

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

Board of Governors March Meeting Update

A summary prepared by WSBA of the Board of Governors (Board) meeting held virtually March 18-19, 2021. The agenda, materials, and video recording from this Board of Governors meeting, as well as past meetings, are [online](#). The next regular meeting is April 16-17, 2021. The Board of Governors is WSBA's governing body charged with determining general policies of the bar and approving its annual budget. To subscribe to the Board Meeting Notification list, email barleaders@wsba.org.

NEED TO KNOW

- 1. A moment of silence.** The board began with a moment of silence to honor and mourn the victims of the horrific shootings in Atlanta last week. [Read WSBA's statement](#) encouraging members to work together to eradicate anti-Asian racism.
- 2. The Bar Exam ... Under Exam.** Last week, the Washington Supreme Court convened its Washington Bar Licensure Task Force to evaluate current lawyer licensing requirements and recommend whether the Court should consider alternatives. WSBA is represented on the task force, and we will keep members updated as the Court establishes a webpage, resources, and feedback opportunities. ([See page 109.](#)) After much dialogue, the board tabled a resolution regarding its stance on the lawyer bar exam ([see page 103](#)) until its April meeting; an ad hoc board task force will collect member feedback before then.
- 3. Financial confidence:** Mitchell Hansen with accounting firm Clark Nuber confirmed that the state bar has once again earned a "clean" (unmodified opinion) annual audit report. He noted that WSBA has no audit adjustments in the report when "the average number of adjustments we identify is three to four ..." for non-profit organizations. "To have none is a good indicator of the quality of the systems and people you have here," he added. [More information.](#)
- 4. We need YOU!** It's volunteer recruitment season at WSBA, and there are many, many committees and boards — which are critical to the legal profession and practice of law—to match members' expertise, interest, and availability. [Check it out.](#) The [application process is also open](#) for the Board of Governor's next At Large (Young Lawyer) seat and President-Elect.

MEETING RECAP

Local Heroes. WSBA honored two amazing legal champions as Local Heroes: **Meredith Gerhart**, a dedicated youth advocate and volunteer who strives to engage proactively in child-centered and trauma-focused representation of some of the most vulnerable members of her community (nominated by the Thurston County Bar Association). **Emily Nelson**, a prolific volunteer dedicated to fighting for human rights who has devoted extensive time to helping people threatened with eviction during the

COVID-19 crisis (nominated by the Government Lawyers Bar Association of Washington). The Local Hero Award is given to those who have made noteworthy contributions to their communities. [Read more.](#)

The future of work at WSBA. At its January meeting, the Board of Governors authorized Executive Director Terra Nevitt to explore and execute a plan to shrink the state bar’s office footprint through flexible remote schedules for most staff. This shift might also provide opportunities for other potential long-term goals, such as moving the main office location and/or creating satellite WSBA offices. (Note: the current office lease in downtown Seattle runs through 2026; WSBA is gauging interest in subleases in the interim.)

Legislative update. The 2021 session is more than two-thirds complete; we have surpassed the chamber-of-origin cutoff deadline and are approaching the deadline for bills to pass out of the opposite chamber’s policy committee. WSBA is supporting two bills promoted by the Business Law Section—[SB 5005](#) (concerning business corporations) and [SB 5034](#) (concerning nonprofit corporations)—both of which have been voted out of the House Civil Rights and Judiciary Committee with a “do pass” recommendation. Overall this session, the WSBA has referred more than 700 bills of potential interest to sections. Of those, sections have requested that we track 480 for possible action.

Other Business

The Board:

- Voted to maintain the active Limited License Legal Technician (LLLT) license fee at \$229 next year. In November, the board voted to increase the fee by \$11, which the Court disapproved.
- Approved an amendment to WSBA bylaws to provide an application/investigation fee waiver for Limited Practice Officers and Limited License Legal Technicians who return to active status from inactive status after 90 days or less. ([See page 122.](#)) The amendment will now go before the Court for review.
- Approved a request from the WSBA Pro Bono and Public Service Committee to submit a comment to the Washington Supreme Court in support of an amendment to APR 11 (to devote at least one of six MCLE credits per reporting period to the topic of “equity, inclusion, and the mitigation of bias in the legal profession”). The WSBA Board of Governors has already submitted support for the proposal. ([See page 169.](#)) NOTE: [Public comments about this proposed rule amendment are due April 30](#), and all members are encouraged to provide feedback.
- Provided some initial information about forming a Board of Governors Technology Committee, a concept that will return for action at the April meeting.
- Heard the annual report from the Client Protection Fund. The fund balance at the beginning of 2020 was \$3,816,143. The fund paid 33 applicants last year, for a total combined payout of \$586,266. ([See page 127.](#))
- Reported back about equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts, including appointing a liaison, Alec Stephens, to the [Washington Race, Equity, and Justice Initiative](#) and connecting with minority bars.
- Heard a Mid-Year Meeting report from WSBA’s American Bar Association delegates. ([See page 172.](#))

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