

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING MINUTES

Seattle, WA

September 26-27, 2025

Call to Order and Welcome ([link](#))

The meeting of the Board of Governors of the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) was called to order by President Sunitha Anjilvel on Friday, September 26, at 9:03 a.m. Governors in attendance were:

Matthew Dresden

Tom Ahearne

Kevin Fay

Kristina Larry

Todd Bloom

Nam Nguyen

Allison Widney

Jordan Couch

Kari Petrasek

Emily Arneson

Parvin Price

Alain Villeneuve

Chris Bhang

Mary Rathbone

Officers and Executive Staff in attendance were: President Sunitha Anjilvel, President-Elect Francis Adewale, Immediate Past President Dan Clark, Executive Director Terra Nevitt, Chief Communications and Outreach Officer Sara Niegowski, Director of Finance Tiffany Lynch, Chief Disciplinary Counsel Doug Ende, Chief Regulatory Counsel Renata Garcia, Director of Advancement Kevin Plachy, Chief Equity & Justice Officer Diana Singleton, General Counsel Laurie Powers, Deputy Director Dua Abudiab, and HR Director & Chief Culture Officer Glynnis Klinefelter Sio.

Also in attendance were Alec Stevens, Andie Anderson, Angela Bugni, Aqua Fetch, Aziza Ozgoren, Betsylew Miale-Gix, Bobby Henry, Brenda Jackson, Brent Williams-Ruth, Carolyn MacGregor, Catherine Schur, Chris Fox, Craig Shank, Christell Casey, Debra Green, Isaac Tobis, Jason Schwartz, Jenny Durkan, Joe Gouge, Jonathan Nomamiukor, Josh Field, Julianne Unite, Katherine Skinner, Kimberly Loges, Laura Lemire, Margeaux Green, Nancy Hawkins, Nicole Gustine, Patrick Palace, Rex Nolte, Sanjay Walveker, Sarah Pendleton, Shelly Bynum, and Steve Crossland.

Member & Public Comments ([link](#))

President Anjilvel opened the session for member and public comments. Alec Stevens requested the removal of a bylaw amendment from the consent calendar for further discussion. Brent Williams-Ruth expressed gratitude to outgoing President Anjilvel and past President Dan Clark for their service and requested follow-up on the Bar Licensure Task Force proposals with respect to the character and fitness process, which are pending with the Washington State Supreme Court. Nancy Hawkins expressed concerns regarding proposed amendments to GR 12.4 and their potential impact on transparency.

Consent Calendar ([link](#))

Gov. Mary Rathbone requested removal from the consent calendar of amendments to the WSBA Bylaws regarding license fee exemptions. Gov. Kevin Fay moved to approve the consent calendar. The motion passed unanimously.

Amendments to the WSBA Bylaws

The Board discussed the proposed amendments to the WSBA Bylaws regarding license fee exemptions based on financial need, which had been removed from the consent calendar. Gov. Jordan Couch moved to approve the proposed amendments. The motion passed unanimously.

President's Report ([link](#))

President Anjilvel gave a brief update, expressing her gratitude to the Board and staff, and reflecting on the milestones of her presidency.

Executive Director's Report ([link](#))

Executive Director Terra Nevitt provided her written report and highlighted key operational updates.

FY26 Budget: Final Draft ([link](#))

Treasurer Kari Petrasek and Director of Finance Tiffany Lynch presented the final draft of the FY26 budget (version 1). The budget includes a 1.9% projected revenue increase and a 2.7% reduction in indirect expenses, achieved primarily through an increase in attorney license fees, reduced FTEs, and lower retirement contribution rates. It also includes a reduction to license fee revenue to account for recent bylaw amendments approved for exemptions based on financial need. The Board discussed inclusion of section budgets and a request to approve dues increases for the Business Law, Health Law, and Labor & Employment Law Sections. Gov. Petrasek moved to approve FY26 Budget as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

WSBA Reserve Fund Recommendations ([link](#))

