



Washington State Bar Association

COUNCIL ON PUBLIC DEFENSE
FEBRUARY 21, 2025 - 9:30AM – 10:30AM
MINUTES

CPD Voting Members: Jason Schwarz (Immediate Past Chair), Maialisa Vanyo (Chair), Christopher Swaby (Vice-Chair), Karen Denise Wilson, Molly Gilbert, Paul Holland, Abraham Ritter, Victoria Blumhorst, David Montes

CPD Emeritus members (non-voting members): Ann Christian, Bob Boruchowitz, Kathy Kyle

WSBA Staff: Bonnie Sterken

Guests: Geoff Hulse, Joe Dozal, Rachel Cortez, Lindsey Townsend, George Yeannakis, Katrin Johnson, Sarah Hudson, Aaron Seda, Sophia Byrd McSherry, Angela Colaiuta, Liz Mustin, Jana Richards, Emily Arneson, Lei Young, Janna Richards, Nat Jacob

Absent: Larry Jefferson, Abigail Pence, Judge Marla Polin, Christie Hedman, Jonathan Quittner, Justice Sheryl Gordon McCloud, Maya Titova, Judge Dee Sontag, Louis Frantz, Arian Noma, Eileen Farley

Vacancies: Two current or former prosecutors, one local government/public defense agency representative

Office of Public Defense Updates: Sophia Byrd McSherry provided an update on legislative issues. She shared about two bills that are on her radar. The first was a SB 5027, relating to a loan repayment program for public defense attorneys and prosecutors. The other was HB 1592, relating to funding for county and city public defense, which is still live but has received amendments.

Sophia addressed questions and gave her insights on how funding decisions might be made. The Council discussed the county and city budget requests and political developments. Sophia encouraged people to share their support of bills as appropriate.

Liz Mustin shared about a bill HB 1815 relating to prison riot sentencing. She asked people on the call to spread the word about the bill and show support as appropriate.

Council Recruitment: Maialisa Vanyo shared that the recruitment committee has been meeting and is looking for 2 at-large members, 3 current or former prosecutors, and a local gov/public defense representative. Maialisa asked everyone to think of individuals who may be interested and able to join the CPD. The recruitment committee is asking for names and will handle the outreach. Individuals at the meeting offered suggested names.

Maialisa also noted that we will need another co-chair starting in the fall when Chris Swaby takes the Chair role.

Minutes: The CPD did not reach a quorum and was not able to vote on the January minutes.

Standards Update: The CPD should hear next steps from the Court regarding the Standard in time to discuss in March.

The meeting adjourned at 9:56am