

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

Small Town and Rural Committee

Small Town and Rural Committee Meeting I Virtual Only

Thursday, September 15, 2022 | 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Via [Zoom](#) | Meeting ID: 884 6080 9037 | Passcode: 047632 | Call-in: 888-788-0099

AGENDA

1. Introductions, May Meeting Recaps, and Approval of May Meeting Minutes (Gov. Abell)
2. WSBA Updates (Gov. Abell and Julianne Unite)
3. Subcommittee Report Updates
 - a. Community, Education, and Outreach (Kari Petrasek, Chair)
 - b. Pipeline Placement Program (Laurie Powers, Chair)
 - c. Job Opportunities and Clearinghouse (Betsy Penoyar, Chair)
4. Discussion of Restructuring Subcommittees to Project Teams and/or Disbanding
5. Follow Up Discussion of WSBA CLE Topics
6. Future Meeting Dates (Kari Petrasek)
7. Other Business
8. Next Steps/ Conclusion
9. Adjournment

2021 - 2022 STAR Committee Meeting Schedule

October 26, 2021	Meeting: 3 – 5:00 p.m.	Virtual Only
November 18, 2021	Meeting: 12 - 2:00 p.m.	Virtual Only
January 20, 2022	Meeting: 12 - 2:00 p.m.	Virtual Only
February 17, 2022	Meeting: 12 - 2:00 p.m.	Virtual Only
March 17, 2022	Meeting: 12 - 2:00 p.m.	Virtual Only
April 21, 2022	Meeting: 12 - 2:00 p.m.	Virtual Only
May 26, 2022	Meeting: 12 - 2:00 p.m.	Virtual Only
June 16, 2022	Meeting: 12 - 2:00 p.m.	Virtual Only
July 28, 2022	Meeting: 12 - 2:00 p.m.	Virtual Only
August 18, 2022	Meeting: 12 - 2:00 p.m.	Virtual Only
September 15, 2022	Meeting: 12 - 2:00 p.m.	Virtual Only

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

Small Town and Rural Committee Charter

Effective: July 16, 2021
as approved by the
WSBA Board of
Governors

Purpose

The WSBA Small Town and Rural (STAR) Committee is committed to strengthen and support the practice of law in the rural communities throughout Washington state. Members of the STAR Committee will work to ensure that the practice of law in rural communities is present, growing, and thriving.

Practitioners in rural communities are few and far between. Additionally, many of these practitioners are nearing retirement without a clear plan of succession for their clients, leaving a void of access to legal representation and counsel. The STAR Committee will guide policy & program development, serves as ambassadors between the WSBA and these communities, explore and advocate for creative and innovative solutions, and regularly assess the legal landscape in rural communities to determine if WSBA policy, advocacy and program development require further resource for sustainability and improvements.

The STAR Committee aligns with the authorized activities outlined in General Rule 12. More specifically, GR 12.1 (a) articulates the Washington Supreme Court’s regulatory objective to provide, in part, “meaningful access to justice. . .” while GR 12.1(d) strives for “affordable and accessible legal services.” In addition, the STAR Committee aligns with the authorized activities outlined in GR 12.2, in particular by providing “services to members and the public,” and “fostering collegiality among its members and goodwill between the legal profession and the public.”

Further, the STAR Committee furthers the WSBA mission to serve the public and the members of the Bar by providing focused attention on the unique needs of residents and members in rural areas both by improving access to legal practitioners in rural communities and outreach and development of a pipeline of younger rural residents to pursue a legal career and serve their communities.

Definition of “Rural”

For the purpose of the STAR Committee and reflective of Washington’s unique geographic and socio-geographic landscape, the definition of “rural” is as follows:

Based on the definitions produced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service (ERS) and an overview of Washington county population, we focused on counties with populations of less than 50,000 and more than 2,500. These areas are considered ‘urban non-metro areas not part of larger labor markets’ by ERS. As part of the working definition, and for ease, we have termed these counties as ‘rural.’ Based upon WA county population data, we’ve pursued a hypothesis that counties with 30,000 or more as rural, but likely more

adjacent to a labor market and perhaps have a varying set of circumstances that may differ from counties that are less than 30,000.

