



Board of Governors Meeting Recap

May 2, 2025

A summary prepared by the WSBA of the Board of Governors (Board) meeting May 2, 2025, in Shelton. The agenda, materials, and video recording from this Board meeting are posted [online](#). Port Angeles. The next regular meeting is July 17-19 in Wall Walla. The Board is the WSBA's governing body charged with determining general policies of the WSBA and approving its annual budget. To subscribe to the Board Meeting Notification list, email barleaders@wsba.org.

TOP TAKEAWAYS

In Support of the Rule of Law. [More than 1,300](#) — that's how many legal professionals turned out on Law Day, May 1, to retake their professional oath, emphasizing their duty to protect the Constitution and rule of law. Thank you to all who participated, sending a powerful message to Washingtonians: We stand united in protecting the liberties and rights of all! Law Day also kicked off our [Rule of Law Ambassador Program](#), which will help legal professionals fulfill one of their most important duties, to educate the public about the rule of law and to build trust and confidence in the justice system. Please email Ambassador@wsba.org to learn more.

Incoming President-Elect. Congratulations to [Kari Petrusek](#). The Board selected Kari to assume the WSBA Presidency in 2026-2027. She is currently serving as WSBA Treasurer, Governor for the Second District, chair of the Small Town and Rural Council, and member of the executive committee for the Solo/Small Practice and Juvenile Law Sections. She will be only the third lawyer from Snohomish County (the first in 35 years) and the seventh woman to hold the position of WSBA President.

Local Hero. The WSBA recognized [James Rodriguez](#) as a Local Hero, an honor bestowed by the WSBA President in partnership with county bar associations to recognize colleagues who make noteworthy contributions to their communities. James was nominated by the Clallam County Bar Association for his outstanding pro bono contributions made through Clallam-Jefferson County Pro Bono Lawyers (CJCPBL) and as Clallam County Bar Association (CCBA) president from 2021 to 2024.

Seeking Input: Amicus Brief Regarding Defense Case Load Standards? The WSBA received a request from King County Department of Public Defense (KCDPD) for an amicus brief in a case pending before the Washington Supreme Court, In re Detention of M.E. The case involves an appeal of a King County Superior Court order requiring KCDPD to handle cases in excess of WSBA's Standards for Indigent Defense Services. The Board considered the amicus request, as contemplated by the criteria of [WSBA's Amicus Curiae Policy](#), and decided to seek member input

before making a decision. Time is of the essence, so if you would like to provide input, please email Barleaders@wsba.org by 5 p.m. May 16. ([See page 616.](#))

Approval of an Equity and Justice Plan. The Board of Governors adopted an [Equity and Justice Plan](#), with much thanks to the WSBA Diversity, Equity, and Justice Council and the hundreds and hundreds of members who contributed to the drafting; the plan is built on comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data reflecting members' demographics and experiences. The plan is a roadmap to drive resources and actions toward the overall goal of expanding justice for all. The plan has three focus areas—the legal profession, the clients we serve, and WSBA leadership—with steps that all contribute to the overall goal: To foster a legal system that is committed to ensuring that everyone in Washington needing legal services can realistically access those services; and that assures everyone in Washington interested in entering the legal field has a realistic opportunity to achieve success in our profession. Stay tuned as the WSBA now begins implementation of the plan. ([See page 57.](#))

WSBA Budget Reforecast and License Fee Philosophy. The Board of Governors approved a reforecast of the current FY25 budget, which is a midyear reconciliation of the projected budget with actual expenses and revenues thus far. The reforecast shows a slight uptick in expenses and downtick in revenues, compared to what was initially projected, with an overall healthy and expected reserve outcome for the year. ([See page 79.](#)) The Board also heard a first reading of a proposed license fee philosophy focused on stability and predictability for members: Under the proposed process, a market factor (COLA) would be considered each year to ensure the license fee is keeping track with the changing value of the dollar; then the Board would adjust the fee, depending on anticipated changes in revenues, expenses, reserve funds, and program needs. [More information.](#) We are still collecting feedback about the proposed license fee philosophy; please weigh in by emailing BoardFeedback@wsba.org by May 26.

Member Well-Being. One of the WSBA's strategic goals is to expand and improve well-being resources for legal professionals. Toward that end, a Well-Being Task Force began studying member well-being in mid-2024, which has included a comprehensive member survey and consulting national models and best practices. Task Force leaders reported that they are on track to produce a final report in March 2026. ([See page 159.](#))

The Board also:

- Held a moment of silence to honor and remember [Justice Susan Owens](#).
- Recommended to the Washington Supreme Court that the Client Protection Fund assessment remain the same, \$20, for the 2026 licensing year and that relevant APRs be amended to increase Fund initial gift payment amounts and per-claim limits. ([See page 141.](#))
- Held a first reading of a technical amendment to a WSBA bylaw regarding license status for eligibility for service on a WSBA committee; that bylaw amendment will be on the Board's consent calendar in July and, if approved, sent to the Washington Supreme Court for consideration. ([See page 539.](#))

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