Director of Finance Tiffany Lynch presented recommendations for the WSBA Reserve Funds. The recommendations included reallocating \$460,000 from the unrestricted reserve to the Special Projects and Innovation Fund, designating \$300,000 for successor activities to the Moderate Means Program and

\$160,000 for the Regulatory Reform Cost Center and Alternative Pathways to Practice. Gov. Petrasek moved to approve the reserve fund recommendations as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Final Report of the Legal Technology Task Force ([link](#))

The Task Force chair Jenny Durkan, member Craig Shank, practice management advisor Margeaux Green, and Director of Advancement Kevin Plachy presented the final report of the Legal Technology Task Force. The report outlined ten key points and numerous recommendations, focusing on enhancing competence, capacity, and trust within the legal community. The Board discussed the necessity for lawyers to adapt to technological changes, the role of the WSBA in supporting this transition, and the importance of integrating technology into legal education. Gov. Couch moved to approve all recommendations and to assign the Executive Committee to delegate the responsibilities for next steps. The motion passed unanimously.

Update on Implementation of the WSBA Standards for Indigent Defense Services ([link](#))

Jason Schwartz, past Chair of the Council on Public Defense, updated the Board on adoption and implementation of WSBA caseload standards. The Washington Supreme Court adopted provisional orders with a 10-year implementation timeline, diverging from the three-year schedule established by the WSBA standards. The Board discussed challenges for rural jurisdictions, the impact on private indigent defense contracts, and data needs for future evaluation.

Executive Session ([link](#))

At 11:39 a.m., the Board entered executive session to receive legal advice regarding legislative activity. The session concluded at 12:15 p.m.

Client Protection Board Annual Report ([link](#))

Assistant General Counsel Nicole Gustine and CPF Specialist Brenda Jackson presented the Client Protection Board's annual report, noting that over \$436,000 was paid out in claims and describing upcoming rule changes pending Supreme Court approval, including raising the maximum gift amount and initial payment threshold. The Board discussed payment terminology and comparative jurisdictional practices.

Update on Implementation of Pathways to Licensure ([link](#))

Chair Zaida Rivera and Assistant General Counsel Catherine Schur updated the Board on progress towards implementing experiential licensure pathways as alternatives to the traditional bar exam. The implementation committee has been actively working since November 2024. Two subcommittees were formed to develop core competencies and supervised practice guidelines. The goal is to propose rules to the Washington Supreme Court by spring 2026, with the first cohort starting in summer 2027. The Board discussed the need for public education and the urgency of addressing the current attorney shortage.

WSBF Annual Meeting ([link](#))

The annual meeting of the Washington State Bar Foundation was called to order by President Brian Anderson. He highlighted that WSBF approved granting \$265,000 to the WSBA for public service, pro bono, and equity programs, as well as funds for Powerful Communities grants.

Approve FY26 Trustee Appointments

President Anderson presented the proposed slate of trustees for FY26. Gov. Nam Nguyen moved to approve Board of Trustees. The motion passed unanimously.

Approve Proposed Changes to the WSBF Bylaws

President Anderson presented proposed WSBF Bylaw changes focusing on simplifying language, aligning with WSBA definitions, and allowing past trustees to return to service. Gov. Nguyen moved to approve proposed Bylaw changes. The motion passed unanimously.

Proposed Changes to the Legislative and Court Rule Comment Policy ([link](#))

Legislative affairs manager Sanjay Walvekar presented proposed changes to the legislative and court rule comment policy, aiming to consolidate procedures, shift the responsibility for legal risk analysis, and clarify technical advice provisions. The Board discussed the policy's implications for sections and Supreme Court boards. Gov. Couch moved to approve proposed changes. The motion passed unanimously with one abstention.