Composition

Members of the STAR Committee should have demonstrated experience and/or interest in a thriving legal practice in Washington's rural communities. The STAR Committee will consist of 13 members and are outlined as:

- Chair (voting member)
- 2 Current or Former WSBA Board of Governors Members (voting members)
- 1 Active WSBA Member At Large (voting member)
- 4 Active WSBA Members from rural communities - see above for definition of "rural" (voting members)
- 1 Active WSBA Young Lawyer Member, as defined in WSBA Bylaws (voting member)
- 3 Law School Representatives (voting members, must be currently employed with a WA Law School which is not currently represented on the Committee.)
- 1 Active WSBA Lawyer Member currently employed with a Qualified Legal Service Provider (QLSP)(voting member).

WSBA Staff Liaison: Member Services and Engagement Manager or staff member in the Advancement Department, non-voting

Board of Governor Liaison: as assigned annually, non-voting.

Terms

- Chair: two-year term
- Members: three-year term

Initial Committee Terms

The first appointments to the STAR Committee should effectuate a staggered rotation of STAR Committee members. Therefore, the following terms are in place for the first appointment cycle only. All subsequent terms should adhere to the term limits stated above. STAR Committee member serving an initial term less than three years, should be considered an incomplete term. Therefore, the member is eligible to serve two subsequent complete three-year terms in WSBA Bylaws.

- 2 Active WSBA Members
1 member with two-year term, 1 member with three-year term.
- 4 Active WSBA Members from rural communities (see above for definition)
1 member with one-year term, 1 member with two years term, 2 members with three-years term.
- 3 Law School Representatives (voting, must be currently employed with a WA Law School)
- *1 member with one-year term, 1 member with two-years term, 1 member with three-years term.*

The following positions will begin as a standard term as set forth in this charter.

- Chair
- 1 Active WSBA Young Lawyer Member

- 1 Active WSBA Lawyer Member currently employed with a Qualified Legal Service Provider (QLSP).

Scope of Work

The scope of the STAR Committee's work will focus on what the WSBA is uniquely positioned to do in supporting a sustaining and thriving environment for the practice of law in Washington's rural communities. The STAR Committee will work with all relevant and interested stakeholders to collaborate where needed. The provision of direct legal services and civil legal aid to the public is outside the scope of the STAR Committee.

Measures of Success

- Increased awareness of the issues and possible solutions to address any gap in practicing members in rural communities.
- A sustainable pipeline of legal practitioners in rural communities.
- Increased numbers of legal practitioners in rural communities.
- The establishment of funding for programs and initiatives for the practice of law in rural communities.

STAR Committee Roles

1. Community Education and Outreach

Coordinated efforts to educate members and potential members about the unique needs, opportunities and benefits of a rural practice. This can include, but should not be limited to, comprehensive information on WSBA's website, features in WSBA publications, presentations at high schools, law schools and community colleges. Meetings and events, such as a summit or symposium, to highlight the issue, convene interested stakeholders to share their concerns and strategize on possible solutions.

2. Pipeline and Placement Program(s)

Develop WSBA programming, or WSBA supported/partnered programming designed to build a pipeline of practitioners in rural areas as well as an incentive program to encourage members to explore a rural practice on a time-limited or multi-year timeframe. This role should explore a possible collaboration or strategic overlap with WSBA existing and future mentorship program(s). In particular, this role will require extensive strategic planning and identification of external stakeholder support and additional funding sources. Coordinate with law schools and other stakeholders regarding economic incentives to practice in rural areas.

3. Job Opportunities and Clearinghouse

Utilize existing and future WSBA resources to support and highlight job opportunities in rural communities. This role should include making it easier, and perhaps more cost-effective, to add job postings to WSBA's service. Develop a clearing house to assist retiring members with succession planning and the buying/selling of a practice.

