

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Board of Law Examiners
April 25, 2025**

1. Call to order, determine quorum, and consider requests for excused absences – Chair

At 9:15 a.m., Rivera called the meeting to order in open session. Board members present were Rivera, Ereon Giltner, Ellis, Mackenzie, Odom, and Soltero. Board members attending remotely were Orr and McKim. Board member Massey was absent with prior approval.

Also attending were:

- Nahdiah Hoang, Executive Director
- Rod Shaheen, Chief Accountant
- Allison Drish, Director of Investigations
- Michael Sullivan, Director of Admissions
- Laurie Gonzales, Executive Assistant
- Kendelyn Schiller, Assistant Director of Investigations
- April Shaheen, Assistant Director of Investigations
- Ky Strunc, Assistant Director of Admissions
- Chris Copeland, Legal Assistant

Rivera opened the meeting with a congratulatory message to McKim acknowledging her completion of service as Chair of the Family Law Section of the State Bar of Texas.

2. Consider approval of minutes and certified agendas of Board Meetings, Hearings/Waiver Panels, and Accommodation Review Committee – Chair

Before the meeting, Board Members were provided with drafts of the minutes for:

- Board Meeting, September 20, 2024
- Board Workshop, January 10 – 11, 2024
- Hearings, September 19, 2024, a.m. Session
- Hearings, September 19, 2024, p.m. Session
- Hearings, December 20, 2024, Mayhew
- Hearings, December 20, 2024, Parks

Ellis moved to approve all minutes as submitted. Odom seconded. Upon vote of the Board, the motion carried unanimously.

3. Consider communication from the public, if any – Chair

No members of the public were present.

4. Report of Accountant – Shaheen

4.1. Review Investment Report

Shaheen presented the investment report for FY2025 through February 28, 2025.

4.2. Review Financial Report

Shaheen presented the financial report for FY2025 through February 28, 2025.

5. Consider budget proposal for fiscal year 2026

5.1. Staff’s budget proposal (Hoang; Shaheen)

Shaheen provided the Board with a FY2026 Draft Budget and a 2026 Budget Prior Year Comparison before the meeting. Shaheen and Hoang presented an overview of the proposed budget, including explanations for line item increases which would result in a deficit. Board members discussed the increasing deficit and procedures for increasing fees if needed, and Hoang said she would ask the Chair to put the issue on the next Board meeting agenda.

5.2. Finance Committee report on budget proposal (Vice chair)

Giltner reported on the Finance Committee meeting. Giltner discussed the FY2026 Draft Budget with the Board.

The Committee recommended that staff investigate Texas-domiciled banks since Independent Financial has merged with a non-Texas domiciled bank, and report at a future Finance Committee meeting.

At 10:17 a.m., Rivera closed the meeting to executive session pursuant to *Tx. Govt. Code 551.074*.

At 10:37 a.m., Rivera reconvened the meeting in open session.

At 10:38 a.m., the meeting was recessed for a 10-minute break.

At 10:48 a.m., Rivera reconvened the meeting in open session.

Returning to agenda item 5.2, Mackenzie moved that the Board approve the proposed budget as presented subject to the Finance Committee Chair consulting with Executive Director, Accounting, and Supreme Court liaison amending the proposal to include fee increases and/or other Supreme Court recommendations. Soltero seconded the motion. Upon vote of the Board, the motion carried unanimously.

Giltner recommended that staff work with the Finance Committee to draft a budget memo to accompany the FY2026 Draft Budget when staff presents it to the Supreme Court Liaison Justice Brett Busby.

6. Consider Supreme Court of Texas Order Inviting Comments on the Law School Accreditation Component of Texas's Bar Admission Requirements, Misc. Docket No. 25-9018 – Chair

The Supreme Court has issued an order in which it “The Court invites comments...from the Texas Board of Law Examiners, the Texas law school deans, the bar, and the public” about the law school accreditation component of Texas’s bar admission requirements, specifically requesting feedback on “whether to reduce or end the Rules’ reliance on the ABA; and alternatives the Court should consider.” The Order further states:

The Court requests that comments take into consideration the goals of promoting high-quality and cost-effective legal education, meeting Texans’ need for legal services, protecting the public, and promoting public accountability in the State of Texas’s governance of the legal profession.

The University of Houston Law Center will host “A Conversation on the ABA Accreditation of Texas Law Schools” online on May 12, 2025.

Rivera invited all Board members to review the Order and attend the UHLC conversation and said that the June 2025 Board meeting agenda will include an item for considering what comment to provide, if any.

7. Consider recommending Rule change for licensing out-of-state attorneys seeking to work for nonprofit and/or government legal service providers – Chair

Hoang explained that Justice Busby asked the Board to discuss an inquiry from the Texas Indigent Defense Commission about possible changes to the Rules to speed up the licensure process for attorneys who worked for certain nonprofit organizations that provided legal services. The Board

discussed possible approaches, including: allowing any out of state attorney to practice for a qualified employer while their application for admission in Texas is pending; issuing practice pending admission licenses to qualified applicants to work for qualified employers; issuing temporary licenses to allow qualified applicants to work for qualified employers even before they apply for a regular license; or prioritizing applications from such applicants.

Hoang said that staff's recommendation was to provide a three-year one-time temporary license to attorney applicants who worked for TIDC, Legal Aid, and similar legal service organizations, and possibly Texas state agencies as well. Like the temporary license available to military spouses and active-duty military personnel under Rule 23, a legal services temporary license would allow these attorney applicants to practice for their employer while staff processed their applications for regular admission, while they prepared for a bar exam, or while they accrued some additional practice time if needed to qualify for AWOX.

