MOTION to approve Consent Agenda: Sam Saks

Seconded by: Christina Poletti

Unanimous.

9. Proposed Amendments to State Bar Bylaws – Lisa Panahi, Sam Saks

Sam Saks presented proposed amendments to the State Bar Bylaws, developed by himself, Lisa Panahi, and their team. The updates include revised references to Rule 32, an updated mission statement aligned with the Arizona Supreme Court, and clarification of decision-making authority for Executive Council members and Board of Governors officers.

This was presented to the Board following the 30-day notice rule.

10. Wellness Services Update – Joel England

Joel England provided an update on the Wellness Services Program, noting ongoing efforts to establish an independent nonprofit to support lawyers. He reminded the Board that funds from the Opportunity Fund were approved to support this initiative. Further updates to follow.

11. ABA House of Delegates Report – Ernie Calderon

Provided an update on various issues regarding the House of Delegates.

The Board took a 25-minute recess.

The meeting reconvened at 9:30 a.m.

12. Recognition of Outgoing Board Members – Ted Schmidt

Ted Schmidt presented plaques to the outgoing Board members, recognizing their commitment and dedication to the Board of Governors and the State Bar of Arizona. Those individuals included:

- a) Christina Poletti, YLD President
- b) Robyn Austin, Public Member
- c) Benjamin Taylor, Ex-Officio/Past President 2023-2024
- d) Mike Baumstark, At-Large Member
- e) Diandra Day Benally, District 6 Representative
- f) John Moody, District Governor

13. 2025-2026 Goals, Funding, and Retreat Preview – Sam Saks

Incoming Board President, Sam Saks, outlined his goals for the upcoming year. He emphasized streamlining Board meetings to focus on critical discussions and voting matters.

His top three priorities are:

- 1. Increasing engagement,
- 2. Enhancing collaboration with non-lawyers and related organizations, and
- 3. Strengthening value delivered to members and the public.

Saks provided a high-level overview of "value," highlighting the importance of CLEs and other programs that support both internal stakeholders and the broader community. His vision includes fostering positive involvement from both lawyers and non-lawyers.

14. Recognition of Outgoing President Ted Schmidt by Staff – Joel England

Joel presented a custom engraved vase to outgoing President Ted Schmidt on behalf of State Bar staff, he included a few words about Ted's presidential year, Joel recognized Ted for his dedication, professionalism, and commitment to the Board of Governors and his continuous service to the State Bar. He additionally presented an art piece from the Heard Museum to Ted on behalf of the State Bar of Arizona and Board of Governors.

15. Recognition of Outgoing President Ted Schmidt on behalf of the State Bar of Arizona and Board of Governors – Sam Saks

Sam recognized Ted Schmidt, he concluded with praise to Ted as he was a wonderful person to work alongside and look up to as Sam steps into Ted's role. He recognized that Ted was of great influence on him and that he is lucky to know him.

16. Correspondence/Reports – Ted Schmidt

Provided in the Board meeting materials:

- a) Board of Governors' – Primary Convention Events
- b) 2025- 2026 Board/Executive Council Meeting Schedule
- c) Draft of Letter to Foundation

MOTION to adjourn: Sam Saks

Seconded by: Robert McWhirter

ADJOURNED at 9:53 a.m.