

# UTAH STATE BAR COMMISSION MEETING

## MINUTES

**Friday, October 17, 2025**

**In Attendance:** President Kim Cordova, Tom Bayles, Brett Chambers, Christian Clinger, Mark Morris, Ezzy Khaosanga, Shawn Newell, Jess Couser, Chrystal Mancuso-Smith, Miriam Allred, Tyler Young, Yvette Donosso, and Rick Hoffman.

**Ex-Officio Members:** Jennifer Carver, Cara Tangaro (remote), Erik Christiansen, Alex Vandiver, Nicole Johnstone, Nick Stiles, and Katie Woods.

**Not in Attendance:** Commissioner Olivia Shaughnessy and Ex-Officio members Dean Kronk Warner, Dean Moore, Nate Alder, Tiffany Shimada, Jessica Ramirez, Eli McCann, and Holly Nelson.

**Also in Attendance:** Executive Director Elizabeth A. Wright, Assistant Executive Director Aubrey Schade, General Counsel Maribeth LeHoux, Finance Director Nathan Severin.

### **1. President's Welcome and Reports**

#### **1.1 Welcome Yvette Donosso**

Ms. Cordova introduced the new commissioner from the Second Division, Yvette Donosso.

#### **1.2 Welcome Nicole Johnston, new YLD ABA Delegate**

Ms. Cordova introduced Nicole Johnstone, who is the new YLD ABA Delegate.

#### **1.3 JPEC Surveys**

Ms. Cordova highlighted that JPEC are being mailed on October 20<sup>th</sup>. She noted how valuable input is and asked those who receive them please complete them.

#### **1.4 Lawyer Legislator Breakfast**

This year's lawyer legislator breakfast will be November 19<sup>th</sup> at the Capitol at 7:30 am. All commissioners are encouraged to attend.

#### **1.5 Fall Forum**

Ms. Cordova discussed the Fall Forum, which will again be 2 days this year - November 13 and 14<sup>th</sup> at the Little America. Commissioners will be speaking and introducing sessions and all are encouraged to attend.

#### **1.6 Event Invitations**

- Reception with ABA President Michelle Behnke will be held November 12, 2025. The event will be hosted by Parson Behle & Latimer. Mr. Christiansen talked about Ms. Behnke's work and the encouraged attendance. An invitation is attached to the meeting materials – please RSVP to Christy Abad.
- The UMBA Awards Dinner – November 17 at Little America

- Legal Aid Fundraiser – during October, Legal Aid is partnering with Current where 20% of the bill will be donated to the Legal Aid Society

### **1.7 Update on Commission Speaks Event**

Mr. Young has been hosting events across the state, with the focus in rural areas. He had second event in Price: about 15 people attended, 4 were judges. Ms. Cordova will be giving the commission presentation at the Fall Forum, talking about the work of the Commission. There will be someone from JPEC there as well. Mr. Young is looking at Richfield/Juab county as well as southern Utah for future events.

### **1.8 Women Lawyers Mentoring Award**

Ms. Cordova informed the Commission that Ms. Wright was receiving the Women Lawyers of Utah mentoring award, which will be awarded at the retreat in early November.

### **1.9 Utah State Bar Elections Reminder**

Ms. Cordova discussed the number of open positions available in the next election, including 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> Division Commissioners (due February 2<sup>nd</sup>) as well president-elect (due January 2<sup>nd</sup>).

## **2. Reports**

### **2.1 Judicial Council Report**

Ms. Woods gave an update from the Judicial Council meeting. There was a grand opening of the new courthouse in Manti. She discussed the overall budget for courts throughout the state, and that the total percentage of the state budget that goes to the court is .76%. The budget requests for the next year are: (1) to improve salaries for support staff, including clerks and JA's; (2) to hire new JA's. (3) to fund a new Fourth Division juvenile court judge; (4) Sixth district trainer; (5) Sixth district team leader; (6) more district judicial officers; (7) counsel for disabled adults in guardianship cases (it's a statutory requirement, but there's been no funding); (8) Grand County and Wasatch County DV Program; (9) Toelle DV Program (judge, JAs, DV case manager); (10) new district judge position.

