Meeting of the State Board of Civil Legal Aid

Date: Friday, May 8, 2026

Time: 11:00 – 12:30

Location: BOCLA, Teams Meeting

Chair: Christopher Wendt

Board Members: Jerry Lane, Katy Drahos, Emily Cooper, Holley Horrell, Ana Pottratz Acosta, Summra Shariff, John Murphy

Absent: Tarryl Clark, John Gordon, Korey Wahwassuck, Susan Beaudet

Staff Members: Bridget Gernander, Colleen Kelly, Josh Pollock

MINUTES

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Client Story

Discussion:

The meeting opened with Chris Wendt welcoming board members and staff.

Summra Shariff shared a client story from when she was a staff attorney in St. Cloud. The client was in crisis and the work of legal aid helped to get the client to safety and away from an abusive situation.

Agenda Item 2: Approval of April 2026 Minutes

Discussion:

The board reviewed and approved the meeting minutes for April 2026.

Holley Horrell moved approval of the April meeting minutes. Second, by Jerry Lane. Voted to approve.

Agenda Item 3: Justice for All Project Grant Applications

Discussion:

Katy Drahos reviewed the Justice for All Project Grant applications with the board. BOCLA initially received six applications. However, two applications were withdrawn by the requesting organizations because of changes with their anticipated projects. Ultimately, the board discussed four Justice for All Project Grant applications for funding.

The table below summaries the applications, reviewer scores, average score, and recommendation for funding.

Organization	Amount Requested	Reviewer 1	Reviewer 2	Reviewer 3	Avg. (20)	Recommendation
Guiding LIGHTS	$37,000	10	9	7	8.66	Not Fund
HOME Line	$75,000					Applicant Withdrew
Justice North	$75,000	12	17	16	15	Fully Fund
MCFP	$75,000	12	15	15	14	Fully Fund
MSBA	$75,000					Applicant Withdrew
The Legal Revolution	$75,000	15	16	15	15.33	Fully Fund

The slate presented to the board for a vote included fully funding Justice North, Minnesotans for Consumer Financial Protection, and The Legal Revolution. The slate also included not funding Guiding LIGHTS.

Summra Shariff moved approval of the slate. Second, by John Murphy. Voted to approve.

Agenda Item 4: FY27 Budget Update

Discussion:

Bridget Gernander and Josh Pollock presented the projected budget for FY27 including revenue and expenses. The revenue projections from IOLTA exceeded the predicted amount for FY26 and is expected to stay at similar levels in FY27. The Board's goal at the beginning of the FY26-27 biennium was to draw down the IOLTA balance by $2 million this grant cycle. To stay on budget for drawing down IOLTA reserves, the Board discussed a 3% adjustment to the FY27 grant contracts. The board also reviewed BOCLA administrative expenses for FY27 including staff salaries.

Jerry Lane moved approval of 3% adjustment to the FY27 grant contracts and administrative costs for FY27. Second, by Summra Sharif. Voted to approve.

Agenda Item 5: BOCLA Grantee Standards Version 1 Ready for Grantee Feedback

Discussion:

Emily Cooper gave an update on the status of the development of standards and timeline for next steps. The phase I of standards focused on requirements for LOON updates. The phase I standards will be shared with grantees for comment and feedback.

Agenda Item 6: Vice Chair / Secretary

Discussion:

Katy Drahos volunteered for the position of Vice Chair and Holley Horrell volunteered for the position of Secretary.

Jerry Lane moved approval of Ms. Drahos for Vice Chair and Ms. Horrell for Secretary. Second, by Summra Shariff. Voted to approve.

Next Board Meeting: July 8, 2026