

**STATE BAR OF GEORGIA  
BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
MEETING MINUTES  
Saturday, January 13, 2024, 9:00 a.m.  
The Westin Buckhead, Atlanta, Georgia  
Hybrid**

The 300<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board of Governors of the State Bar of Georgia was held at the location, date and time shown above. President J. Antonio “Tony” DelCampo presided and called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Jonathan B. Pannell, Eastern Circuit, Post 3, led the pledge of allegiance.

Invocation

Hon. Stacey K. Hydrick, Stone Mountain Circuit, Post 1, gave the invocation.

Special Recognition

President Tony DelCampo recognized the members of the judiciary, the past presidents of the State Bar, and other special guests in attendance. President DelCampo also recognized Georgia Bar Foundation Executive Director Len Horton on his retirement after almost 38 years of service. Hroton then introduced his successor, Rachel Barnhard.

Roll Call

Secretary Bill Gentry circulated the roll for signature. He reminded everyone participating by Zoom that it automatically creates a report of attendees. However, he asked those who telephoned into the meeting to email him to ensure they are reflected in the attendance record as being present. The list of those in attendance is attached as Exhibit A.

Future Meetings Schedule

President Tony DelCampo reviewed the Future Meetings Schedule and then asked President-Elect Ivy N. Cadle to announce his 2024-2025 Bar year meetings. Cadle said he does not intend to continue hybrid meetings for several reasons.

Minutes of the 299<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Board of Governors

The minutes of the Board of Governors meeting held on October 28, 2023, were approved as presented by a majority vote.

Proposed Rules and Bylaws Changes

Following a report by Deputy General Counsel Bill NeSmith, the Board of Governors, by majority vote, approved proposed amendments to the following rules:

*Rule 1.8 Conflict of Interest: Prohibited Transactions.*

The proposed change to this rule would adopt a recent amendment to the American Bar Association Model Rules. It would allow lawyers who represent a client pro bono, an indigent client through a nonprofit legal service or public interest organization pro bono, or an indigent client pro bono through a law school clinical or pro bono program to provide modest gifts to the client for food, rent, transportation, medicine, and other basic living expenses. However, the proposed amendment

prohibits lawyers from making any promises or assurances to clients before or after they have been retained. The comments section has been revised to explain the rule more clearly. It emphasizes that lawyers still are not allowed to financially support a lawsuit or administrative proceeding on behalf of their clients.

The Board of Governors, by majority vote, approved the proposed Rule change.

President DelCampo adjourned the Board of Governors Meeting and called to order the Plenary Session of the Membership of the State Bar of Georgia.

Following a report by Deputy General Counsel Bill NeSmith, the Board of Governors, by majority vote, approved proposed amendments to the following rules:

*Article VIII, Committees – Generally, Sections 1 and 2*

The purpose of the proposed change to this bylaw is to provide clarity regarding voting and quorum requirements for committees. The amendment specifically states that a member serving ex officio retains the right to vote and their presence contributes to meeting the quorum requirements for voting in both standing and special committees. Also, the proposed change clearly states that liaisons and advisory members are not granted voting rights, and their presence does not contribute to establishing a quorum for conducting business in a standing or special committee.

The Board of Governors, by majority vote, approved the proposed Bylaw change.

President DelCampo adjourned the Plenary Session of the Membership of the State Bar of Georgia and reconvened the Board of Governors Meeting.

White Collar Section Proposal

Deputy General Counsel Bill NeSmith presented the proposed White Collar Section. The white-collar law practice is an amalgamation of several practice areas, including business litigation, criminal law, technology law, civil litigation, securities litigation, compliance, and corporate governance. Instead of duplicating any of the sections mentioned above, the White Collar Section would uniquely fuse a few specific, applicable aspects from each of them to create a common ground for professionals working on criminal, civil, parallel, or internal white-collar matters or investigations, compliance, and any resulting litigation.

The Board of Governors, by majority vote, approved the new White Collar Section.

