



WSBA

Diversity Committee Minutes Final

March 16, 2019

10 – 3 pm

In Person: WSBA Office, 1325 4th Ave, Suite 600, Seattle, WA 98101

The Washington State Bar Association's Diversity Committee is dedicated to implementing WSBA's Diversity and Inclusion Plan. The work of the committee promotes historically underrepresented groups to enter and stay in the profession of law. The Diversity Committee does this through collaborative relationships and community building activities which highlight the numerous societal benefits of a diverse law profession.

In Attendance: Chelsea Brisbois, William Locke, Mubarak Abdur Raheem, Roger Hillman, Gov. Alec Stephens, Andrea Jarmon, Laura Wulf, Gov. Dan Clark, Gov. Athan Papailiou, Sunitha Anjilvel,

Absent: Nam Nguyen, Thomas McGirk, Allison Ross, Ailene Limric, Lisa Mansfield, Jennifer Cruz, Gov. Jean Kang,

Staff: Dana Barnett, Tyler Washington, KJ Williams

Guest: President- Elect Rajeev Majumdar

Call to Order, Welcome and Approval of Minutes– Gov. Alec Stephens, Co-Chair

Alec called meeting to order at 10:08a.m. On motion by Roger and seconded by William, the Diversity Committee unanimously approved the February meeting minutes.

Oregon State Bar Summit

KJ provided an update that the Oregon State Bar is being sued and possibly bifurcated. They are currently unable to plan a summit with the Diversity Committee.

Training: Implicit Bias and Microaggressions – Joy Williams, Diversity Program Manager

KJ conducted a training on implicit bias and microaggressions

BOG Report – Governor Alec Stephens, Co-Chair

Alec provided the committee with the BOG report. He shared that the committee statement in support of the Oregon specialty bars was approved by the BOG for dissemination. Committee members brought up the recent shooting in New Zealand and the committee discussed the possibility of addressing this along with their original statement. Dana asked the committee if there will be a cover letter included with the statement and who will be responsible for drafting it. Sunitha stated she preferred not to delay the dissemination of their current letter by

adding language that would require BOG approval. Andrea states that she believes there is nexus between the events in New Zealand and Oregon and urged the committee to address the incident. The committee decided that the overall goal is to send the BOG approved statement out by Friday (3/22) with or without the cover letter. Alec will draft the cover letter which will acknowledge the New Zealand incident and circulate it to the committee for review. If the cover letter would cause a delay in dissemination, then the cover letter and statement will be sent to diversity-stakeholders list serve, and original statement will sent out without cover letter to WSBA membership.

Alec shared that Paula Littlewood's last day as Executive Director is 3/31 and that the interim director will be announced soon. Alec also shared that the Washington State Supreme Court structure workgroup is meeting in March and that diversity committee members, Andrea and Dan are on it. Alec also shared that the BOG has voted to oppose house bill 1788 which would end the state bar act. A delegation of four bog members, including Alec, will attend the senate hearing on 3/19 to speak on the bill.

Alec provided update that the staff presented on anti-harassment and retaliation policies during the March BOG meeting. He shared that the BOG approved a harassment and retaliation policy in January, however WSBA staff addressed the policy gaps in the current policy in light of recent allegations against Gov. Dan Bridges as there is no process on how to handle a complaint against a governor. Alec shared that he sent staff recommendations to Personnel Committee.

Alec also shared that a vote was taken to suspend Governor Dan Bridges as Treasurer pending the resolution of multiple legal claims during the January BOG meeting, but that the BOG determined the removal to be an ultra vires act and he has been since reinstated as Treasurer.

Alec stated that the Washington Supreme Court will open a hostile work environment investigation at the WSBA.

Laura asked if Dan Bridges still has access to staff, and Alec stated yes, but there is no personal with Kara.

Athan shared that he believed that the BOG votes should be exposed because BOG members should be accountable to their vote. Athan asked for Rajeev for his stance on the recent allegations, and Rajeev stated he will not comment and remain neutral, Athan expressed his disappointment and that his silence shows his position

Dana shared that staff has heard complaints from members that staff shouldn't speak at board meeting and that two members approached staff, one who is running for a BOG seat, and reminded staff that there are at-will employees. Alec stated they do not have the power to make these statements

Andrea asked when the allegations against Dan Bridges were originally brought forth if there was a policy in place to deal with allegations against the board members. Alec and Dan confirmed that there was no anti-retaliation policy. Andrea asked if investigation into the allegations found if the claims were credible, and Alec stated that the investigator found they were more likely than not to be true. Andrea noted to the diversity committee that Dan Bridges was acting as treasurer before he was reinstated. Andrea asked the committee what obligation, if any, the committee has to make address these issues. Sunitha stated that does not believe in commenting on active litigation but suggested the committee help draft harassment policy. Dana shared that the staff has been working on policy recommendations, which were presented by staff at the March BOG meeting and can share them with the committee. Alec stated he will work with Exec team to get existing policies. Andrea also suggested that the BOG undergo harassment training. Alec stated that there has been training.