Law Clerk Board Suggested Amendments to APR 6 and Related Regulations ([link](#))

Law Clerk Board member Christell Casey presented recommendations to amend APR 6 to expand access to the program by reducing the experience requirement for tutors and increasing the number of clerks a tutor can supervise at a time. The Board discussed the potential for further reducing the experience requirement to align with the Washington Bar Licensure Task Force proposal and the importance of addressing attorney shortages in rural areas. Gov. Petrasek moved to approve the suggested amendments as presented for submission to the Court. The motion passed unanimously.

Law Clerk Board Additional Suggested Amendments to Program Regulations ([link](#))

Law Clerk Board member Christell Casey introduced additional amendments to program regulations to accommodate remote and hybrid work arrangements, expand textbook selection criteria, and ensure consistency in program requirements. Discussion followed, including reservations about remote supervision and the need to address legal deserts and the reality of virtual court appearances. Gov. Petrasek moved to approve additional suggested amendments to program regulations. The motion passed unanimously.

Presentation Regarding New GR 12.2 ([link](#))

Alec Stevens presented the background on GR 12.2, which was amended effective September 1, 2025. He discussed implications for Board processes, particularly in providing clearer guidance for legislative proposals, and highlighted the work of the Equity and Disparity Workgroup. The Board discussed the scope of certain provisions.

Swearing In of FY26 Governors and Officers ([link](#))

Supreme Court Justice Mary Yu administered oaths to the incoming officers and reelected governors. President Anjivel recognized retiring Justice Yu for her distinguished service and contributions to WSBA.

Second Day

The meeting reconvened at 9:01 a.m.

Executive Session ([link](#))

At 9:03 a.m., the Board entered executive session to receive legal advice regarding the Keller deduction and to evaluate the Executive Director. The session concluded at 10:45 a.m.

2026 Keller Deduction ([link](#))

Upon returning from executive session, Gov. Petrasek moved to approve the 2026 Keller deduction. The motion passed unanimously with one abstention. Gov. Fay and Gov. Dresden were not present.

FY26-29 Strategic Plan ([link](#))

President-Elect Adewale and Executive Director Nevitt presented a 3-year strategic plan for the WSBA, focusing on continuity across access to justice, technology, culture, and governance policy areas. The Board discussed the importance of culture, technological impacts, and the need for clear metrics of success, with a focus on public and member perceptions. Gov. Villeneuve moved to approve the FY26-29 strategic plan. The motion passed unanimously. Gov. Fay was not present.

Governor Roundtable ([link](#))

Outgoing President Anjivel expressed appreciation for Board and staff contributions and suggested the creation of a work group to address the ongoing access-to-justice gap. Discussion followed with the Board expressing unanimous support to receive a proposal to form a work group in collaboration with the Access to Justice Board to pursue community-based solutions. Updates were also provided on the STAR Council's rural will clinic and additional outreach efforts.

Adjournment

There being no further business, President Anjivel adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m. on September 27, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Terra Nevitt

Terra Nevitt
WSBA Executive Director & Secretary



**Board of Governors Meeting – Motions List
Walla Walla, WA
July 18, 2025**

1. Approve the consent calendar, excluding the bylaw amendment regarding license fee exemption. Passed unanimously.
2. Approve the proposed bylaw amendment regarding license fee exemption. Passed unanimously.
3. Approve the FY26 budget. Passed unanimously.
4. Approve Reserve Fund recommendations. Passed unanimously.
5. Approve recommendations of the Legal Tech Task Force, delegating assignment of responsibilities to the Executive Committee. Passed unanimously.
6. Approve Board of Trustees roster for WSBF. Passed unanimously.
7. Approve WSBF bylaw changes. Passed unanimously.
8. Approve proposed changes to Legislative and Court Rule Comment Policy. Passed with one abstention.
9. Approve Law Clerk Board amendments to APR 6 and related regulations. Passed unanimously.
10. Approve Law Clerk Board additional suggested amendments to the program regulations. Passed unanimously.
11. Approve 2026 Keller deduction. Passed with one abstention.
12. Approve WSBA strategic plan direction for FY26. Passed unanimously.