

**STATE BAR OF GEORGIA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
MEETING MINUTES
Saturday, March 20, 2021, 9:00 a.m.
Zoom**

The 286th meeting of the Board of Governors of the State Bar of Georgia was held at the date and location shown above. President Dawn M. Jones presided and called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and began the meeting with a moment of silence to acknowledge the hardships and challenges everyone has had to endure during the ongoing pandemic and those who have been have lost.

Pledge of Allegiance

Board of Governors Member Judge Joy Parks, Enotah Circuit, led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Invocation

YLD Board of Directors Member Pamela Peynado gave an invocation.

Special Recognition

YLD Member Jared Parrish recognized the members of the judiciary, the past presidents of the State Bar and other special guests in attendance.

Roll Call

Secretary Tony DelCampo circulated the roll for signature. The list of those in attendance is attached as Exhibit A.

Future Meetings Schedule

President Dawn M. Jones reviewed the Future Meetings Schedule and let everyone know that we will discuss the Annual Meeting during the executive director's report.

Minutes of the 285th Meeting of the Board of Governors

The minutes of the Board of Governors meeting held January 9, 2021, via Zoom, were approved by unanimous vote.

Proposed Rules Changes

Following a report by General Counsel Paula Frederick, Gary Spencer (Board member and vice chair of the Disciplinary Rules and Procedures Committee) and Sherry Boston (Board member and representative of the district attorneys' association), and a lengthy discussion with questions also being answered by representatives of the U.S. attorneys' offices, the Board of Governors, by majority poll vote, approved proposed rules changes to Georgia Rule of Professional Conduct 3.8 Special Responsibilities of a Prosecutor (Exhibit B).

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Sally Akins reported on the Bar's finances and that the Bar is looking for new tenants to mitigate the loss of revenue due to COVID-19. She thanked those in attendance for their continued support of GLSP and the legislative fund.

The Board of Governors received copies of the Consolidated (Operational and Bar Center) Revenues and Expenditures Report as of December 31, 2020; Income Statement YTD-Operations for the current period ending December 31, 2020; Status and Use of Cash and Investments as of December 31, 2020; Board-

Designated and Donor Temporarily Restricted Net Assets for the current period ending December 31, 2020; Summary of Members and Voluntary Legislative Contributions with contributions paid through December 31, 2020; Summary of Members and Voluntary Contributions to Georgia Legal Services Program (GLSP) with contributions paid through December 31, 2020; Legislative Activity Report from July 1, 2020 thru December 31, 2020; Summary of Clients' Security Fund Activity for the current period ending December 31, 2020; and the budget timetable for the 2021-2022 State Bar budget.

Dues 2021-2022

After a report from Finance Committee Chair Elena Kaplan, the Board of Governors, by majority poll vote, approved Active Dues at \$254 (no increase from fiscal year 2020-2021) and Inactive Dues at \$127 for fiscal year 2021-2022.

Approval of Other Dues Items

The Board of Governors, by majority poll vote, approved the following other dues items:

- 1) Section Dues (\$10 to \$40).
- 2) Clients' Security Fund (\$100 @ \$25/year for new members per Bar Rule 1-506).
- 3) Professionalism Fee (\$11/year).
- 4) Legislative and Public Education Fund Contribution (\$100 optional contribution).
- 5) Georgia Legal Services Program (\$400 suggested individual contribution/\$100 suggested contribution for young lawyers).

Elections Committee Recommendation

Elections Committee Chair Allegra J. Lawrence reported that the Elections Committee had reviewed participation and historical voter data for the previous five election cycles and found that participation has been between 8-17% of eligible voters. A majority of votes cast, 78-81%, were electronic. The committee's recommendation is to change the election format to opt-in to paper ballots rather than opting out, for a cost savings of \$17,000 to \$18,000. The committee would like to use the savings in the 2022-2023 election cycle for a PR campaign to ensure Bar members are aware of the changes and also use the opportunity to encourage more participation in Bar elections. After discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Board of Governors accept the Election Committee's recommendation, which passed by majority poll vote.

President's Report

President Dawn M. Jones thanked those in attendance for allowing her to continue to lead the Bar and thanked everyone for their support. She said she continues to speak at local bar associations and other events, like the ABA Techshow and the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism's CLE "The Necessity of Unparalleled Unity." She reported that she has been an active member of the National Conference of Bar Presidents and remarked how useful that organization is and how helpful it is to be able to talk to other bar presidents. She reported that she meets with senior staff, Executive Director Damon Elmore, General Counsel Paula Frederick and Chief Operating Officer Sarah Coole, twice a week to ensure all Bar needs are handled, including discussions about building safety and our Bar offices, how to support our committees and sections, looking at COVID-19 protocols, etc. She reminded everyone that Board of Governors minutes and Executive Committee minutes can be found on the website at www.gabar.org.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Damon Elmore reported that he has been discussing with department heads the Bar's strategic direction for operations related to efficiencies and obsolete processes. He reported that he and other Bar staff will be working with President-Elect Elizabeth L. Fite to give Bar members a refresher on all the programs the Bar offers, along with general information about what the Bar does. Executive Director

Elmore said that he feels employee morale is good, and he continues to work to provide more information and transparency to the staff as a whole. Right now there is a goal of July 6 to begin bringing staff back into the building, pending any changes to the COVID-19 climate. Other items he shared included: continuing to focus on expenses and the planning we can do to utilize 104 Marietta Street to its fullest; keeping a close eye on the legislative session with the help of the legislative team; ensuring safety of our staff; and producing quality programming through ICLE.