Committee Evaluation

The STAR Committee should conduct an assessment within five years from the date of Board of Governors' approval by 1) conducting a survey of rural practitioners to provide stakeholder feedback regarding the impact of this Committee to effectuate change in these areas, 2) assessing the scope of work to reflect impact and progress in this area and align with trends in the greater legal community, and 3) earnestly examining if the Committee is necessary to continue the scope of work.

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

Small Town and Rural Committee

Small Town and Rural Committee Meeting Minutes Thursday, August 18, 2022, | 12:12 p.m. – 1:13 p.m. *Virtual meeting via Zoom*

Committee Members Present: Allison Foreman, Elizabeth Penoyar, Kathryn Burke, Merf Ehman, Rusty McGuire, Zachary Bryant

Committee Members Absent: Governor Hunter Abell (excused), Sarah Cuellar (excused), Cindy Yeung (excused), Laurie Powers (excused), Governor Sunitha Anjilvel

WSBA Staff: Julianne Unite – Member Services and Engagement Manager, Chelle Gegax – Member Services and Engagement Administrative Assistant, Karen Duncan – WSBA Educational Programs Lead, Kevin Plachy – Advancement Department Manager

Public Attendees: Governor-elect Kari Petrasek, Lauren McElroy

Introductions, July Meeting Recaps, and Approval of July Meeting Minutes

Governor Elect Kari Petrasek called the meeting to order at 12:12 p.m. Kari is chairing today's meeting as the incoming STAR Committee Chair, in absence of STAR Committee Chair, Hunter Abel. Kari invited first time attendee, WSBA Educational Program Lead Karen Duncan, to introduce herself. On motion by STAR Committee Member Elizabeth (Betsy) Penoyar, seconded by STAR Committee Member Rusty McGuire, the committee voted unanimously to approve the July meeting minutes.

WSBA Updates

Kari advised that Board of Governors (BOG) voted regarding the ETHOS meeting and voted to maintain current structure and this decision will be forwarded to the supreme court. The BOG also decided that regarding a contingency plan, should something happen to cause reevaluation, that this discussion should be tabled, as it is a large "what and if", being that there are no current cases that say current structure does not work. BOG believes too many unknown to create viable contingency plan but will create a checklist of what should be decided. WSBA Member Services and Engagement Manager, Julianne Unite, advised that the ETHOS meeting is available on the WSBA webpage, including materials. The Budget & Audit Committee met August 17, 2022, and is still reviewing the FY23 budget. WSBA Advancement Department Manager, Kevin Plachy, advised that the budget should be adopted at the September BOG meeting as that is the last of the fiscal year. Kevin also commented that in a prior budget and audit meeting, there was discussion to recommend to BOG that the 2024 license fee remain the same as current.

Subcommittee Report Updates

Community, Education, and Outreach (Kari Petrasek, Chair)

Kari commented that the subcommittee did not meet. Their plan moving forward is to try meeting with the Pipeline Placement Program Committee for further discussion.

Pipeline Placement Program (Laurie Powers, Chair)

Kathryn Burke commented that the Pipeline Placement Program subcommittee did not meet.

Job Opportunities and Clearinghouse (Betsy Penoyar, Chair)

Betsy shared that the subcommittee did not meet but wanted to discuss terminating the committee due to no relevant tasks. This will be further discussed farther down the agenda.

