

2024 Minutes Approved

Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Law Society of Alberta

November 28, 2024

Videoconference

1. Call to Order

The Law Society of Alberta (Law Society) President, Deanna Steblyk, called the meeting to order at 11 a.m. Bencher, Sharilyn Nagina delivered an Indigenous land acknowledgment statement for Alberta.

Ms. Steblyk reminded the guests in attendance that they may observe, but not participate in the meeting.

2. Credentials Report

One inactive and 48 active Members were present. Ms. Steblyk confirmed quorum was met in accordance with section 27 of the *Legal Profession Act* (Act).

3. Meeting Procedures and Etiquette

Ms. Steblyk noted that the meeting procedures were provided to registered attendees prior to the meeting and reviewed key procedures and expected etiquette.

Ms. Steblyk reported 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 2025 AGM.

4. Adoption of the Agenda

The proposed agenda was distributed to all registrants in advance of the meeting. There being no objections, the agenda was adopted as presented.

5. Presentation of the 2023 Annual General Meeting Minutes

The approved 2023 AGM minutes were distributed to all registrants in advance of the meeting. There were no suggested corrections.

6. President's Report

In accordance with subsection 27(2) of the Act, the President presented a report of the proceedings of the Benchers since the last report at the 2023 AGM.

Prior to presentation of the President's report of the Benchers' proceedings, Ms. Steblyk reported on two important developments for the legal profession and legal stakeholders

in 2024: renegotiation and signing of the Legal Aid Governance Agreement effective September 6, 2024, and the ongoing Government of Alberta's Professional Regulatory Review.

Ms. Steblyk then reported on the following key Strategic Plan advancements by the Benchers in 2024:

- Ongoing work is being done to address the conduct and competence of the profession, by ensuring that the Law Society's regulatory framework and processes are efficient, proportionate and responsive.
- The Law Society has continued to work alongside the Federation of Law Societies of Canada (FLSC) on anti-money laundering initiatives in the profession.
- A follow-up survey to the 2019 Articling survey was issued and found that some new lawyers and current articling students continue to struggle with less than ideal or even unsafe working conditions during their articles. The Law Society will continue to work within its mandate to build a more equitable and safer environment for articling students and new lawyers.
- In August 2024, the Law Society, in collaboration with the Alberta Lawyers' Assistance Society, the Alberta Lawyers Indemnity Association, the Canadian Bar Association – Alberta Branch, and the Legal Education Society of Alberta (LESA), launched a series of free lunch-and-learn events for new lawyers offered in Calgary, Edmonton, and via webinar. Invitees included new Alberta lawyers, those who have completed law school but not yet been called to the bar, articling students, Practice Readiness Education Program (PREP) students who have not started articling, internationally trained lawyers, and lawyers transferring from outside of Alberta. The events featured presentations to inform attendees of what is offered by each organization and how to access the different supports available.
- On September 26, 2024, the Benchers voted to amend the Rules of the Law Society of Alberta (Rules) to align with the FLSC's Model Rules regarding client identification and verification which will come into force on January 1, 2025.
- Also at the September Board meeting, the Benchers approved an amendment to Rule 58.1 to give the Law Society the authority to extend the registration of a student-at-law where disciplinary proceedings under Part 3 of the Act are underway. The amendments addressed a gap in regulatory processes and ensure that the Law Society can protect the public interest effectively.
- The Law Society recently introduced the Practice Fundamentals Program (Program) as a way for new lawyers to enhance basic competencies. The Program, developed alongside LESA and several other subject matter experts to provide consistency in fundamental skills, will be gradually rolled out over the

next several years. It is geared toward new lawyers who gained active status with the Law Society in January 2024 or later and can access the Program at no cost on the LESA website. More experienced lawyers can purchase individual courses on the LESA website at minimal cost.

Following the delivery of the President's Report, Ms. Steblyk invited the active Members to ask questions and there were none.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Approved by Minutes Approval
Committee:

January 28, 2025

Minutes Approval Committee Chair:

"Ronald A. Sorokin, KC"

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Secretary:

"Christine Schreuder"

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