

**Equal Justice Authority (EJA) Board
Minutes Board Meeting
June 9, 2025**

I. Welcome

1. The meeting was convened at 3:02pm by board chair Matt Baca and was conducted via Zoom.
2. The following board members and staff were present:
 1. Matt Baca, Toni-Anne Nunez, Charlie Willman, Ceasar Jimenez, Allison Esser, Renzo Reategui, Lauren Peach, and Elise Bechthold (staff).
3. No members of the public were present.

II. Board Vote on Grant Awards

1. Lauren provided an overview of the process the grant application scoring committee utilized to review and score grant applications. First, the committee reviewed the rubric that was finalized by the EJA board in April. Second, the committee individually reviewed and scored applications on their own time. Third, the committee held an in-person meeting to discuss the details of each application and reach consensus on scores.
 1. The in-person meeting began with the committee discussing the eligibility of each applicant and removed any ineligible applications from the pool. Next, the committee reviewed the percentiles spreadsheet that calculated criteria 1-3. Lastly, the committee focused their discussion on scoring criteria 4 and 5.
 2. The committee developed a list of follow-up questions for a few applicants to answer any questions that they felt were unclear in applicant answers.
2. Elise compiled the spreadsheets and calculations, then sent them to Lauren and Judge Esser for review.
 1. The committee held a follow-up virtual meeting where they discussed the applicant's replies to the committee's questions, reviewed spreadsheets and calculations, and brainstormed award letter and declination letter outreach.
3. Charlie stated he was happy with the process the scoring committee developed. Matt agreed and noted how close the final grant amounts ended up being.
4. The board received a spreadsheet that had the name of each applicant, their final score as determined by the scoring committee, and the estimated amount each applicant is to receive. Renzo made a motion to approve the process and disbursements made by the scoring committee. Toni-Anne seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

III. Approval of Minutes

5. Charlie made a motion to approve the June 2, 2025 minutes and Judge Esser seconded. The minutes of the June 2, 2025, board meeting were approved unanimously with no changes.

IV. Finance/Insurance Update

1. Charlie updated the general operating budget by adjusting the amount to be paid to the Colorado Access to Justice Commission (ATJC) in FY2024-2025. As ATJC bills quarterly, the next invoice will be received and paid in July.
2. Charlie and Elise received the monthly spreadsheet from the State Court Administrator's Office that details expected disbursements from judicial districts for May. They will review that spreadsheet as May checks arrive in the next few weeks.
3. Elise will pick up and deposit checks this Wednesday.

V. Staff Update

4. Elise updated the board that she created and emailed a short survey to all applicants, asking them what worked and did not work for their organizations during the application process. The survey will close prior to grant award announcements being made on Friday, June 13. Elise linked the board to the survey replies received so far.

VI. Review Grant Documents

5. Award Letter & Process

1. Elise reviewed the draft award letter and grant agreement. The board discussed who would sign the letter and determined it was best to have it sent from the board as a whole and from the board email address. Elise will send these emails on Friday, June 13. She will then send a final award letter with the exact amount by June 26.

1. Charlie asked about the sentence that said money would be rescinded if grantees do not complete the grant acceptance steps. Judge Esser clarified that this was included to ensure funds were not delayed to other grant recipients, but they want to work with each organization. Elise said she will create a spreadsheet of who has/has not completed grant acceptance steps and reach out to any organizations with outstanding tasks prior to the due date.

2. Charlie stated that he and Elise plan to complete ACH transfers on June 26th, which allows 3 business days for the transfers. This means funds should arrive by July 1, according to the statutory requirement.

2. The board discussed the grant agreement section that outlined accessibility and equity requirements for individuals with Limited English Proficiency. The board decided to remove this section, as it is specifically pertinent to federal funds. Next year, the board will consider adding a values statement that reflects broader anti-discrimination inclusions.

6. Declination Letters & Process

1. Judge Esser reviewed the scoring committee's discussion on how to approach declination letters. Ultimately, they determined that the best approach would be to send a letter and offer a follow-up meeting. Emo also plans to contact each organization that received a declination letter. Lauren and Judge Esser also offered to join Elise and Emo in these meetings as needed.

2. The board approved of the declination letter as currently drafted and determined it should be sent from the EJABoard email from the entirety of the board.
7. The board discussed who will sign the grant agreement on behalf of awardees and decided the language should be updated to reflect an authorized signatory. Elise will make that change.
8. Elise will send the letter to Melinda when reaching out to Colorado Legal Services.

VII. Judge Esser logged off the meeting at 3:50 p.m.

VIII. Open Discussion

9. Summer Meeting Cadence

1. The board discussed their summer meeting cadence and decided to move to a monthly meeting. At the next board meeting, they will discuss if monthly or quarterly meetings are needed, discuss an in-person board gathering, and review the list of action items Elise has for the next year.
 2. Elise will email regular updates on administrative activities. As a reminder regarding Open Meetings Law rules, board members should not participate in substantive decision-making processes via email.
10. The next EJA Board meeting will be on July 7 at 4:00 p.m.

IX. Adjournment

1. The meeting was adjourned at 4:00pm.