Standing Board Policy 1000

Executive Director Damon Elmore presented proposed Standing Board Policy 1000 (Positions, Articles, Programs, Meetings, Activities of Committees and Sections. Guidelines for the State Bar of Georgia). He said the policy was designed to ensure that the Bar's activities are consistent with its mission and purposes. This will be voted on at the Annual Meeting in June.

Member Benefits Committee Recommendation: DocketAlarm

Chief Operating Officer Sarah Coole presented the Fastcase contract with the option of adding the new DocketAlarm benefit, a docket research database that lives alongside Fastcase, enhancing members' research experience, which came from the Member Benefits Committee and then the Executive Committee as a recommendation. She said it was reviewed internally and found to be beneficial for members, specifically for solo/small firm litigators. DocketAlarm would cost an additional \$146,000, which equates to a \$4 dues increase. Members can purchase DocketAlarm separately for \$95 a month, and some pay that

now. By majority vote, the Board of Governors approved the DocketAlarm proposal. This new benefit will begin in July 2024.

Appointment to the Commission on Continuing Lawyer Competency (CCLC)

The Board of Governors approved the 3-year appointment of LaToya Williams to the CCLC (2024-2026) by majority vote.

Nominations of ABA Delegates

ABA State Delegate Bob Rothman proposed the ABA delegate nominations listed below. The Board of Governors nominated the following attorneys to the Georgia ABA Delegate Posts as indicated. These positions are open to Georgia lawyers who are members of the ABA.

<u>Post</u>	<u>Delegate</u>
1	Alvin T. Wong (two-year appointment)
3	C. Elisia Frazier (two-year appointment)
7	Vera S. Edenfield (two-year appointment)
2	Glenn Hendrix (one-year appointment to fill an unexpired term)

Nominations of State Bar Officers

The Board of Governors received the following nominations for State Bar officers for the 2024-2025 Bar year:

<u>Office</u>	<u>Nominator</u>	<u>Nominee</u>
Secretary	Hon. Shondeana Morris Donna Hix (Seconding)	Javoyne Hicks
Treasurer	Past President Elizabeth L. Fite Hon. Bobby Wolf (Seconding)	William Gentry
President-elect	Brandon Peak Joyce Gist Lewis (Seconding)	Christopher P. Twyman

Per Article VII, Section 1 “Nominations and Elections” of the State Bar of Georgia Bylaws, nominations are open for 10 days after this meeting.

Advisory Committee on Legislation (ACL)/Legislative Proposals

Following a report by ACL Chair Brandon Peak, 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>
<i>Professionalism Committee</i>		
1) Support for a Resolution of the General Assembly Recognizing April 2024 as Legal Professionalism Month	Passed by majority vote	Passed by 2/3 majority
<i>Indigent Defense Committee</i>		
2) Support for the Judicial Council’s Budget Request for FY 2025 –	Passed by majority vote	Passed by 2/3 majority

Increased Funding for the  
Georgia Resource Center

*Committee to Promote Inclusion  
in the Profession*

- |   |                         |                        |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 3) Support for the Judicial Council's Budget Request for FY 2025 – Funding for Civil Legal Services Grants for Victims of Domestic Violence | Passed by majority vote | Passed by 2/3 majority |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------|

*Access to Justice Committee*

- |  |                         |                        |
|--|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 4) Support for the Judicial Council's Budget Request for FY 2025 – Increased Appropriations for Medical Legal Partnerships | Passed by majority vote | Passed by 2/3 majority |
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*Advisory Committee on Legislation*

- |   |                         |                        |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 5) Support for Judicial Council's Judicial Compensation Reform Proposal | Passed by majority vote | Passed by 2/3 majority |
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Legislative Update

Legislative Consultants Mark Middleton and Rusty Sewell reported that it was currently day five of the legislative session. They noted that all of the Bar's bills have sponsors and are underway. They said it should be a fast session, finishing on March 28, since this is an election year. Not on the Bar's legislative agenda but of interest to lawyers are decreasing the age of eligibility for retirement benefits for appellate court judges, lawyer advertising, tort reform, and online notary bills. They also noted that the state has a \$16 billion surplus.

