

# UTAH STATE BAR COMMISSION MEETING

## MINUTES

**Friday, November 21, 2025**

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

**Ex-Officio Members:** Nate Alder, Jennifer Carver, Cara Tangaro, Erik Christiansen, Jessica Ramirez, Alex Vandiver, Nicole Johnston, Dean Elizabeth Kronk-Warner, Holly Nelson, Dean David Moore, Nick Stiles, and Katie Woods.

**Not in Attendance:** Chrystal Mancuso-Smith, and Ex-Officio Tiffany Shimada and Eli McCann.

**Also in Attendance:** Executive Director Elizabeth A. Wright, Assistant Executive Director Aubrey Schade, General Counsel Maribeth LeHoux, Communications Director Jennifer Weaver.

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

#### **1.1 Report on Meeting with Governor Cox**

Ms. Cordova discussed the meeting with Governor Cox. Other attendees included Ms. Wright, Mr. Young, Jacey Skinner and Frank Pignanelli. Discussions included increasing the number of judges, both at the Supreme Court and Appellate Court. He also agreed to attend and speak at the Summer Convention in Sun Valley in Summer 2026.

#### **1.2 Report on Lawyer-Legislative Breakfast**

Ms. Cordova reported there was a good turnout at the event, including Supreme Court Justices and many commissioners. The meetings included discussions with Brammer about judicial efficiency and Loubet about potential UPL legislation. The Commission discussed a possible future event during the session.

#### **1.3 Report on 2025 Fall Forum**

Ms. Cordova provided a report on the Fall Forum. She noted that there was a good turnout, including lots of vendors. Highlights included an OPC panel, a presentation from JPEC, the judges panel, and the legislative panel. She also noted that the UMBA Banquet on Monday was very well attended.

#### **1.4 Report on "Listening" CLE with President Adams and House Speaker Schultz**

Ms. Cordova discussed upcoming CLE on December 10 with President Adams and Speaker Schultz. The event would include an in-person lunch for the Commission and other invited guests but would also be broadcast as a CLE.

#### **1.5 Commission Election Reminder**

Ms. Cordova discussed the open positions on the Commission, including a candidate for President Elect.

## **2. Action Items**

### **2.1 Amendment to the Submission Guidelines for Bar Journal Letters to the Editor**

Ms. Wright discussed that the current policy for Letters to the Editor in the Bar Journal does not require that the letter relate to anything actually published. To keep letters topical to the materials in the Bar Journal, the policy should specify that letters need to be relevant.

Ms. Cordova made a motion amended the submission guidelines for Letters to the Editor in the Bar Journal. Mr. Clinger seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

### **2.2 Amendments to Ethics Advisory Opinion Committee Rules**

Ms. LeHoux led a discussion regarding publishing the opinions of the Ethics Advisory Opinion Committee. Utah is one of only very few Bars that do not have oversight of the opinions by the Commission. The Commission discussed what the process could look like, and whether they could act by written consent. Ms. LeHoux stated she will provide a draft of the proposed rule change at the next meeting.

Mr. Young made a motion to adopt a rule change requiring Commission approval before publishing opinions. Ms. Allred seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

## **3. Reports**

### **3.1 Report from the SJ Quinney School of Law**

Dean Kronk Warner reported on recent discussions regarding a part-time JD program, potentially to be located at UVU. Senator Brammer is interested and may propose legislation. Dean Kronk Warner discussed the potential obstacles of creating a new program: cost, acquiring ABA accreditation, and securing at least 25 students in the program every year.

There is concern about market demand: the biggest parttime program in the country is Georgetown, and it only has about 50 students per year. There are also issues with cost: for ABA accreditation, 2/3 of the courses have to be taught by full time faculty.

Dean Kronk Warner said the U is looking at how they can help with other lawyer-adjacent jobs as well as how to address the access to justice issue in rural communities.

On the national level, the Dept. of Education accreditor has said they're creating a standards committee to look at ABA standards. Some states are looking at whether they're going to continue to requiring ABA accreditation.

### **3.2 Report on Alternate Path to Licensure**

Ms. Lee reported that the Alternate Path was approved as of October 1. The program will start taking applications Jan 1, 2026. There are at least 3 people who have said they will be applying. The program is for applicants who have never sat for a bar exam and have graduated from an ABA law school. There is a required 240 supervised hours, as well as a performance test, but licensure will not require passing the bar exam. In talking with judges in rural areas, there are concerns about supervised practice and who will be able to

provide supervision.

Ms. Johnston asked a question about reciprocity. Ms. Lee answered that it's based on the admission processes of the other states, there is currently no reciprocity. Our reciprocity rule requires applicants to have taken a bar exam in another state. But some states are changing their reciprocity rules to remove the bar exam requirement.

The first administration of the alternate path exam will be August 2026.

### **3.3 2026 Legislative Session**

Mr. Pignanelli and Ms. Skinner presented. Mr. Pignanelli talked about the government relations committee and their role in reviewing proposed legislation. Ms. Skinner said that while we don't know everything that's going to happen during the session, we know there will be something about JPEC standards, specifically for the Supreme Court on issues of getting opinions out and calendar management.

Other potential bills include addressing Bar fees and what can be included in bar fees. There may also be a proposal for a new law school.

Mr. Clinger recommended reaching out to licensees about legislative matters. Ms. Wright mentioned that there will be a meeting with our PR firm in December to help discuss strategies, and Mr. Pignanelli discussed the need for a rapid response team for commissioners to be able to act quickly during the session.

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

Mr. Hoffman discussed the October 2025 Financial Statements, which were provided in the meeting materials.

Mr. Hoffman made a motion that the finance committee also review the use of bar licensing fees. Ms. Cordova seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

### **Adjournment.**

The Commission adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

### **Consent Agenda.**

The Commission approved by consent the following items:

- Minutes of the October 17, 2025 Commission Meeting