The Commission discussed how the Bar can help with these objectives.

### **2.2 Legislative Audit Meeting and SB 1003**

On August 21, Ms. Wright appeared at Rules, Review and Oversight Committee Hearing. The Committee wants follow up on lawyer license fees. The Commission discussed additional steps the Bar would be taking.

### **2.3 And Justice for All**

Representatives from And Justice for All – Legal Aid Society, ULS, Disability Law Center – presented.

They have had an increase in the number of clients served by 20% since 2022 They have done a lot of fundraising, and just had a successful fundraising at breakfast event.

Disability Law Center: serves 4,200 clients a year, have seen an increase of 500 clients this year. They are federally funded and don't get any state funds.

Legal Aid Society: Handle DV matters in Salt Lake County. This includes protective orders, with a run rate of over 200 victims a month. They also provide pro bono legal services in family law. They are not as reliant on federal government for funding, but do get funding under the Victims of Crime Act, and the funding they've received has been cut in half over the last few years.

ULS: discussed how severe the need is right now and how threatened resources are.

### **3. Action Items**

#### **3.1 Purchase Table for UMBA Banquet**

The UMBA Banquet will be November 17<sup>th</sup> at the Little America. The cost to purchase a table is \$1500.

Ms. Donosso made a motion for the Commission to purchase a table. Mr. Clinger seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

#### **3.2 Approve Financial Audit**

Mr. Severin presented on the financial audit. Tanner has completed their audit of the 2024-2025 fiscal year. They provided an unqualified audit, meaning there were no adjustments. The Bar has \$11m in total assets. Unplanned expenses for the year included hiring a second governmental affairs representative as well as a wellness consultant.

Ms. Cordova made a motion to approve the 2024-2025 Financial Audit. Ms. Mancuso-Smith seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

#### **3.3 Approve Changes to Tava Contract**

Ms. Cordova discussed the current contract and how the Bar was looking at various options for cost reduction. Possible options include: removing dependents, removing inactive members, or reducing number of sessions. A discussion ensued, in which several commissioners emphasized the importance of providing services for dependents.

Mr. Clinger made a motion remove coverage for inactive, keep at 6 sessions, and keep dependents. Ms. Donosso seconded. Mr. Young made a friendly amendment to remove dependents. The friendly amendment was declined by Mr. Clinger. Mr. Clinger's original motion carried, with two voting in opposition.

#### **3.4 Approve Hiring Intrepid Communications on an As-Needed Basis**

Ms. Wright discussed engaging Intrepid Communications so we can use them on an hourly basis as needed, including during the legislative session. They will be helpful at getting the public engaged. Their rates are \$250/hr for Chris Thomas and \$175/hr for staff.

Mr. Clinger made a motion to engage Intrepid Communications. Ms. Khaosanga seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

#### **3.5 Select Fall Forum Awards**

Mr. Adam Bondy, co-chair of the USB Awards Committee presented the following nominees for the Fall Forum awards.

- Mentoring Awards:

- Charlotte Miller Award: Wendy Brown
- Paul Moxley Award: F. Joseph Paldino
- James Lee Award: Thomas R. Barton

Ms. Cordova motion – Jess Couser second

Ms. Cordova made a motion to approve the mentoring awards as presented. Ms. Couser seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

- Community Member Award: Chelsey Phelps of AFCC

Mr. Clinger made a motion to approve the community award as presented. Ms. Couser seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

- Professionalism Award: Julianne Blanch

Ms. Cordova made a motion to approve the professional award as presented. Mr. Young seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

- Special Service Award: Brandon Owen.

Ms. Cordova made a motion to approve the professional award as presented. Mr. Chambers seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

#### **4. Information and Discussion Items**

none

#### **Adjournment.**

The Commission adjourned at 11:39.

#### **Consent Agenda.**

The Commission approved by consent the following items:

- Minutes of the August 22, 2025 Commission Meeting
- Amendments to the Appellate Section Bylaws
- Fund for Client Protection payments

#### **Executive Session**

Litigation update from Dick Baldwin