

UTAH STATE BAR COMMISSION MEETING

MINUTES

Friday, May 16, 2025

In Attendance: President Cara Tangaro, Kim Cordova, Miriam Alred, Tom Bayles (remote), Brett Chambers, Matt Hansen, Rick Hoffman, Chrystal Mancuso-Smith, Shawn Newell, Olivia Shaughnessy, Jess Couse, and Tyler Young.

Ex-Officio Members: Nate Alder, Jennifer Carver, Erik Christiansen, Tiffany Shimada, Ezzy Khaosanga, Nick Stiles, Jennifer Carver.

Not in Attendance: Mark Morris and Christian Clinger. Ex-Officio members Andy Gonzalez, Dean Kronk Warner, Eili McCann, Brit Merrill, Dean More, Katie Woods.

Also in Attendance: Executive Director Elizabeth A. Wright, Assistant Executive Director Aubrey Schade, General Counsel Maribeth LeHoux, Finance Director Nathan Severin, Communications Director Jennifer Weaver, and IT Director Spencer Twede.

1. President's Welcome and Reports

1.1 Election Results

Ms. Tangaro announced the results of the Commission Elections, with Tyler Young being elected as president elect. In the Third Division, Jess Couser was elected for a full term on the Commission. Mr. Bayles won his election for the Fifth Division. Ms. Tangaro congratulated Matt Hansen on his judicial nomination, which will open another spot on the Commission for the Second Division, as he was also re-elected.

1.2 Spring Convention Reports

Ms. Tangaro reported that the Spring Convention was a successful event and had great attendance.

1.3 Report on fee meeting with the Court

Ms. Tangaro, Ms. Wright, and Mr. Severin met with the Court for approval of the licensing fee for 2025-2026. They told the Court that eventually we will have to raise rates, probably in 2 years. The current fee has been \$425 since 2009. Overall, costs have gone up on everything and fees have not correspondingly increased. The Court is going to review various programs the Bar has been charged with executing in evaluating costs.

1.4 Admissions Ceremony

The next admissions ceremony is May 20th at the Capitol at noon. All Commissioners are encouraged to attend.

1.5 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will be June 26th at 5pm at This is the Place. AG Derek Brown will give the keynote address.

2. Information and Discussion Items

2.1 2025 Legislative Session Recap

Ron Gordon and Michael Drechsel from the Administrative Office of the Court presented along with Jacey Skinner, Frank Pignanelli and Steve Styler, our government affairs teams. They reported that the Governmental Relations Committee reviewed over 200 bills during the 2025 legislative session. Many members of the bar reached out to their representatives, particularly about HB 512 which would have allowed the legislature to provide a recommendation to the public on whether a judge should be retained during a retention election. The recommendation would have appeared next to the judge's name on the ballot. The focus of the team was making sure that the citizens have access to the courts, and the protection of the process. During the interim, they are going to work to help explain the importance of system and that it's not about individual judges and individual decisions. The involvement of individual bar members led to members of the public being informed and getting involved. The group discussed potential challenges that may arise next year, and the importance of involving regional bar and bar affinity groups.

During the Interim Session, there is an item on bar licensure. Additionally, earlier discussions about court productivity will be revisited. There is also discussion of creating a new law school at UVU.

3. Reports

3.1 Western States Bar Conference

Mr. Young reported on the Western States Bar Conference, which was held in Arizona. He attended with Elizabeth, Aubrey and Olivia. Topics included access to justice, including such programs as the Sandbox, as well as the use of technology, including AI, to expand access to justice.

3.2 ABA Day in Washington DC

Mr. Christiansen reported on ABA Day in DC, which occurred in early April. Working with Frank Pignanelli, Mr. Christiansen was able to meet with members of the Utah delegation to discuss funding for the Legal Services Corporation which funds free legal services providers in all states including Utah. Mr. Christiansen reported that Utah's delegation indicated there would be no Legal Services funding in the proposed 2026 budget.

3.3 Report on Supreme Court Ad Hoc Committee on Regulatory Reform

Mr. Stiles reported on the Committee and working groups, which will be working from now until August, 2026. The Court has asked the working groups to study different regulatory reforms and to provide reports and recommendations based on info and data from the Sandbox and propose rule changes to the Court.

3.4 Bar 95th Anniversary

Ms. Weaver, Bar Communications Director, presented plans for the Bar's 95th anniversary in 2026. So far, a committee has been formed. The short-term goal is to increase public awareness and engagement leading up to the event.

4. Action Items

4.1 Approve 2025-2026 Budget for Submission to Court

Mr. Hoffman presented the proposed budget, which had been previously provided to the Commissioners for their review. We are budgeting to lose money; the controlled loss is timed with an increase to licensing fees in two years. The Commission discussed, and thanked Mr. Severin for this excellent work.

Ms. Tangaro made a motion to approve the budget. Mr. Young seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

4.2 Appoint 2026 Summer Convention Co-Chairs

Ms. Cordova discussed appointing chairs for the 2026 Summer Convention in Sun Valley. She recommended Cecilia Romero and Christina Jepson. She is continuing to look for a third person and welcomes recommendations of the Commission.

Ms. Tangaro made a motion to approve the Convention Co-Chairs. Mr. Young seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

4.3 Approve Creation of AI and the Law Committee

Mr. Borden presented (remotely) about creating and chairing an AI committee. The committee would have three main functions:

1. Educating members of the bar;
2. Allowing the Bar to be a stakeholder in the development of AI in the law policy; and
3. Providing legal scholarship, including setting up clinic at BYU

Mr. Borden offered to chair the newly formed committee. The Commission discussed how a new AI Committee would interact with the existing Innovation and the Law Committee.

Ms. Tangaro made a motion to approve the creation of the AI and the Law Committee. Mr. Newell seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Adjournment.

The Commission adjourned at 10:52 am.

Consent Agenda.

The Commission approved by consent the following items:

- Minutes of the March 13, 2025 Commission Meeting