

**STATE BAR OF GEORGIA
GENERAL SESSION/BOARD OF GOVERNORS
MEETING MINUTES
Saturday, January 6, 2018/9:00 a.m.
Westin Atlanta Perimeter North/Atlanta, GA**

The 271st meeting of the Board of Governor of the State Bar of Georgia was held at the date and location shown above. Buck Rogers, President, presided.

Special Recognition

President Buck Rogers recognized the members of the judiciary, the Past Presidents of the State Bar, and other special guests in attendance. Thereafter, he recognized the new 2018 YLD Leadership Academy class of participants.

Roll Call

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

Future Meetings Schedule

President-elect Ken Hodges reviewed the Future Meetings Schedule.

General Session—Midyear Members' Meeting

President Buck Rogers called to order the General Session of the State Bar of Georgia. Pursuant to Article II, Section 4, of the State Bar Bylaws, at least fifty active members were present at the meeting, thereby constituting a quorum.

Proposed Bylaws Changes

Following a report by Deputy General Counsel Bill NeSmith, the following proposed Bylaws changes (Exhibit B) were approved by unanimous voice vote: 1) Article 1 Members, Section 1. Registration of Members, 2) Article 1 Members, Section 6. Associates and Students Associates, and 3) Article 1 Members, Section 7. Emeritus Members

Board of Governors Meeting Convened

President Buck Rogers adjourned the General Session and convened the Board of Governors Meeting of the State Bar of Georgia.

Minutes of the 270th Meeting of the Board of Governors

The minutes of the Board of Governors meetings held October 28, 2017, at the Jekyll Island Convention Bureau at Jekyll Island, Georgia, were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Proposed Rules Changes

Following a report by Deputy General Counsel Bill NeSmith, the Board of Governors approved recommending to the Supreme Court of Georgia the following Rules changes (Exhibit C) by unanimous voice vote: 1) Rule 1-202. Classes of Members; 2) Rule 1-205. Bar of Judicial Circuit; 3) Rule 1-506. Clients' Security Fund Assessment; 4) Rule 1-507. Bar Facility Assessment; 5) Rule 1-602. Bylaws; and 6) Rule 5-101. Amendment, Filing, Notice.

Rule 1-208. Resignation from Membership was withdrawn for consideration.

Nominations of State Bar Officers

The Board of Governors received the following nominations for State Bar officers for the 2018-2019 Bar year, and there being no others, declared the nominations closed:

<u>Office</u>	<u>Nominator</u>	<u>Nominee</u>
Treasurer	R. Javoyné Hicks William F. Underwood, III (Seconding)	Dawn M. Jones
Secretary	Elena Kaplan Thomas R. Burnside, III (Seconding)	Elizabeth L. Fite
President-elect	Sherry Boston Joseph Carl Sumner, Jr. (Seconding)	Darrell L. Sutton

Nominations of ABA Delegates

The Board of Governors, by unanimous voice vote, nominated the following attorneys for two-year terms to the Georgia ABA Delegate Posts indicated. These positions are open to Georgia lawyers who are members of the ABA. Anyone else interested in running for any of the three posts can do so by filing a petition or contacting Paula Frederick and they will be added to the statewide ballot.

<u>Post</u>	<u>Delegate</u>
1	(currently held by Robert Rothman)
3	(currently held by C. Elisia Frazier)
7	(currently held by Past President Gerald Edenfield)

Appointment to the Georgia Legal Services Board

The Board of Governors, by unanimous voice vote, approved the appointment of Seth Bruckner to the Georgia Legal Services Board of Trustees for a two-year term (2018-2020).