Soltero submitted a motion that the Board recommend to the Court that the Rules be amended to create a three-year, one-time temporary license that would be made available to attorney applicants who worked for TDIC, Legal Aid, similar legal services organizations, and Texas state agencies. Mackenzie seconded the motion. Upon vote of the Board, the motion passed unanimously.

8. Consider Rule changes required to implement Supreme Court of Texas Order Regarding the NextGen Bar Exam and Texas Law Component, Misc. Docket No. 24-9040; Consider format and timing of Texas Law Component – Chair; Hoang

Hoang, Sullivan, and Strunc presented information regarding the Court's Order Regarding the NextGen Bar Exam and the Texas Law Component, which anticipated accepting NextGen UBE scores, administering the NextGen UBE in July 2028, and administering a half-day, graded exam as the Texas Law Component (TLC test). They presented options for deciding the format, content, question development, and administration of the TLC test. They noted that the NCBE had advised that the TLC test could not be scaled to the NextGen UBE.

Hoang stated that staff recommend a multiple-choice exam, with content determined after some form of a job task analysis. Staff recommended that the Board draft multiple-choice questions with assistance from a consultant. Some Board members expressed a strong preference that a

consultant draft the questions under direction of the Board members.

At 12:19 p.m., the meeting was recessed for a brief lunch break.

At 12:43 p.m., the meeting was reconvened in open session.

9. Report of Executive Director – Hoang

9.1. General agency operations, including New Lawyers Induction Ceremony on April 30, 2025

New Lawyer Induction is scheduled for Wednesday, April 30, 2025. Massey will represent the Board at the event.

9.2. Calendar update, including Feb 2025 Formal Review schedule

Gonzales noted that each Board Member was scheduled for 6 Formal Reviews as of the time of the board meeting. Gonzales noted that the number of Formals may change as requests were being accepted through Monday, 4/28/2025.

Hoang noted that the CY2026 draft calendar will be discussed at the June 2025 Board Meeting. She suggested a change to consider for board meeting scheduling that the three board members not scheduled for hearings the Thursday prior to a board meeting be allowed to attend board meetings via Zoom.

9.3. Articles of interest

Hoang provided the Board with articles of interest pertinent to BLE.

9.4. Complaint Resolution Report

Hoang presented the Complaint Resolution Report for period 1/1/2025 – 4/8/2025.

9.5. Administratively Determined Waiver Decisions

Hoang presented the Administratively Determined Waivers Report for period 1/1/2025 – 3/31/2025.

9.6. Legislation of interest

Hoang presented an update on pending legislation pertinent to BLE.

10. Report of Director of Investigations – Drish

- 10.1. Recommendations of probationary licenses to be converted to regular licenses and for minor modifications to probationary licenses

Drish presented the Report of Recommendations for Conversion to Regular License to Practice Law.

11. Report of the Director of Admissions – Sullivan

- 11.1. Report on February 2025 Texas Bar Examination

Sullivan applauded staff for a fantastic exam administration, the best of his tenure in his opinion.

February 2025 grade release was timely and orderly. February 2025 exam statistics were posted on April 23, 2025.

12. Litigation Report (This review may be conducted in executive session pursuant to *Tex. Gov't Code sec. 551.071.*) – Hoang

Hoang referred the Board to the written Litigation Report they were provided prior to the meeting. She had no additional information to provide.

13. Update on NextGen (Some of this review may be conducted in executive session pursuant to *Tex. Gov't Code sec. 551.089.*) – Chair

Rivera noted that NCBE will be conducting a standard setting study in Chicago May 12th – 16th, 2025. Texas will be represented by Sullivan.

At 1:11 p.m., Rivera closed the meeting to executive session pursuant to *Tex. Gov't Code sec. 551.089.*

At 1:30 p.m., Rivera reconvened the meeting in open session.

14. Report of Chair – Chair

The Chair deferred this topic to a future board meeting.

15. Consider issues arising from Reports of Accountant, Executive Director, Director of Investigations, General Counsel, and Board Chair – Chair

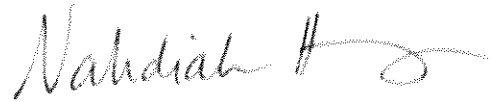
Soltero requested an agenda item for June 2025 Board meeting regarding the burden of proof for a hearing on a probationary licensee's request for

a regular license.

16. Adjourn – Chair

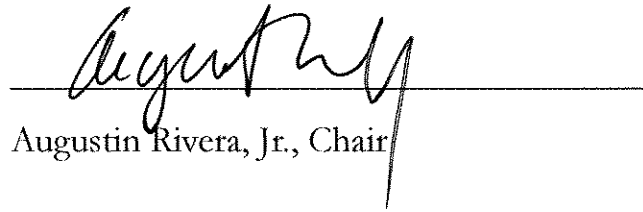
At 1:31 p.m., with no additional business to discuss, Rivera closed the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Nahdiah Hoang", written in dark ink.

Nahdiah Hoang, Executive Director

Approved

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Augustin Rivera, Jr.", written in dark ink. The signature is positioned above a horizontal line.

Augustin Rivera, Jr., Chair

A handwritten date "6-26-26" in cursive script, written in dark ink. The date is positioned above a horizontal line.

Date