STAR Committee CLE Discussion with WSBA Staff Karen Duncan

Karen shared with the committee ideas on producing a CLE specifically aimed at small town rural law community and communities at-large. This has been discussed in the CLE team for some time now. Karen asked for suggestions on what committee members would like to see in a CLE and the aim is to put together a program for this coming November. Karen and the CLE team at WSBA would like to hear thoughts from committee members. Kari asked for clarification on type of CLE - half day, full day, luncheon? Karen advised that it would fall under the WSBA presents portfolio, so it would be open to half or full day options, depending on content. Kevin commented that WSBA presents program is focused on topics relevant to state bar associations, including a lot of ethics, skills development, and not always substantive law programming (which typically falls to sections). Kevin suggested that committee make suggestions on what are the most relevant topics and who would it target, would it target rural practitioners or would it target broader audience to bring more awareness to rural practice. Betsy commented that she felt it would be a great idea to have rural directed CLE. She has also wondered if we could have a bar representative comment on ethics in rural communities; are rules different in areas with limited practitioners? Allison commented that Wenatchee doesn't always feel very rural but does see a lot of agricultural work with farms, businesses and water rights, titling issues, which seems to be unique to her area. Katie commented that she agreed with the ethics issues; in her area there is one attorney that lives there, and she is the only prosecutor. She sees difficulties in representing multiple clients. Rusty feels that ethics and a topic such as mentoring would be helpful, suggested a generalized CLE that discusses challenges of being in rural areas such as internet access availability. Merf offered the idea of courts and court funding, language barriers - urban areas have resources for language barriers, etc. What is available in rural areas vs. urban areas, and how to obtain those resources in rural areas for those in need. How could we address LGBTQIA+ and POC communities in rural areas and the stigma that rural areas are awful for those communities? Kari commented that the next STAR meeting is September 15th. Kevin commented that it might be helpful for Karen to return to that meeting as a follow up. Kari commented that a November delivery date would allow for the CLE to happen before the Law School events. Julianne commented the fall panel at Seattle University would likely be in November, and the larger job fair was scheduled for a March delivery date. Julianne also commented that there is an anticipated *Bar News* article in November with a rural practice article. Kari invited Karen to join the September meeting, as the committee would discuss more ideas and return at that meeting with further information.

Bar News Editorial Advisory Committee Update

STAR Committee Member Allison Foreman advised that the *Bar News* article would be focusing on rural practice in November. They are currently missing a personalized narrative of attorneys who have returned to their place of birth/childhood to build successful practice in their place of origin. Many who practice in rural areas are not rural "country kids". Allison asked if there was anyone on this committee

who could be profiled, or if anyone had recommendations for those would be a good fit. She feels it would be compelling and motivating for young lawyers to return to their area versus staying in large area. Betsy commented that there are 2-4 attorneys in her area that are practicing there currently, and for Allison to reach out to provide names. Allison suggested a meeting with those attorneys to further explain the idea of the article and to see if they are interested. Allison and Betsy will connect offline. Kari asked when information was needed and what the article deadline is? Allison commented that initial deadline is September 1, but Bar News team is aware that this timeline may need to be stretched due to short notice. Rusty commented that himself and two other attorneys in his area, in towns of 500-2200 people, would possibly be available. Allison and Rusty will connect offline for further information. Kari also suggested that Allison could reach out to Hunter as an additional contact, as he grew up in and now practices in Ferry County.

Equity and Disparity Workgroup Recommendations

Kari advised that this information was included in the July meeting materials and was recommended that committee members review prior to August. Julianne advised that these materials are on page 11 of the August meeting materials. Committee members are encouraged to review the included proposal and make comments and/or suggestions to the workgroup on what how they could apply or be improved regarding rural practitioners. Kari asked Julianne and Kevin for clarification - this recommendation is focusing on allowing litigants access to technology? Kevin added that the proposal also includes discussion on the way that courts implement and respond to things, as this is not a uniform policy across the state, and some areas are more technology savvy than others. Different counties all have different approaches on allowances for remote hearings, etc., for litigants and attorneys throughout the state. The Equity and Disparity Workgroup work group is seeking more consistency across the state for these things. Kari commented that if litigants are allowed to appear by zoom, then presumptively the attorneys should be able to as well. Kari commented that in Snohomish County, that judges do not mind if people appear by zoom, but if the client does then the attorney must as well. It is difficult to talk to your client if one is remote and one is not. Although this proposal is mostly focused on litigants, it should also extend to attorneys. Kari asked if committee members felt the committee as a whole should comment on the proposal? Julianne advised that if the committee did not want to comment, that individuals could provide comments to the workgroup outside of the committee. Kari advised that due to lack of response, the committee will not comment at this time. If committee members want to comment on an individual basis, to reach out to Julianne for additional information. Julianne advised that as this topic moves along, additional information can be brought back to the STAR Committee to revisit and comment at that time, if needed.

