



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF THE LAW SOCIETY OF ALBERTA (LSA)
HELD AT THE LAW SOCIETY OFFICES
500, 919 – 11th AVENUE SW
CALGARY, ALBERTA
APRIL 9, 2015**

LSA President, James Eamon, QC, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and confirmed that a quorum of 20 members present is met.

1. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: To approve minutes of the Annual General Meeting held April 10, 2014.

**Seconded
CARRIED**

2. President's Report

James Eamon

The President reported on the following LSA initiatives and accomplishments over the past year:

Regulatory

- Refinements to the complaints management model is improving risk management and optimizing complainant outcomes.
- The number and length of hearings has been reduced through increased use of pre-hearing conferences, mediation, settlements, early identification and remediation of practice issues.
- Single adjudicator hearings have been instituted to expedite transactions.
- The in-house counsel team has been expanded, reducing the LSA's reliance on external counsel.
- Early intervention in the Practice Review area moved from a pilot to a formal program
- The framework is in place for increasing the number of non-Bencher adjudicators.
- The new Tribunal Office is centralizing the administration of many adjudicative processes including conduct, credentialing, practice, assurance, trust safety, and the appeal processes.
- Measures are underway to strengthen the complaints dismissal process.

Trust Safety

- Refinements to the Trust Safety program during 2014 included the implementation of electronic reporting and a restructured model for trust defalcation.
- The risk of unlimited liability for losses was restructured, resulting in the establishment of the Alberta Lawyers Insurance Exchange, an insurance reciprocal, in July 2014.

Alternative Business Structures (ABS)

- The LSA is collaborating with the law societies of Saskatchewan and Manitoba on ABS and innovative ways to deliver legal services. Policy work on ABS regulation is also underway.

Improving Lawyer Competence

- The LSA hired a new Director of Professionalism and Access to oversee the development and implementation of an integrated approach to competence.
- Services provided by LSA Practice Advisors and Equity Ombudsperson continue to be in high demand.
- Online resources are being continually enhanced, extending the reach to lawyers through the use of ebulletins, Law Society Today, presentations, and articles.
- The LSA Code of Conduct was amended to address developments in conflict cases and align it with the Federation of Law Societies of Canada *Model Code*.

Government Relations

- The LSA furthered its initiative with the government to secure sustainable funding for Legal Aid Alberta by participating in a media conference with the Minister and organizing an information session for government MLAs.
- This issue served as a springboard to developing collaborative relationships with Ministry staff.

Access to Justice

- Benchers approved the articulation of the role of the LSA in Access to Justice. All quality legal services projects will be scrutinized through an Access to Justice lens.
- The LSA continued to play a major role in the *Justicia* project throughout 2014.
- Creative, engaging ways of providing information to Internationally Trained Lawyers were developed, in order to support their entry and re-entry into the Alberta legal community.

- The LSA co-convened in the Reforming the Family Justice initiative, a collaboration between government, the Courts, and a number of organizations, which has generated 3 prototypes for further development on a priority basis.

Business Technology

- The LSA's new lawyer portal, for the payment of annual membership fees, was successfully launched in January.
- Creation of the Human Resources Information System portal enhances staff user experience and management reporting capability.
- New video conferencing equipment and collaboration services are installed and in use, providing point-to-point video conferencing between the Calgary and Edmonton offices as well as full remote access capability from any web enabled device. In addition the service provides integrated voice conferencing, messaging and document sharing, so improving overall collaboration.

Communications

- Communications with stakeholders are continuously improving.
- Modernizing communications processes and vehicles is ongoing. One highlight of 2014 was the successful completion of an online Bencher Election.

4. Old Business

None.

5. New Business

None.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.