Advisory Committee on Legislation (ACL)/Legislative Proposals

Following a report by ACL Chair Michael Geoffroy, the Board of Governors took the following action on proposed legislation:

<u>Legislative Proposal</u>	<u>Germane to Purposes of the Bar</u>	<u>Support on Merits 2/3 Majority</u>
International Trade in Legal Services Committee		
1) Proposed Uniform Unsworn Foreign Declarations Act	Passed by unanimous voice vote	Passed by 2/3 hand vote

ACL Chair Geoffroy reported that even though there was only one legislative bill on today's agenda, the Bar's legislative agenda also includes six carry-over bills from last year. He thanked Governmental Affairs Director Christine Butcher Hayes and legislative consultant Rusty Sewell for their support and asked the Board of Governors members to keep an eye out for legislative updates beginning in January. Lastly, he paid tribute to recently deceased Board of Governors member William Gregory Pope.

Legislative Update

Governmental Affairs Director Christine Butcher Hayes recognized ACL Chair Michael Geoffroy for his work on behalf of the ACL Committee. She reported that we expect to see Governor Deal's final round of criminal justice reform legislation to address the needs of rural Georgians, and that mass transit is also expected to be a hot topic of discussion in this session. She encouraged the Board of Governors members to participate in a legislative day at the Capitol. Lastly, she stated that she is looking forward to working with Rusty Sewell and legislative consultants Mark Middleton and Roy Robinson during the 2018 General Session.

Rusty Sewell asked the Board members to reach out to their legislative representatives.

Distinguished Service Award to Chief Justice Hugh Thompson

Immediate Past President Patrick T. O'Connor presented the 2017 Distinguished Service Award to Chief Justice Hugh B. Thompson (Exhibit D) for his numerous contributions to the rule of law, the justice system, and the people of Georgia throughout his judicial career as exemplified by this honor. This is the highest accolade bestowed on an individual lawyer by the State Bar. The recipient is honored for conspicuous service to the cause of jurisprudence and to the advancement of the legal profession in the state of Georgia.

Thomas O. Marshall Professionalism Award

President-elect Ken Hodges presented the 16th annual Thomas O. Marshall Professionalism Award to the family of (the late) Past President Jeffrey O. Bramlett. This award, presented by the Bench and Bar Committee, honors one lawyer and one judge who have and continue to demonstrate the highest professional conduct and paramount reputation for professionalism.

Resolution for Alvin Leaphart

Alvin Leaphart was unable to attend the Board of Governors meeting due to health issues, so President Buck Rogers read the resolution (Exhibit E) to the Board of Governors. Immediate Past President Patrick T. O'Connor will hand deliver the resolution to Alvin.

Resolution for Marlene E. Melvin

President-elect Ken Hodges presented a resolution (Exhibit F) to Marlene Melvin in recognition of her significant contributions to the Law-Related Education (LRE) Program of the State Bar. As an educator, she rendered exceptional service to the State Bar during the development of the Journey Through Justice field trip component of the LRE Program, including writing original mock trial scripts, creating law lessons, and serving as a docent for the Museum of Law. Her contributions will have a lasting, positive impact on the public's understanding of the law and its role in protecting the freedoms enjoyed by all Americans.

Attorney General's Report

Attorney General Chris Carr thanked the new officers elected today for their service to the Bar and the award recipients. Thereafter, he gave an update on the Department of Law. He reported that he will be in U.S. Supreme Court on Monday arguing the "water wars" case between Georgia and Florida. He reported that the Court Reform Council has submitted its final report to Governor Nathan Deal for his consideration. It includes recommendations from the Administrative Procedure Act Subcommittee for improving efficiencies to achieve best practices for the administrative of justice, and issues identified by the Sovereign Immunity Subcommittee related to the state's sovereign immunity that should be reviewed for best practices and potential options for action. Attorney General Carr also reported on the Opioid Task Force that is trying to bring together stakeholders in the public, private and non-profit sector, and local, state and federal officials to ensure Georgia has a strong and effective tool to combat this issue that is plaguing Georgia and the nation. Lastly, he reported on Georgia's efforts to stem human trafficking. He announced that the Legal Food Frenzy raised over 1.3 million pounds of food for Georgia's food banks last year, and he thanked the YLD, the Bar leadership, and the Board of Governors for their support. He hopes to top that figure during this year's Legal Food Frenzy.