Discussion of restructuring subcommittees/meeting schedule moving forward

Kari commented that it has been discussed by multiple members to restructure the subcommittees due to overlapping topics. Betsy commented that there have not been many action items due to overlapping topics and suggested either joining another subcommittee, or disbanding. Julianne reminded that quorum or more of committee members, this would count as an open meeting and require meetings, etc. Julianne also advised that other committees structure the way they accomplish work differently, such as WYLC. They use project teams vs. subcommittees. They function as needed, and members are assigned to project teams and return to the larger committee with findings, results, etc. Julianne commented that the work of the STAR Committee seems to have changed course into more of a project-based format rather than subcommittees and encouraged the committee to consider this format. Kathryn agreed with JU's suggestion of project teams since some committee members are more able to

find resources or time geared to projects. Kari asked the committee if they felt that subcommittees were no longer needed, and would the committee prefer to adjust to project teams. Betsy and Rusty both agreed with this approach. Merf commented that they felt it be best to be decided fully on this topic with Laurie in attendance as she is the chair of the Pipeline Placement Program subcommittee. STAR Committee Member Zachary Bryant agreed that action today seemed very quick, without some in attendance and suggested that in the meantime, subcommittees not meet if there is nothing to discuss. Julianne commented that we lost quorum with Allison Foreman leaving the meeting. This topic can be added to the next agenda for further discussion. Kari advised that this will be included on the September agenda. Kari asked the committee to consider if the current meeting schedule is working, or would it be preferred to move to a different schedule such as bi-monthly, shorter time, etc. Merf commented that if we continue to meet monthly, shorten the meeting to one hour and if we meet bi-monthly, then the meeting be 2 hours. Katie commented to keep monthly meetings due to people having scheduling conflicts, and scheduling less would shorten the opportunity for those to attend. Zac and Kari shared the same opinion as Katie regarding scheduling monthly. Committee members discussed alternative times that would work for them moving forward. Julianne offered to create a doodle pool to circulate to the committee to gain a wider perspective of what works for everyone. Kari agreed to have Julianne circulate the doodle pool, Kari will propose times and days of the week moving forward.

Other Business

Kari asked the committee if there was anything else anyone had to discuss. No response from committee members.

Next Steps/ Conclusion

The next committee meeting will be held September 15, 2022, at 12:00 p.m. Please bring ideas for the CLE, restructuring project teams, and names to Allison for *Bar News* article.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1:13 p.m.

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

WSBA ENTITY ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2022: October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022

The mission of the Washington State Bar Association is to serve the public and the members of the Bar, to ensure integrity of the legal profession, and to champion justice.

Instructions: In accordance with the WSBA Bylaws, Committees, Other Bar Entities (excluding Regulatory Boards¹), Councils, and Sections must submit an annual report to the Executive Director. The information below should reflect the activities and outcomes from the fiscal year October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022. Information in the annual report will be provided to the Executive Director and Board of Governors, and may be published for other purposes, such as *Bar News*, volunteer recruitment messaging, and other WSBA activity-based reporting.

It is recommended that completion of the annual report be a collaborative effort with members of your entity, the BOG liaison, and staff liaison.

Submission Deadline is Friday, October 7: please submit by emailing barleaders@wsba.org or requesting that your staff liaison submit the report internally.

Name of Entity:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Chair or Co-Chairs:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Staff Liaison: <i>(include name, job title, and department if known)</i>	Click or tap here to enter text.
Board of Governors Liaison:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Purpose of Entity: <i>May be stated in Bylaws, Charter, Court Rule, etc.</i>	
Click or tap here to enter text.	
Strategy to Fulfill Purpose:	
Click or tap here to enter text.	
How does the entity's purpose help further the mission of the WSBA "to serve the public and the members of the Bar, to ensure integrity of the legal profession, and to champion justice"?	
Click or tap here to enter text.	
2021 -2022 Entity Accomplishments:	
Click or tap here to enter text.	