Executive Director Elmore shared with everyone that the plan as of now is to have a hybrid Annual Meeting, with both in-person and virtual options for those who would like to attend. He said that safety is the top priority and that masks will be required for all indoor and outdoor Bar events taking place at the Annual Meeting. The Board of Governors members were asked the following questions via poll:

- 1) How will you attend the 2021 Annual Meeting, currently planned in a hybrid format?
69 in person, 18 virtually, 26 undecided
- 2) If attending in person, do you plan to stay on property at Wild Dunes Resort?
69 yes, 1 no, 11 undecided
- 3) Will you adhere to all required safety measures, including wearing a mask (indoors and outdoors) and physically distancing from others, regardless of an individual attendee's vaccination status?
86 yes, 8 no
- 4) If attending in person, do you plan to bring family and/or guests?
67 yes, 16 no, 12 undecided

Young Lawyers Division

YLD President Bert Hummel reported that the YLD has had a busy year supporting young lawyers around the state both professionally and personally. He pointed out that so many have stood up and found flexible ways of continuing to serve the profession, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, including: the YLD poll worker program, several wills clinics to help those on the frontlines (healthcare workers, educators, first responders), a YLD speakers' bureau bringing together young lawyers to share their experiences of surviving and living during a pandemic, a YLD implicit bias in judicial proceedings CLE, and the 10th annual Legal Food Frenzy beginning April 19-30. YLD President Hummel extended his thanks to President Jones and Chief Justice Harold Melton for their leadership during this difficult year.

Georgia Legal Services Program

Executive Director Rick Rufalo reported on the status of GLSP and shared the joint statement of GLSP and Atlanta Legal Aid Society condemning the recent murders and racism against the Asian American community. He discussed the need for contributions to make a difference in communities with domestic violence and housing issues. He said that the pandemic has made the domestic violence crisis even bigger. He said there was \$432,000 in total contributions in the State Bar campaign (from dues notice, etc.) to date this year, and only about 3,400 members are contributing out of 48,000 paying members. He asked those in attendance to contribute and to encourage others to do so as well on the license fee statement coming out in May.

Seeking Equal Justice and Addressing Racism and Racial Bias Committee

Vice Chair Gary Spencer reported that the Seeking Equal Justice Committee has been busy this year. In February, the committee will host the next Courageous Conversation on Blue and Black Lives Matter, and then the next topic will be White Fragility later in April. President Jones read the statement she emailed to

all Bar member regarding the recent shootings in Atlanta targeting the Asian American community. She expressed her thanks to the committee for continuing their important work.

Suicide Awareness Program

Board Member Hon. Shondeana Morris reported on behalf of the Suicide Awareness Program. She encouraged everyone to attend the upcoming program on April 30 specific to the topic of suicide awareness, which includes one hour of professionalism CLE credit. The program will be moderated by Sally Yates and will include experts speaking on topics ranging from suicide prevention to warning signs and prevention methods.

Attorney Wellness Committee

Attorney Wellness Committee Chair Javoyne Hicks thanked the Board of Governors and everyone else for their support of the Wellness Committee. She reported that the committee had launched their first quarterly newsletter, which initially went to all Bar members, but members must opt-in to receive further issues of the newsletter. She said that the committee has continued their “monthly touches” to connect with Bar members, and those replays can be found on the Bar’s YouTube page. She reported that the Attorney Wellness Committee and the Lawyer Assistance Program Committee continue to work closely together to ensure information about each program is easily available to all Bar members.

Legislative Update

Governmental Affairs Director Christine Butcher Hayes provided an update on the current legislative session. She said that there were 10 legislative days remaining, with the last day being March 31. The three bills in the Bar’s legislative package include the Uniform Mediation Act bill, which she reported was voted favorably out of the House Judiciary Committee this week and which should receive a floor vote in the next 10 days; the Remote Online Notary bill, which has passed the House and awaits a hearing in the Senate; and the Advanced Psychiatric Directive bill, which did not get filed this year but will continue next year. She said that the legislative team continues to monitor other bills of interest to the Bar along with the State’s budget.

Special Presentation

President Dawn M. Jones presented Jeff Davis, executive director of the State Bar from 2014-2020, with a resolution thanking him for his service to the Bar for more than six years as executive director. Remarks from Jeff Davis were presented via video to those in attendance.

Executive Committee Minutes

The Board of Governors received copies of the minutes of the Executive Committee meetings held on December 4, 2020, December 17, 2020, and January 29, 2021.

Law Practice Management Program

The Board of Governors received a written report on the activities of the Law Practice Management Program.

Communications Update

The Board of Governors received a media report from the Communications Department.

Chief Justice’s Commission on Professionalism Report

The Board of Governors received a written report on the activities of the Chief Justice’s Commission on Professionalism.

Georgia Diversity Program Report

The Board of Governors received a written report on the activities of the Georgia Diversity Program.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

There was no new business.

Executive Session

There was no executive session.

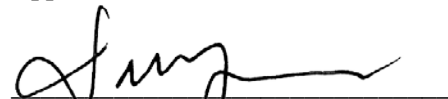
Remarks / Q&A / Comments / Suggestions

There were no remarks, Q&A, comments or suggestions.


Adjournment

There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Approved:



Dawn M. Jones, President



Tony DelCampo, Secretary