

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING MINUTES

Olympia, WA
March 6, 2026

Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting of the Board of Governors of the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) was called to order by President Francis Adewale on Friday March 6, at 2:00 p.m. Governors in attendance were:

Matthew Dresden
Tom Ahearne
Kevin Fay
Kristina Larry
Todd Bloom
Nam Nguyen
Allison Widney
Kari Petrasek
Parvin Price
Christopher Bhang
Mary Rathbone
Emily Arneson
Jordan Couch
Alain Villeneuve

Officers and Executive Staff in attendance were President Francis Adewale, Immediate-Past President Sunitha Anjilvel, Executive Director Terra Nevitt, Chief Communications and Outreach Officer Sara Niegowski, Chief Disciplinary Counsel & Parliamentarian Doug Ende, Chief Regulatory Counsel Renata Garcia, Advancement Department Director Kevin Plachy, Chief Equity & Justice Officer Diana Singleton, General Counsel Laurie Powers, and HR Director & Chief Culture Officer Glynnis Klinefelter Sio.

Also in attendance were Andrew Yi, Nancy Hawkins, Sanjay Walveker, Julianne Unite, Jennifer Olegario, Erin Varriano, Catherine Schur, Betsylew Miale-Gix, Brian Anderson, Paris Eriksen, Kyle Sciuchetti, and Patrick Palace.

Member & Public Comments

President Adewale opened the session for member and public comments. No public comments were made.

Consent Calendar

President Adewale presented the consent calendar. There being no requests for removal or objections, the items on the consent calendar were adopted by unanimous consent.

President's Report

President Adewale announced open positions on the Board of Governors, encouraging members to apply for roles in various districts and as president-elect. President Adewale also noted the upcoming joint column with Executive Director Nevitt in the Bar News.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Terra Nevitt referred to her written report available in the meeting materials and invited questions. No questions were raised.

Court Rules and Procedures Committee Proposed Comments

Chair Andrew Yi of the Court Rules and Procedures Committee presented proposed comments on several court rules. The committee recommended revisions to Criminal Rule 4.2 to clarify fines related to trafficking offenses and suggested consistent terminology in Criminal Rule 4.7. The committee also proposed changes to the rules for courts of limited jurisdiction to streamline the process for defense counsel providing redacted discovery. Gov. Kevin Fay moved to approve the proposed comments. The motion passed with three negative votes.

Approve Appointment of Foundation Trustee

Chair Brian Anderson proposed the appointment of Kriti Ganguly to the Washington State Bar Foundation's Board of Trustees. Gov. Kari Petrasek moved to approve Kriti Ganguly as the newest member of the Washington State Bar Foundation Board of Trustees. The motion passed unanimously.

Third Read: Governance Committee's Proposed Amendments to the WSBA Bylaws re Political Activities

Chair Kevin Fay presented the third reading of the proposed bylaw amendments concerning the political activities of governors and officers. The proposal incorporated feedback from the previous meeting. Gov. Parvin Price moved to approve the bylaw amendments. The motion passed unanimously.

Update on Experiential Licensing Pathway

Gov. Jordan Couch provided an update on the experiential licensing pathways, set for implementation in July 2027 as an alternative to the bar exam. The discussion focused on the development of nine core competencies required for licensure, including legal processes, professional conduct, and client interaction. The Licensure Pathways Steering Committee is considering a uniform supervision requirement of 825 hours across all pathways, replacing the previous three-tiered model. Concerns were raised regarding public perception and the non-retroactive application of the new rules for current law clerks. Feedback from listening sessions indicated general support for the new pathway. The Steering Committee will continue to refine the proposal and engage with stakeholders to ensure effective implementation.

Governor Roundtable

The Member Engagement Council, co-chaired by Govs. Rathbone and Matthew Dresden announced the initiation of a viability review for the Animal Law Section. Discussion ensued about the necessity and structure of the viability review process, with suggestions to potentially modify or eliminate it. Gov. Fay suggested that the Governance Committee evaluate the viability review's effectiveness.

Gov. Tom Ahearne proposed enhancing legal education in schools through partnerships with mock trial programs to promote the rule of law.

Chief Regulatory Counsel Garcia shared a member request to make changes to the emeritus status for retired bar members.

Proposal to Sign the NCBP Pledge to Preserve the Independence of the Legal Profession and the Judicial System and to Sponsor a Related ABA Resolution

National Conference of Bar Presidents (NCBP) President Patrick Palace presented a proposal for the WSBA to sign the NCBP pledge, which emphasizes core elements of the Oath of Attorney such as upholding the rule of law and ensuring access to justice. The proposal also included sponsoring a related ABA resolution. Discussion ensued regarding the implications of signing the pledge, including concerns about redundancy and member reaction to such statements. Executive Director Nevitt suggested that if the Board were inclined to approve signing the pledge, it be signed on behalf of the Board of Governors instead of WSBA. Gov. Couch moved to sign the NCBP pledge as the Board of Governors. The motion passed with one negative vote.

Gov. Couch moved to sponsor the ABA resolution as drafted. The motion resulted in a tie vote. President Adewale cast the tie-breaking vote in favor of sponsoring the resolution. The Board agreed to sponsor the ABA resolution with the understanding that sponsorship could be withdrawn if necessary. The Executive Committee will monitor the process and call a special meeting if needed.

Executive Session

The Board entered executive session at 4:25 p.m. to discuss legal advice regarding the Keller deduction. The session concluded at 5:07 p.m., and the Board returned to public session.

Meeting Feedback

Governors identified positive aspects of the meeting, including improved efficiency in discussions. New ideas discussed included a focus on rule of law and mock trial initiatives for high school students.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, President Adewale adjourned the meeting at 5:12 p.m. on March 6, 2026.

Respectfully,

Terra Nevitt

Terra Nevitt
WSBA Executive Director & Secretary



**Board of Governors Meeting – Motions List
Olympia, WA
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1. **Approve the Consent Calendar:** Adopted by unanimous consent.
2. **Approve Court Rules and Procedures Committee Proposed Comments:** Passed with three negative votes.
3. **Approve New Appointment to the Washington State Bar Foundation Board of Trustees:** Passed unanimously.
4. **Approve Third Read: Proposed Amendments to the WSBA Bylaws Re Political Activities:** Passed unanimously.
5. **Sign the NCBP Pledge as the Board of Governors:** Passed with one negative vote.
6. **Sponsor the ABA Resolution as Drafted:** Passed by tie-breaking vote of the President.