

Approved Benchers Public Minutes

Conference Call Meeting

April 6, 2020

9:00 am

<p>Benchers present</p>	<p>Kent Teskey, President Darlene Scott, President-Elect Ryan Anderson Arman Chak Corie Flett Elizabeth Hak Bill Hendsbee Cal Johnson Linda Long Jim Lutz Barb McKinley Bud Melnyk Walter Pavlic Lou Pesta Corinne Petersen Stacy Petriuk Robert Philp Kathleen Ryan Deanna Steblyk Margaret Unsworth Cora Voyageur Ken Warren Louise Wasylenko</p>
<p>Executive Leadership Team members present</p>	<p>Elizabeth Osler, CEO & Executive Director Cori Ghitter, Deputy Executive Director and Director, Professionalism and Policy Paule Armeneau, Director, Regulation, and General Counsel Nadine Meade, Chief Financial Officer Andrew Norton, Director, Business Technology David Weyant, President and CEO, Alberta Lawyers Indemnity Association</p>
<p>Staff present</p>	<p>Barbra Bailey, Policy Counsel Colleen Brown, Manager, Communications Ruth Corbett, Governance Administrator</p>



	<p>Tina McKay, Senior Manager, Business Operations, Membership Kara Mitchelmore, CEO, CPLED Stephen Ong, Business Technology Christine Schreuder, Governance Coordinator</p>
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The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m.

Item	
1	<p>Call to Order and Report from the Chair</p> <p>The President’s report was added to the meeting materials shortly before the meeting. Benchers were invited to review the report and contact Mr. Teskey after the meeting if they have questions. Mr. Teskey highlighted the following from his report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings with Government: the Law Society maintains regular contact with the Minister of Justice and the Chief Justice of the Court of Queen’s Bench to provide feedback, policy advice and assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic. - Levy Instalment Changes: there was a positive response from the profession to the communication last week announcing a change to the insurance levy instalments to provide the option to pay a minimal first instalment. Mr. Teskey thanked Mr. Weyant and the ALIA Executive Committee for responding to make this happen so quickly. - Bencher Vacancy: Mr. Teskey advised the Benchers that the Rules allow for the discretion not to fill the vacancy if it occurs following February 28 in an election year. The Benchers had no objections to not filling the vacancy this year. Mr. Teskey will write to advise the next candidate on the list. - Law Society response to the Pandemic: leadership meets regularly and is assessing risk factors. The goal is to engage issues as they arise and take decisive action as necessary.
2	<p>Articling Rule Changes and CPLED PREP Subsidy</p> <p>Documentation for these items was circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>Articling Rule Changes</p> <p>Ms. Ghitter provided an overview, including the pros and cons, of the proposal intended to create flexibility in the current articling requirements to address concerns arising during the pandemic, to create options to relieve pressure on firms and preserve articling positions. The purpose of the Rule amendments, procedure, competence concerns, and actions being taken in other jurisdictions, were presented. The proposal was discussed and recommended by the Executive Committee at their meeting on April 1, 2020.</p> <p>Ms. Ryan joined the meeting.</p> <p>During the discussion, a few Benchers voiced concerns that the proposed changes to Rule 56 would permanently shorten the length of the articling term and should be time-limited. Other considerations discussed included the strategic need for changes to the articling system; the commitment of the Lawyer Competence Committee to examine these issues; the unknown duration and total impact of the pandemic; and concerns being heard</p>



from firms and students. The Benchers supported Mr. Teskey's suggestion to create an additional motion for Rule 56 to include a mandatory review.

Motion: Steblyk/Hendsbee

That the Benchers approve the amendments to Rule 56, as proposed, and conduct a review of the impact of this specific amendment by the end of 2021.

Carried by greater than a 2/3 majority

Motion: Steblyk/Hendsbee

That the Benchers approve the amendments to Rules 50.1, 50.2, and 57, as proposed.

Carried unanimously

CPLED PREP Subsidy

Ms. Ghitter provided an overview of the proposal to increase the current subsidy to the PREP program by \$1,000 per student for 2020. The memo to the Benchers summarized the PREP requirements, start date, and the budgetary impact of increasing the subsidy in various increments. The proposal is intended as a temporary measure for this year only.

Ms. Ghitter informed the Benchers that the CPLED Board debated and agreed that students can complete the entire CPLED program without an Article and that this will provide students with the opportunity to complete the program during these uncertain times, even if they do not have an articling position secured.

The Benchers' discussion focused on the question of the CPLED budget and whether the CPLED Board could deliver the program for less cost this year. Ms. Ghitter advised the Benchers that as the new CPLED program is still in its infancy, the budget is lean, making it difficult to reduce the cost of the program this year. As well it was noted that there could be a revenue drop if student numbers decline as a result of the pandemic.

Motion: Steblyk/Hendsbee

That the Benchers, as a temporary measure, approve an increase in the subsidy provided to 2020-2021 PREP students by \$1,000, for a total subsidy of \$3,600 per student.

Carried unanimously

Other Business

There was no other business. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 am.