President's Report

President Tony DelCampo reported that the priorities that he outlined at the onset of his presidency are proceeding. He said the building improvements have begun and have been performed at or under budget. The website redesign is a priority and is being worked on very diligently.

President DelCampo continues to stress the Bar's attorney wellness initiatives every time he has a chance to speak at different bar associations and meetings and encouraged others to do so as well. He reported on his attendance and participation at the Southern Conference of Bar Presidents, the Columbus Bar Association, the Sandy Spring Bar Association, and the Georgia Hispanic Bar, as well as speaking at the Judicial Council Meeting. He said he is focusing on the Bar's Unlicensed Practice of Law Program in connection with the Attorney-Client Solicitation Committee being chaired by Dax Lopex and Michael Geoffroy. He said he wants to improve efforts in this area to protect the public from these unethical practices.

He announced that after several rounds of interviews, Andreea Morrison had been hired as deputy general counsel, succeeding Jenny Mittelman, who has been at the State Bar for 34 years. He thanked Jenny Mittelman for her many years of excellent work and service.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Chris Twyman reported on the Bar's finances. The Bar received a clean audit, which has been posted to the Bar's website for those who want to review it. He commended Chief Financial Officer Ron Turner and his team for their great work. The Board of Governors received a copy of the October 2023

financials. Currently, finances are tracking on schedule, and there are no known issues. Treasurer Twyman thanked everyone for their voluntary contributions to the Legislative Fund and GLSP, noting that both are higher than they have been in recent years.

#### Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Damon Elmore reported Bar staff have had an active first half of the Bar year, and they continue to find ways to make our work better, being consistent with the Bar's mission and improving the quality of legal services. He said a main priority is the 2024-2025 proposed budget, which the Board will review at the Spring Meeting. He thanked the Atlanta, Savannah and Tifton staff for their hard work. He also thanked the Supreme Court liaisons, Bar officers and Executive Committee members.

#### Young Lawyers Division Report

YLD President Brittanie Browning reported that the Signature Fundraiser the previous evening was a success. She acknowledged the 32 members of the Leadership Academy Class of 2025 who attended the meeting. The YLD hosted a service project at the Midyear Meeting, collecting new socks for the MLK Beloved Service Project. She reminded everyone that the Legal Food Frenzy kicks off in April with a \$1 million goal. She reminded everyone that the HSMT program and the Intrastate Moot Court Competition need volunteers to ensure the success of both programs.

#### Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism Report

Executive Director Karlise Grier reported on the activities of the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism. She announced the following events: The Significant Lawyer: The Pursuit of Purpose and Professionalism CLE on Jan. 23; the Ethics and Professionalism During Career Transactions virtual CLE on March 28; and the Annual Robert Benham Awards event on April 17.

#### Executive Committee Minutes

The Board of Governors received copies of the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on August 24, 2023.

#### Office of the General Counsel

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

#### Law Practice Management Program

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

#### ICLE Report

The Board of Governors received a written report on the activities of the Institute of Continuing Legal Education of the State Bar of Georgia.

#### Media Report

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

#### Old Business

There was no old business.

#### New Business

President Tony DelCampo recognized Hon. Stacey Hydrick to speak about the newly formed Jewish Bar Association of Georgia.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Executive Session

There was no executive session.

Remarks / Q&A / Comments / Suggestions

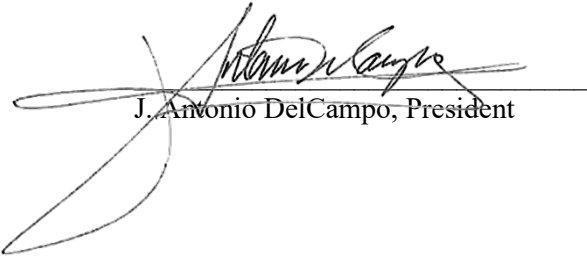
President Tony DelCampo opened the floor to remarks, questions, comments and suggestions.

Adjournment

There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

  
William C. Gentry, Secretary

Approved:

  
J. Antonio DelCampo, President