



**Civil Rights Law Section**  
WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION  
**Executive Committee Meeting**  
**April 16, 2019, 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM**  
**Minutes**

Present:

Sarah Derry, Chair  
Molly Matter, Chair-Elect  
Anne Paxton, Secretary  
Fred Diamondstone, At-Large Member  
Kristi Cruz, At-Large Member  
Eleen Trang, WSBA Liaison  
Alec Stephens, BOG Liaison

The WSBA Civil Rights Section Executive Committee met by phone April 16, 2019. A quorum was not in attendance and members agreed to postpone approval of the March 2019 minutes and April 2019 minutes until the May meeting.

### **Status of WSBA**

With the legislature voting to transfer regulation of attorneys in Washington to the state Supreme Court (ESHB 1788), the future status of the WSBA is unclear. Repeal of the bar act would move regulatory and disciplinary functions to the Supreme court but what happens with the association functions of the bar, such as sections which are now supported within WSBA's overall budget, is an open question.

EC members discussed some implications of the bill. Alec said the recent termination of the WSBA executive director by the Board of Governors was done without notice to the membership. Some WSBA members are gathering signatures to rescind the termination. A lawsuit is pending over the lack of open meetings. Judge James Robart found in April that the WSBA is subject to the Open Meetings Act. The state Supreme Court is investigating complaints about a hostile work environment.

In prior years there have been discussions about efforts to abolish the WSBA but they have usually gone nowhere. This year, the chair of the House Judiciary committee decided it was necessary to make formal what the state Supreme Court has said in opinions over a number of years, that the bar and all things related to the practice of law are under its jurisdiction. The BOG voted to oppose ESHB 1788, in part since a work structures group is looking at how the bar might be reorganized if that is required by recent and future rulings on mandatory bars.

[NOTE: According to WSBA, as of May 3, 2019 ESHB 1788 did not get a concurrence vote in the House before the last day of session. In effect, this means that no bill related to the State Bar Act passed the Legislature this session.]

### **Other bills**

Fred reported updates on other bills supported by the Civil Rights Section. The bill amending the Washington Law Against Discrimination to add citizenship or immigration status passed the

Senate and is on the floor calendar in the House. The New Hope Act passed both houses and is being reconciled. The Native American Voting Rights bill was enacted, significantly with no requirement that Native Americans have a Post Office Box. The bill providing for automatic restoration of voting rights of people on probation or parole did not pass either house.

### **Diversity vote**

Alec sponsored an action before the BOG to allow the diversity committee to issue a statement in support and in solidarity with the specialty bar associations in Oregon (minority bars), whose leadership has come under attack and has been receiving physical threats. The BOG has approved that motion. Sarah noted she was asked by the BOG's diversity committee for a recommendation for a speaker on Juneteenth to address civil rights topics, and she sent the relevant information to at least one potential speaker.

### **Spring CLE Plans**

Our spring CLE on implicit bias training, examining and undoing power and privilege of practice, is set to be presented in a half day, 3.75 credit format Friday, May 24. Kristi reported that we now have commitments from Just Lead to send a speaker on undoing institutional racism, Colectiva Legal will provide a speaker on implementing this work in practice, and Tuare Solas, a meditation expert, will talk about mindfulness. Molly has offered a \$1,000 total honorarium to the speakers. The CLE committee would like to be able to offer at least 2 ethics credits. Discussion is still ongoing as to whether the CLE session on diversity and anti-bias work related to the practice of law will qualify as an ethics credit. The bar is planning to mail out flyers about the CLE to promote it.

### **EC Elections**

Molly and Kathleen are on the nominating committee and Sarah is available as backup, We currently have two candidates for the at-large member positions but no candidates for the officer positions: secretary, treasurer, and chair-elect. Some other sections are in the same situation. Sarah urged members to continue trying to encourage people to run for the EC positions as the only way our section will survive is if we have folks in all those roles. One possibility is that we can treat all positions as interim vacancies and the EC can appoint people to vacancies if no volunteers come forth. The new term for officers starts in October.

### **Youth of Color representation**

Molly is connecting with WSBA Diversity and Equity about having youth of color representation on the sections.

The meeting was adjourned with a reminder to everyone to attend the May 24 CLE.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Paxton  
Secretary