The Board of Governors received a written report from the Attorney General.

President's Remarks

President Buck Rogers reported on the Bar's continued PSA media campaign and media buy and presented three PSAs to the Board of Governors. He announced that a new website will be launched in April, after the March 31 CLE reporting deadline has passed. It will have a new updated design, along with new functionality. Regarding the enhanced member directory being developed by CloudLawyers (formerly Zeekbeek/CloudLaw), he reported that Bar staff is working with CloudLawyers on the programming. He reported that ICLE completed its transfer of assets to the State Bar last year and moved its operations to the Bar Center. The ICLE Athens property has sold for 1.1 million dollars, which was just slightly under the appraised value, and the proceeds will be divided equally between the UGA Law School Alumni Association and the State Bar of Georgia Foundation. He thanked Past President Bob Kauffman, who represented the Bar's interest in the transaction, and Board of Governors member Andy Davis who helped negotiate the terms of the sale in his role as President of the UGA Law School Alumni Association. He shared his hope for an uneventful session this year under the Gold Dome and encouraged everyone to keep an eye on the legislation that may affect their area of practice. The attorney members of the legislature, including our Board members Senator John Kennedy and newly elected Senator Jennifer Auer Jordan, are some of the most utilized and overworked members during the session because of their working knowledge of the code and their ability to understand and explain complex legislation. In closing, President Rogers recognized Executive Committee member Phyllis Holmen, who will be honored at the GLSP Biennial Champions of Justice Recognition Event on January 25. Phyllis is retiring from the GLSP after an amazing 43-year career of working to ensure access to justice for low-income Georgians across this state.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Darrell Sutton reported on the Bar's finances. The Executive Committee received copies of the Consolidated (Operational and Bar Center) Preliminary Revenues and Expenditures Report as of September 30, 2017; Income Statement YTD for the Three Months Ended September 30, 2017; Bar Center Revenues and Expenditures Report for the Three Months Ended September 30, 2017; State Bar Balance Sheet as of September 30, 2017; Summary of Dues and Voluntary Contributions at October 31, 2017; Legislative Fund and Cornerstones of Freedom Fund Activity Reports through September 30, 2017; and the Investment Performance Comparison 2016-2017.

YLD Report

YLD President Nicole Leet reported on the activities of the YLD. She thanked the Board of Governors for approving recent Rules and Bylaws changes that affect when young lawyers begin paying their mandatory assessments by a two-year deferment, and she thanked the YLD Officers for their support. She reported on the Annual Signature Fundraiser's Due Justice Due Fifty campaign challenging lawyers to commit to 50 hours of service. To date over 6,000 hours have been pledged. There will be a celebration in February for those participating in the challenge. She reported that the YLD Fall Meeting was recently held at Brasstown Valley Resort. She referred the Board members to the YLD written report for a more comprehensive report on YLD activities. She announced that 1) the Litigation Committee's annual Litigation Soups to Nuts CLE will take place March 4 and is always a sellout, 2) the annual Legislative Luncheon will be held on February 6, 3) the Leadership Academy kicked off at the Midyear Meeting, and she thanked President Buck Rogers for addressing the class, and 4) the Legal Food Frenzy will kick off on April 16. Lastly, she encouraged the Board members to continue to submit articles for the *YLD Review*, and encouraged them to attend the YLD Spring meeting, March 15-18, in Nashville.

The Board of Governors received a written YLD Midyear Meeting Report.

Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism

Executive Director Karlise Grier reported on the activities of the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism. She provided a history of the Commission, which is funded by the \$15/hour professionalism CLE fee. The \$15/hour fee has remained steady since the Commission was established. She reported that when the Commission meets later this year, it will discuss changing the structure from a \$15 per professionalism hour CLE fee collected by sponsors to an annual \$15 professionalism fee, regardless of how many professionalism hours an attorney takes each year, paid through the Bar's due notice. As the Commission approaches its 30th anniversary, she wants lawyers to think about professionalism. Lastly, she announced that the recipients of the Chief Justice Robert Benham Community Service Awards have been selected and will be announced next week. The awards ceremony will take place on February 27 at the Bar Center.

