

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

**October 21, 2022**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Jessica Sanchez, President, Mesa; Benjamin Taylor, President-Elect, Phoenix; Ted Schmidt, Vice President, Tucson; Sam Saks, Secretary/Treasurer, Tempe; Sandra Bensley, Tucson; YLD President Nicholas Brown, Phoenix; Jenna Decker-Xu, Phoenix; Kelsi Lane, Phoenix; Leticia Marquez, Tucson; Robert McWhirter, Phoenix; John Moody, Phoenix; Preston Pollock, Payson; Jennifer Rebholz, Board Advisor, Phoenix; Eric Ruchensky, Flagstaff; Jimmie Dee Smith, Yuma; Public Governors Robyn Austin, Tucson; Cedric Dave, Chandler; and Mignonne Hollis, Sierra Vista; At-Large Governors Mike Baumstark, Scottsdale, and Marcus Reinkensmeyer, Phoenix.

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Diandra Benally, Fountain Hills; Denis Fitzgibbons, Casa Grande; Sharon Flack, Prescott; David Rosenbaum, Phoenix; D. Christopher Russell, Sierra Vista; At-Large Governor Doreen McPaul, Window Rock.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCE: Public Governor Jonathan Martone, Paradise Valley

STAFF: Teri Baldonado, Legal Secretary; Deanna Commack, Executive Assistant; Joel England, CEO/Executive Director; Joe Hengemuehler, Chief Communications Officer; Lori Maxwell, Chief Information Officer; Lisa Panahi, General Counsel; Patricia Seguin, Legal Services Manager; Carrie Sherman, Director of Board Operations; Maret Vessella, Chief Bar Counsel; Chris Wyatt, I.T. Lead.

GUESTS: Hon. William Montgomery, Arizona Supreme Court Liaison; Victoria Ames, ASU College of Law; Leah Won and Dr. Jessica Findley, UA College of Law.

A Meet and Greet with the Board of Governors and the Bar staff was held from 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. President Jessica Sanchez called the Board meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.

**Call to the Public** – Jessica Sanchez

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

**President's Report** – Jessica Sanchez

- Thanked those present for participating in the breakfast with staff
  - The Bar has a professional staff and their efforts help make the association a leader among bar associations
  - 22 employees (23%) have been at SBA for 15+ years; the average tenure is 9.1 years
- Will attend the Court's Leadership Conference and the AZ Judicial Council meeting in Flagstaff on October 26 and 27
- October 28 taping for ABC15 *Sonoran Living* segment which will air November 4

- 2023 Convention Kick Off Meeting held with staff and co-chairs Judge David Gass and Suzanne Diaz
- Los Abogados Gala October 29 at Hyatt Regency Phoenix
  - Bar is sponsoring a table for 10; RSVPs requested today
- No November Board meeting so December meeting will be jam-packed
- Board Holiday Reception: Thursday, December 1 at the home of Anna Thomasson

### **CEO's Report** – Joel England

- Introduced Employee of Q3: Legal Secretary Teri Baldonado, along with her normal duties, has been the sole support person for the Intake Unit the past several months while efforts continue to fill vacant support staff positions; goes above and beyond, always with a smile.
- Two Bar Foundation Board appointments will be made at the December meeting; seeking interested Governors
- Request from the Court for nominations to fill two seats on the Family Court Improvement Committee; applications due October 24
- 2023 Board Election: call for candidates launching November 1; deadline to run December 14
  - District 1 (Apache/Coconino/Mohave/Navajo Counties) – one seat
  - District 4 (Cochise County) – one seat
  - District 5 (Pima/Santa Cruz Counties) – one seat
  - District 6 (Maricopa County) – three seats
  - Court will also be making appointments to various seats

### **Mark Harrison Memorial 10-Minute Topics** – Robert McWhirter

Mr. McWhirter presented on “Where Do Lawyers Come From?”

### **Proposed Revisions to Fee Arbitration Program Rules** – Lisa Panahi

- Rules required updating now that there are Legal Paraprofessionals
- Technical amendments only; no substantive changes
- **MOTION:** Sandra Bensley moved, Mike Baumstark seconded and the motion carried unanimously to approve the proposed amendments to the Fee Arbitration Program Rules.

### **Finance and Audit Committee** – Kelsi Lane

- The initial draft of the 2023 budget is for a budgeted surplus excluding sections and investment activity of \$208,212. The budget currently meets both of the budget guidelines adopted by the Board in September.
- Revenues are currently anticipated to exceed 2022's budget but not 2022's actual performance. This is primarily due to the 2023 Convention being in Tucson, the impact of the newly issued *Probate & Trust Manual* on 2022's actual revenues and the incorporation of the new Retired Lawyer status on annual fees.
- Expenses are currently anticipated to exceed both 2022's budget and actual performance. A significant chunk of the increase is the personnel costs, which is a combination of the HR Subcommittee approved package for 2023 and the lower actual costs for 2022 resulting from above-average vacancy levels. Operating costs are higher, although 80% of the increase

stems from costs reimbursed to the Supreme Court via the Office of the Presiding Disciplinary Judge.

- The capital budget is currently at \$709K, but additional work is needed to finalize the software and building improvement projects included in that amount.

### **Consent Agenda** – Jessica Sanchez

President Sanchez asked if there were any matters that needed to be removed from the Consent Agenda and hearing nothing,

- **MOTION:** Benjamin Taylor moved, Eric Ruchensky seconded, and the motion carried unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda:
  - a) Approval of September 23, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes
  - b) Approval of Resignations in Good Standing
  - c) 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.)
  - d) Approval of Reinstatements of Members Suspended for Non-Compliance with MCLE Requirements (Rule 45, Ariz. R. Sup. Ct.)
  - e) Reduction in Alternative Dispute Resolution Section’s Membership Fees

### **UA Law School Update** – Leah Won and Dr. Jessica Findley

- Provided overview of JD-Next, a pre-law school preparation program focusing on:
  - Pipeline - Improve readiness, especially among diverse students
  - Prediction – Create a valid and reliable test
  - Scalability - Lower barriers to legal education
- Pilot developed in 2019 includes coursework and exams
- 2022: Grown to include fourth cohort with 26 law schools, sponsored by ETS; pilot of BA students
- Follow-up surveys re: assignments, content, etc., to ascertain students’ law school preparedness
- Gathering/analyzing data on test validity, validity for groups, efficacy

### **Information**

- Jessica Sanchez: Encouraged Board members to read Stanford Report in materials - *Legal Innovation and Regulatory Reform in AZ and UT*
- Jennifer Rebholz: Inter-Bar Cooperation Initiative – new group formed to enhance collaboration, and increase attendance/participation, between the Bar and other bars within Arizona

**Adjournment:** 10:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sam Saks  
Secretary/Treasurer