Chelsea asked how to be the committee can be consistently kept up to date on the harassment and retaliation policies and issue and Alec stated that it can be made into an agenda item going forward.

Alec shared that on the May 17 BOG meeting the district 1 governor will be selected. Sunitha is one of candidates. Andrea suggested writing letters of support for Sunitha.

Mid-year Evaluation (Revisiting FY19 committee goals)

Dana led a check in and evaluation of the committee goals. Andrea suggested that a document that lines up the events with the related goal would be helpful

1. Committee members will take on more leadership in their role as hosts of the Community Networking events
 - a. Dana shared that the Tri-Cities event is being held on April 18. Chelsea and Dan can attend, and asked to review the role they would play at the event. Dana stated that the role can be what they are comfortable with, from acting as MC to helping facilitate the networking as well as speaking about the diversity committee. Laura, Lisa and Andrea will be attending the Tacoma networking event on May 14. Sunitha will attend the Bellingham networking event on May 23rd.
 - b. Rajeev noted that the Bellevue networking event was well attended by MBA compared to the BOG reception and asked what the barriers are. Dana stated that there were issues with short notice and also that the Diversity programs and committee has spent a lot of time building relationships with the MBAs. Alec stated his discussed the reception at the MBA leadership meeting and in discussion of the planning process for next year's reception with advancement leadership.
2. All committee members feel equipped to represent the work of the committee and WSBA diversity staff.
 - a. Andrea suggested creating a talking points document for the committee to help members feel comfortable when representing the committee
3. Leadership of the IL program is transferred to upcoming committee members and a process is established for leadership development.
 - a. Chelsea and Laura have successfully taken over IL programming. Chelsea stated that she would like to focus more in Spokane/Eastside. The committee discussed creating more personalized connections with the students and expressed interest in getting more involved in pipeline work. Sunitha, Chelsea and William to form a subcommittee to explore these efforts.
4. Diversity Committee members are equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to conduct diversity and inclusion training in the legal profession through participation in train the trainer sessions led by Diversity Program staff.
 - a. Dana shared that a train the trainer's session will be held in September for those who are interested in participating.
5. Committee members assist with the development of three diversity themed legal lunchboxes.
 - a. Three legal lunchbox themes that originated from the committee brainstorm have been scheduled. The upcoming microaggressions themed Legal lunchbox is on March 27, with Laura, Sunitha and Mubarak serving as faculty and moderator. Dana will send a message to the committee to ask if there is interest in involvement with the next two topics, white supremacy and intergenerational differences. William and Chelsea expressed interest in the intergenerational topic.

- b. Dana will send out code to diversity committee members again so they can view past Legal Lunchbox recording for free. The code is DIVCOM.
6. Committee members participate in several mentorship events with underrepresented law students and new/young members of the bar.
 - a. Dana shared that upcoming events that support mentorship are the ARC event and community networking events, as well as the ongoing IL programs.
7. Increase the opportunities for interaction and collaboration between the WSBA Diversity Committee and MBAs.
 - a. Dana shared that committee members have been attending MBA outreach check-ins and annual events.

Program Updates and Reports

- **MCLE Rule Change**

The committee discussed the MCLE rule change proposal. Chelsea and Laura expressed that they were not sure how security and technology requirement fit in with the other credits. Dana recapped that MCLE took the diversity committee proposal into consideration and put forward their own proposal. MCLE shared their current proposal to the diversity committee and MBAs via email and provided an opportunity for comment. Committee members can respond individually or draft a group response. Laura and Chelsea discussed supporting the proposal, or supporting the equity and inclusion piece and sharing the concern that technology addition takes away from equity and inclusion. Andrea believes that the Diversity Committee's proposal should go forward as originally intended, without the addition with extra credits. Chelsea noted technology requirement could be added elsewhere. Sunitha voiced her concern that adding more credits could cause resentment with members. Chelsea will summarize the committee respond to the MCLE board.
- **ATJ Conference**

Andrea and Chelsea will be attending the ATJ conference as Diversity Committee Delegates. Chelsea will only need a ticket. Alec will be attending as a BOG rep and Mubarak attending with Team Child.

On motion by Roger and seconded by William, the diversity committee adjourned the meeting at 3:05pm.

Next Meeting: CONFERENCE CALL 1-866-577-9294 Access Code: 52680, Wednesday May 15, 12:00 – 1:30
If you need special accommodations contact diversity@wsba.org