SOLACE Committee

Supreme Court Justice Harold Melton reported on the activities of the SOLACE Committee. SOLACE is an acronym for Support of Lawyers/Legal Personnel - All Concern Encouraged. The SOLACE program is the Bar helping lawyers, judges, court personnel and law office staff in times of need by using their networks, relationships, phones, and resources. No one is asked to provide money and the committee does not raise money. Justice Melton asked the Board of Governors members to inform their local Bar communities about this program and to keep the program in the forefront of their minds. Lastly, he presented a video on the SOLACE program.

Lawyers Assistance Program (LAP) – Lawyers Helping Lawyers Peer Program

LAP Committee Chair Jeff Kuester discussed the LAP and the services provided by the program through CorpCare. Thereafter, he introduced LAP Committee member Lynn Garson who reported on the LAP's *Lawyers Helping Lawyers (LHL)* volunteer peer program. Currently, the peer volunteer database is available to lawyers to sign up as volunteers to provide peer support to fellow lawyers needing support or advice. Volunteers receive training on their responsibilities as a peer, and the first class of volunteers was trained at the Bar Center in November. In the future, online training will also be available for peer volunteers. The training provides one professionalism and one ethics hour. Participation in the *LHL* program is confidential, and she encouraged the Board members to participate and to spread the word. Lastly, she reported that the LAP is looking for opportunities to go around the state and talk to local bars about the LAP and *LHL* volunteer peer program.

2019 National High School Mock Trial Championship

Michael Nixon, Director of the High School Mock Trial Program, reported on the activities of the High School Mock Trial Program. Schools from all corners of the state participate. To date, 120 schools are registered to compete in this year's competition. Over 280 lawyers and judges serve as attorney coaches, but the program needs an additional 1,000 lawyers to serve as judges. He reported that Georgia teams have won four (4) national champions. He announced that Georgia will be hosting the 2019 National High School Mock Trial Championship the week of May 16-19, 2019 in Athens. Facilities in downtown Athens and on the UGA campus will be utilized. Forty-six teams from around the country will be coming to Athens to compete nationally along with attorneys and judges from those states. He encouraged the Board of Governors to volunteer to sit on the judging panels and spread the word to their fellow attorneys and judges. There are 92 spots to be filled for each round in the national competition. He also encouraged the Board members to get involved at the state level and referred them to the state competition schedule in the Board book.

Strategic Plan Updates

President-elect Ken Hodges presented an update on the Strategic Plan. The PSAs presented earlier are part of the plan to promote a positive perception of the legal system and the legal profession. We are

enacting rules changes to streamline the disciplinary process. The YLD is spreading the word about the importance of access to justice for all through its pro bono campaign initiative. President-elect Hodges announced that he and President Buck Rogers will conduct a comprehensive review of the Bar's programs as part of this year's budgeting process to ensure that the Bar is using its resources wisely. Lastly, he reported that we will continue to work on the Strategic Plan and have a more complete report at the Spring Board of Governors meeting.

Executive Committee Minutes

The Board of Governors received copies of the minutes of the Executive Committee meetings held on September 20, October 12, November 9, and November 16, 2017.

Office of the General Counsel

The Board of Governors received a written Report of the Office of the General Counsel.

Military Legal Assistance Program

The Board of Governors received a written report on the Status of the Military Legal Assistance Program.

Consumer Assistance Program

The Board of Governors received a written report on the Consumer Assistance Program.

Law Practice Management Program

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

Communications Update

The Board of Governors received a copy of the 2017-18 Media Report.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

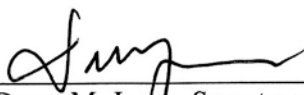
There was no new business.


Remarks/Questions; Comments/Suggestions

The President opened the meeting for questions and comments. There were none.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.


Dawn M. Jones, Secretary

Approved: 
Buck Rogers, President