

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

DEI Council November 13th, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Present: Jerry Thomas, Raina Wagner, Julien Tarraf, Matthew Dresden, Anthony Rich, Alec Stephens, Lynnette Jenkins, Miryam Gordon, Hon. Andrea Jarmon, Nam Nguyen, Mary M. Rathbone, Tom Ahaerne

Absent: Sharon Sakamoto, SaNni Lemonidis, Milli Cunningham

Guests: Paris Eriksen

WSBA Staff: Andrea Agrella Clemente, Saleena Salango, Elliott Schwebach
BOG Liaison:

Meeting called to order 12:04 pm

October Meeting Minutes

Tom Ahaerne made a motion to approve the minutes. Raina Wagner seconded the motion. 12 number of members voted in approval, 0 declined, 0 abstained.

Affinity Bar Association Reception - Overview

Folks were able to share a moment in community in the face of a changing political climate. Nam opened the space to discussion. Anthony wanted to direct our intentions to the new Washington State governor and directing our attentions to potential collaborations with that group.

Board of Governors Update

Emeritus Status has been reduced to 40-years overall from 50-years in Washington State. This change in status should be enacted in the next year. Many folks that had previously been listed as 'inactive' that wanted to participate in volunteer committees/councils/sections and have voting powers without directly practicing law.

The Board did not pass the lived-experience stipend 3 people votes yes, 2 people abstained and the rest said no. Some of the discussion points that came up were regarding the bar funding paying for the stipend.

Members of the BOG did not want dues going towards the stipend. The BOG voted to raise the bar fee by \$10 for 2026 to cover part of the cost of inflation over the last several years.

Law School Deans Meeting Synopsis

The cost of law school has risen significantly over the last few years. There was a vested interest in figuring out how to lower costs for law school education. The deans suggested that the legislature should be responsible for providing more grants/scholarships. Also, the University of Washington mission statement does not include serving the public.

Law Clerk program costs only \$3,000/year as opposed to the law schools.

Diversity At-Large Appointments

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According to bylaws the DEI council is to provide up to 3 candidates before the next BOG election. This term would be shorted for the next year and would not be an election, but an appointment. The candidate would have to get vetted again before the next session of the BOG in September. Any WSBA member is eligible for the position, but the DEI council must vet the person to assure that they fit under the criteria specified for the diversity at-large position. Please note:

- Applications due: December 20
- DEI Council Interviews: January 8 (regularly scheduled meeting) – (possibly schedule this meeting 12-3 just in case we have a lot of applicants)
- Send cover memo for BOG materials - January 10 (as late materials)
- BOG interview vetted candidates and decided who to appoint at regularly scheduled meeting: Jan. 17/18

If you're interested, see page 34 in the bylaws that describes the process for the At-Large Governors: [current-wsba-bylaws0cc870f2f6d9654cb471ff1f00003f4f.pdf](https://www.wsba.org/files/2024/01/current-wsba-bylaws0cc870f2f6d9654cb471ff1f00003f4f.pdf)

At today's meeting, the council should decide on the interview questions. The questions will be posted on the WSBA website and provided to interviewees in advance.

The council will be interviewing folks at our January meeting. The meeting will be extended to 2 hour meeting.

Pro Tem 2-day CLE

Open to the public, there is a cost but the Washington State Bar Foundation offers scholarships. The council is requesting volunteers to vet the scholarships. This would require a few hours to review applications and coordinate with Laura Sanford.

Julien Tarraf and Jerry Thomas and Anthony Rich (potential back-up) volunteered.

Equity and Justice Plan – Update

The efforts have been made to disseminate the plan. The feedback will be 12/6 is the next DEI Plan meeting where the feedback will be integrated into the plan. There are upcoming drop-in sessions are 11/15 at noon and 11/21 at noon. Please join us to speak to community members.

Pathways to the Profession – Update

Saleena created a report based on the September summit. This report was shared by Diana on Tue 11/12/2024 7:00 AM. The next steps for the workgroup are outlined in the document.

Liaison for Affinity Bar Association

Looking for two volunteers for the two remaining affinity bars. This is for the purposes of relationship building. You're then welcome to join their meetings/events as you please. Please get on the agenda for at least one meeting so that you can talk about the DEI Council and the work that we do. WSBA will reimburse you for membership expenses and events that the affinity bars host.

Open Discussion

Miryam brought up the potential to license LLLT to be responsible for misdemeanor criminal cases in order to lighten the load on criminal attorneys to direct their attentions to felonies.

Meeting adjourned at 1:25 pm