

**Federal Bar Association
Government Contracts Section
Meeting Minutes for Thursday, May 21, 2026 at 12 pm EDT**

Minutes taken by John McMurray, Secretary-Treasurer

In attendance virtually (9): Lisa Brauner, Lisa Colon, Robby Dube (Chair), Mike McCarthy, John McMurray, Kara Sacilotto, Vince Tese, Ralph Thomas, David Timm. Not in attendance: Nicole Bacon, Christopher Chaisson, Jimmie Herring, Jana Patterson, Kendra Perkins Norwood, Robb Wong.

Secretary-Treasurer Report

John McMurray reviewed the meeting minutes from the March meeting, which were approved unanimously. In the Treasurer report, he noted that, from the period from October 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025, overall section expenses were \$7,129, with \$6,000 of that deriving from food and beverage costs from the annual Showcase held at the Watergate Hotel. Our ending fund balance was \$35,779.

Happy Hour Recap

The section's April 23 Happy Hour, according to co-organizer David Timm, was a good time to get to know section members on an informal basis. Lisa C., the other co-organizer, said that it was "well worth it" and that we should consider another happy hour later in the calendar year.

Lisa C. mentioned that several non-section members who attended the Showcase were also at the happy hour. Lisa C. estimated that 10-12 people were in attendance at the happy hour, and David suggested it was closer to 15. Robby said he would like to see the full attendance list of those who signed up and that he would encourage anyone who was there to become involved with the section during the next year.

Next steps on David Timm's proposal on AI disclosure

As noted in the March 12 minutes, David's AI proposal "suggests that a procurement tribunal disclose when AI is used in a bid protest or claim and would include a certification that all citations have been verified by the user." Building on our previous discussion, the panel concluded that David's proposal is ready to be sent out and that David can work with section leadership to get it circulated.

New format for the Showcase

Robby noted that we had not yet decided whether this year's Showcase should be virtual or in person and how we could do it in a way which would be cost effective.

Robby said that Jeff Eckland, who is a partner at Robby's firm in Minnesota, runs an organization which could include our Showcase as part of a larger event. Rather than being a standalone event, the Showcase would be sponsored by Jeff's group and would be part of an existing event where we would partner with the annual seminar that Jeff's group runs. We would therefore not have control over it. It would instead be a virtual event held in mid-September. Jeff would be spearheading it and co-planning the event with the FBA.

The event would provide 18 hours of CLE, which Vince said would be a positive, as we did not have that arrangement last time. The cost to attendees would be the FBA rate. Vince also emphasized that a Zoom event would likely be a positive in terms of boosting attendance, even if we would miss out on in-person interactions. One way to mitigate the latter problem might be to have a section happy hour afterwards. David noted that, due to timing, we needed to proceed with a decision quickly, and Robby concurred.

Robby said this approach has benefits as a way to recruit and to pair our Showcase with another event. David said that Robby “has the right idea” with a virtual approach this time. David would volunteer his firm location in Washington, D.C. for an in-person happy hour following the event.

There was support for having a Showcase in person in 2027. To that end, Vince offered to lead the first year of a Showcase planning committee. John emphasized that doing a virtual Showcase in 2026 does not bind us to remaining virtual in future years. Robby supported the idea of having an in-person section meeting shortly after the virtual Showcase.

Robby indicated that we needed to take a vote since the proposed Showcase would be a co-sponsored event. Vince motioned that we have a virtual Showcase this year and also form a committee to plan next year’s Showcase. Kara noted that perhaps a partnership with Labor and Employment would be worthwhile and that we would need 6-9 months to plan a live event.

Vince made the motion and David seconded. Five attendees were in favor, with no verbal opposition, and the motion passed.

Vince agreed to chair the Showcase planning committee. Robby and Nicole also agreed to serve. It is expected to be called the ‘event committee’ and will provide monthly updates.

Future meetings

Robby asked if members would prefer monthly meetings. Vince, David, and John came out in support. Lisa C. opposed but said she would attend regardless. Kara noted the difficulties of attending monthly meetings and would prefer every other month. Vince said that, with bi-monthly meetings, if you miss one month, you miss a lot.

Robby’s original plan had been for members to prepare webinars and other contents in alternate months but that this approach hasn’t provided the volume of content he had anticipated. Therefore, Robby will work with FBA about moving section meetings back to a monthly schedule.

Section updates

- David said that bid protests in 2026 are likely to be the lowest in recorded history and that we will know more when GAO releases its annual report at the end of the year.
- Lisa C. noted that the Administration will not permit DEI in federal contracting and that she will update more next month.

This meeting was Mike McCarthy’s last one since he was retiring at the end of the week. The section applauded Mike for his service and dedication. The date of the next section meeting was yet to be announced.