

Draft Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Law Society of Alberta (the “Law Society”)

December 3, 2020

Video conference

4 p.m.

	Item
1	<p>Call to Order</p> <p>Law Society President, Kent Teskey, QC, called the meeting to order at 4 p.m. on Dec. 3, 2020. The notice of the Annual General Meeting (AGM), agenda, Law Society draft financial statements, and the Alberta Lawyers Insurance Association (ALIA) audited financial statements were sent to members via e-bulletin on Nov. 20, 2020.</p> <p>Mr. Teskey delivered the Indigenous land acknowledgment statement.</p>
2	<p>Credentials Report and Confirmation of Quorum</p> <p>44 active members were present. Mr. Teskey confirmed this met quorum in accordance with Section 27 of the <i>Legal Profession Act</i>.</p>
3	<p>Meeting Special Rules and Etiquette</p> <p>In accordance with Rule 3 of the Rules of the Law Society of Alberta, the Benchers varied Rule 33(2) through the adoption of a resolution on Nov.13, 2020, that provided for Meeting Special Rules for this AGM to facilitate the transaction of business through the electronic meeting platform. Mr. Teskey went over the Meeting Special Rules and etiquette to remind attendees of key items.</p>
4	<p>Adoption of the Agenda</p> <p>There being no objections, the AGM agenda was adopted as presented.</p>
5	<p>Approval of the 2019 Annual General Meeting Minutes</p> <p>There being no corrections, the minutes of the April 26, 2019 AGM were adopted.</p>
6	<p>President’s Report</p> <p>In accordance with subsection 27(2) of the Act, the President presented a report of the proceedings of the Benchers since the last AGM. The following projects and initiatives were highlighted:</p>



- a) The Benchers approved a new five-year strategic plan for the Law Society to provide direction and focus for decision making, resource allocation and priority setting.
- b) The Law Society responded to the pandemic quickly, moving to remote operations on March 15, 2020. A COVID-19 Updates section on the website served as a single point of pandemic-related information that was being distributed regularly to the profession via various other platforms.
- c) The Tribunal Office immediately transitioned to virtual hearings for some matters. As distancing requirements continued, in the public interest, the Board approved a one-year pilot project to conduct all hearings by virtual means. The Tribunal Office also developed a process for public attendance at virtual hearings.
- d) The Law Society addressed the economic impacts of the pandemic on the profession by adjusting dates and deadlines for fee payments and filing requirements. The Alberta Lawyers Indemnity Association (ALIA) implemented a one-time option for its indemnified lawyers to pay a nominal portion of the levy in the first instalment.
- e) Changes were made to articling requirements and the subsidy to the Practice Readiness Education Program was increased.
- f) For the first time in the Law Society's history, the 2020 Bencher election was conducted entirely online. The Law Society was successful in improving the diversity of the candidates and elected Benchers.
- g) A part-time status option was made available to Alberta lawyers in February 2020.
- h) Two key committees and two supporting advisory committees were created in response to the 2019 articling survey, the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, and the Law Society's strategic goals for lawyer competence and equity, diversity and inclusion. Results of this work to-date include:
 - o The suspension of the Continuing Professional Development program with a more modern and dynamic competence framework being developed.
 - o The introduction in 2021 of mandatory Indigenous cultural competency training for all active Alberta lawyers.
 - o The adoption of recommendations for lawyer licensing and competence.
 - o The launch of the "My Experience" project to collect the experiences of Black Canadians, Indigenous Peoples and People of Colour in the legal profession to help identify areas for change within the Law Society's regulatory mandate.
 - o Work is underway on changes to the articling placement program.
- i) The operation of the Lawyer Referral Service was moved in-house.
- j) The Law Society introduced approved legal services providers to facilitate the delivery of legal services to the public from not-for-profit, pro bono agencies.

Mr. Teskey then responded to questions and comments from members on the topics of the "My Experience" project and goals; current challenges facing the profession; and membership fees and insurance levies.

7	Business Arising There were no items of business arising from the 2019 Annual General Meeting minutes.
8	New Business There was no new business brought before the meeting.
9	Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.