October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022 (FY22)

Looking Ahead: 2022-2023 Top Goals & Priorities:		
1	Click or tap here to enter text.	
2	Click or tap here to enter text.	
3	Click or tap here to enter text.	
4	Click or tap here to enter text.	
5	Click or tap here to enter text.	
<p>Please describe how this entity is addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion: <i>How have you elicited input from a variety of perspectives in your decision-making? What have you done to promote a culture of inclusion within the board or committee? What has your committee/board done to promote equitable conditions for members from historically underrepresented backgrounds to enter, stay, thrive, and eventually lead the profession? Other?</i></p>		
Click or tap here to enter text.		
<p>Please share feedback regarding the support and engagement provided by WSBA. <i>For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Quality of WSBA staff support/services, including technology solutions</i> • <i>Involvement with Board of Governors, including assigned BOG liaison</i> • <i>Ideas you have on ways WSBA can continue to strengthen/support your entity.</i> 		
Click or tap here to enter text.		
<p>SECTIONS ONLY: Please quantify your section's 2021-2022 member benefits:</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>\$3000 Scholarships, donations, grants awarded;</i> • <i>4 mini-CLEs produced</i> 	Click or tap here to enter text.	Newsletters/publications produced
	Click or tap here to enter text.	Mini-CLEs produced
	Click or tap here to enter text.	Co-sponsored half-day, full-day and/or multi-day CLE seminars with WSBA
	Click or tap here to enter text.	Co-sponsored half-day, full-day and/or multi-day CLE seminars with <i>non</i> -WSBA entity
	Click or tap here to enter text.	Receptions/forums hosted or co-hosted
	Click or tap here to enter text.	Recognitions/Awards given
	Click or tap here to enter text.	New Lawyer Outreach events/benefits

	Click or tap here to enter text.	Other (please describe):
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**Entity Detail & Demographics Report:
To Be Completed by WSBA Staff**

Size of Entity:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Membership Size: (for Sections Only) <i>(As of September 30, 2022)</i>	Click or tap here to enter text.
Number of Applicants for FY23 <i>(October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022)</i>	Click or tap here to enter text.
Number of current volunteer vacancies for this entity	Click or tap here to enter text.
FY22 Revenue (\$): For Sections Only: <i>As of September 30, 2022</i>	Click or tap here to enter text.
Direct Expenses: <i>As of September 30, 2022. For Sections, this does not include the Per-Member-Charge.</i>	Click or tap here to enter text.
Indirect Expenses:	Click or tap here to enter text.

FY22 Demographics:

The WSBA promotes diversity, equality, and cultural competence in the courts, legal profession, and the bar, and is committed to ensuring that its committees, boards, and panels reflect the diversity of its membership.

Aside from the factors marked (*), demographic information was provided voluntarily and individuals had the option to not respond to any or all of the factors below.

Disability	No	%
	Chose Not to Respond	%
District*	0	%
	1	%
	2	%
	3	%
	4	%
	5	%
	6	%
	7N	%
	7S	%
	8	%
	9	%
	10	%

Ethnicity	White or European Descent	%
	Middle Eastern Descent	%
	Multi Racial or Bi Racial	%
	Chose Not to Respond	%
Gender	Female	%
	Male	%
	Chose Not to Respond	%
Sexual Orientation	Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Pansexual, or Queer	%
	Heterosexual	%
	No	%
	Chose Not to Respond	%

The Yes/No response for the Sexual Orientation category is data from a previous demographic question 'Do you open identify as a sexual minority to include the following: gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender?' This question was on the volunteer application when some of the current members submitted their application and therefore, is still included.

ⁱ Supreme Court Boards (Access to Justice Board, Disciplinary Board, LLLT Board, Limited Practice Board, MCLE Board and Practice of Law Board) provide annual reports to WSBA to support its responsibility under [GR 12.3](#), to provide oversight and monitor compliance with applicable rules and orders. Boards have the option to use the WSBA template or to share their annual reports to the Washington Supreme Court.