

# 2023 Minutes Approved

Annual General Meeting of the Law Society of Alberta

Nov. 30, 2023

Videoconference meeting

Item	
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Call to Order</b></p> <p>The Law Society of Alberta (Law Society) President, Bill Hendsbee, called the meeting to order at 11 a.m. President-elect, Deanna Steblyk delivered an Indigenous Land Acknowledgment Statement for Alberta.</p> <p>10 members of the public were in attendance and Mr. Hendsbee reminded them that they may observe but not participate in the meeting.</p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Credentials Report</b></p> <p>53 active members were present. Mr. Hendsbee confirmed this meets quorum in accordance with section 27 of the <i>Legal Profession Act</i> (the <i>Act</i>).</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Meeting Procedures and Etiquette</b></p> <p>Mr. Hendsbee noted that the meeting procedures were provided to registered attendees prior to the meeting and reviewed key procedures and expected etiquette.</p> <p>Mr. Hendsbee noted that a Minutes Approval Committee has been appointed and the approved minutes will be provided to members in advance of the next AGM with any necessary corrections to be made at the 2024 AGM.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Adoption of the Agenda</b></p> <p>The proposed agenda was distributed to all registrants in advance of the meeting. As no objections were raised, the AGM agenda was adopted as distributed.</p>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Adoption of the 2022 Annual General Meeting Minutes</b></p> <p>The 2022 AGM minutes were distributed to all registrants in advance of the meeting. There being no corrections, the minutes were adopted as distributed.</p>
<b>6</b>	<p><b>President's Report</b></p> <p>In accordance with subsection 27(2) of the <i>Act</i>, the President presented a report of the proceedings of the Benchers since the last AGM.</p> <p>Prior to presentation of his President's report of the Benchers' proceedings, Mr. Hendsbee reported that there were two significant events in 2023: a Special Meeting of the Society on Feb. 6, 2023, and the Bencher Election with results announced on Nov. 21, 2024.</p>



## Item

Mr. Hendsbee then reported on the following Strategic Plan advancements by the Benchers in 2023:

### **Innovation & Proactive Regulation**

- The Innovation Sandbox continued to provide support, guidance and oversight to legal innovators.
- The Benchers approved new and amended Law Society Rules to align with Labour Mobility legislation.
- A new three-year Strategic Plan created and approved by the Benchers, will take effect on Jan. 1, 2024

### **Competence & Wellness, and Equity, Diversity & Inclusion**

- The new Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program and tool was launched in July.
- Table Talks, a new mentorship program, was launched in January.
- Active Non-Practising Status Rule changes to accommodate lawyers going on leave were approved and will come into effect on Feb. 1, 2024.
- The Law Society Code of Conduct (Code) was amended to address harassment and discrimination, and ex parte communications and appearances issues.
- A Reconciliation Advisory Roster was established to continue the Law Society's commitment to responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #27.
- In October 2023, the Benchers approved the outline of the Practice Fundamentals Program and development of course materials is underway.
- Efforts to enhance lawyer competence in Alberta were advanced through an initiative of the Law Societies of Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan to identify and validate competencies needed upon entry to legal practice. This initiative will result in the publication of a Western Canada Competency Profile (WCCP).
- Focus groups were held earlier in 2023 with key stakeholder groups and a validation survey to collect further feedback on the WCCP draft is underway. The finalized profile is expected to be published mid-2024.

### **Access**

- Official language rights amendments to section 3.2-8 and associated commentary in the Code were approved in February. These were in addition to the approved amendment to section 3.2-7 at the December 2022 Bencher meeting.



Item	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Work is underway to enhance the web-based Lawyer Directory to provide the public with a tool to help find a lawyer in Alberta.</li><li>- The Law Society conducted a comprehensive review and made the difficult decision to close the Lawyer Referral Service (LRS) effective Friday, Sept. 22, 2023, after running the LRS in-house for more than three years.</li></ul> <p>Following the delivery of the President's Report, responses to member questions were provided.</p>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>New Business</b></p> <p>Mr. Hendsbee advised that in accordance with Rule 32 (1) motions to be presented at the meeting must be submitted 20 days in advance of the date of the meeting. In accordance with Rule 33 (2)(b) any motions that have not accompanied the notice of the meeting may only be presented with unanimous consent of the members present at the meeting.</p> <p>Member, Ms. Goold, of Calgary, moved and member, Mr. Song, of Calgary, seconded, that the 2024 AGM be conducted both in person and virtually.</p> <p>Mr. Hendsbee advised that an electronic poll would be used to collect member votes for or against the presentation of the motion as proposed. Mr. Hendsbee reminded the assembly that only active members may vote.</p> <p>The following poll was issued:</p> <p><i>That the members consent to the presentation of the motion as proposed</i></p> <p>There was not unanimous consent and therefore the motion was not considered.</p>
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Adjournment</b></p> <p>The meeting was adjourned at 11:43 a.m.</p>

Approved by Minutes Approval Committee: Jan. 18, 2024

Minutes Approval Committee Chair:

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Margaret Unsworth, KC

Secretary:

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Christine Schreuder