

2025 Minutes Approved

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

November 27, 2025

Zoom Webinar

1. Call to Order

The Law Society of Alberta (Law Society) President, Stacy Petriuk, KC, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. and introduced the head table.

2. Confirmation of Quorum

569 active Members were present. Three public representative Benchers were present to attend but not participate in the meeting. The Chair confirmed quorum was met in accordance with section 27 of the *Legal Profession Act* (Act).

3. Meeting Procedural Rules and Etiquette

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

The Chair provided an overview of the Zoom webinar platform raising hands, polls and chat functions.

The Chair 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 2026 AGM.

4. Adoption of the Agenda

The proposed agenda was distributed to all registrants in advance of the meeting.

It was moved by Mr. David Tupper and seconded that the agenda be adopted. There was no debate.

Voting on the motion that the agenda be adopted was conducted via anonymous Zoom poll. The tellers' committee report was given as follows:

The number of votes cast: 543

The number of votes necessary for adoption (majority): 272

Votes for motion: 541

Votes against motion: 2

The Chair declared that the agenda was adopted.

5. 2024 Annual General Meeting Minutes

The approved 2024 AGM minutes were distributed to all registrants in advance of the meeting. There were no corrections to the minutes as presented.

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 2024 AGM.

Ms. Petriuk began by noting that the Law Society's Strategic Plan was extended to 2027 to continue work on the three strategic goals Effective Regulation, Competence, and Public Confidence.

Prior to providing an update on the strategic work, Ms. Petriuk reported on Law Society operational advancements and two important government initiatives in 2025.

Ms. Petriuk reported that:

- The Law Society is committed to regulatory reform and creating operational efficiencies to better serve the public interest. Improvements to regulatory processes have been implemented or are currently underway aligning with the objectives in the first goal of the Strategic Plan to increase transparency, efficiency and sustainability, and enhancing regulatory processes to address conduct and competence.
- The Law Society is focused on systems infrastructure updates that supports the work of the regulator with investment in technology modernization that will ensure efficient operation, using systems that meet modern standards. Work is underway to develop a platform that will simplify and enhance stakeholder transactions and interactions, reduce administrative burden on lawyers and enhance the experience for all stakeholders.
- Together with Legal Aid Alberta and the Government of Alberta, a new five-year governance agreement for legal aid services was negotiated. The new agreement came into effect on July 16, 2025, and will continue until July 2030.
- The Law Society participated in the Government of Alberta's review of all professional regulatory bodies in Alberta. This review was completed at the end of 2024. On November 20, 2025 the government introduced Bill 13, the *Regulated Professions Neutrality Act*. The Law Society is conducting a thorough review of the new draft legislation to fully understand what it means for the Law Society, the public and the legal profession in Alberta. Additional amendments to the *Legal Profession Act* are expected to be put before the legislature in the first week of December. As with the *Regulated Professions Neutrality Act*, a thorough review will be conducted to fully understand what the amendments to the *Legal*

Profession Act means for the Law Society, the public and the legal profession in Alberta.

Ms. Petriuk welcomed Sarah Klein as the newest member of the Law Society's Executive Leadership Team in the role of General Counsel since early September.

Ms. Petriuk then reported on the following key strategic programs, projects and initiatives advancements in 2025:

- In conjunction with World Mental Health Day, the Law Society introduced a new, online Well-being in the Legal Profession course on October 10, 2025. The goal of this voluntary course initiative is to support lawyers in their capacity to remain capable, ethical and effective throughout their careers.
- A 2024 survey was issued to the Law Societies of Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia and the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society in follow-up to the 2019 articling survey. Analysis of the 2024 survey results was completed in early 2025 to produce a cross-jurisdictional report. The findings allow these provincial law societies opportunities to collaborate to determine next steps as work continues to enhance the articling experience and entry level practice. The full report is available on the Law Society website.
- The Law Society joined a coalition of Canadian law societies, and the Federation of Law Societies of Canada to launch *Ours to Protect*, a national campaign to raise awareness about the importance of the rule of law and to unite Canadians around the shared values of democracy and justice. This is an initiative to help Canadians better understand why the rule of law is Ours to Protect. To learn more visit www.ourstoprotect.ca.

Following the delivery of the President's Report, responses to member questions were provided.

7. New Business

a. Member Motion #1

The Chair confirmed that the following proposed motion was moved Mr. Yue (Roger) Song, as the submitter of the motion, and seconded by Mr. Clive Llewelyn.

Resolution of the 2025 Annual General Meeting of the Law Society of Alberta

WHEREAS section 115 of the *Legal Profession Act*, RSA 2000, c. L-8 ("LPA") provides that

Protection from liability

115(1) No action lies against

- (a) the Society or a person who is or was an officer, employee or agent of the Society,
- (b) a person who conducted an investigation under Part 3,
- (c) a person who is or was a Benchers or a member of a committee established by or under this Act,
- (d) a person who is or was a custodian appointed under Part 4,
- (e) a subsidiary corporation of the Society referred to in section 99(2)(b) or a person who is or was a director, officer or employee of that corporation, or
- (f) a person who acted on the instructions of, or under the supervision of, a person referred to in clauses (a) to (e), in respect of anything done by any of them in good faith pursuant to this Act, the rules or any direction of the Benchers.

(2) No action for defamation may be founded on a communication regarding the conduct of a member or student-at-law if the communication is published to or by a person within any of the classes of person enumerated in subsection (1), in good faith and in the course of any proceedings under this Act or the rules relating to that conduct.

(3) Subsections (1) and (2) do not operate to restrict or abrogate any immunity or protection that is otherwise provided by law to a person within any of the classes of person enumerated in subsection (1) or to any other person.

WHEREAS on October 2, 2025, the Estate of Edward McCann (the "**Applicant**") as represented by the litigation representative Tamasine Davies filed a Reconsideration Application (the "**Reconsideration Application**") with the Court of Appeal of Alberta (File Number 2501-0195 AC).

WHEREAS the Applicant in the Reconsideration Application applies under Rules 14.46 and 14.72 for leave to argue on appeal that **Dechant v. Stevens**, 2001 ABCA 39 ("**Dechant**") should be reconsidered. Specifically, Mr. McCann seeks to argue on appeal that the Court's findings in Dechant with respect to s. 112 of the Legal Profession Act, S.A. 1990, c. L-9.1 (now s. 115 of the Legal Profession Act, RSA 2000, c L-8), ought to be reconsidered.

WHEREAS *Dechant* found there was no common law defence of absolute privilege in quasi-judicial settings. This finding directly resulted in the Court's conclusion in *Dechant* that s. 1 15(3) of the LPA did not override s. 1 15(2).

*[28] Section 1 12(3) provides that subsections (1) and (2) " ... do not restrict or abrogate any immunity or protection otherwise provided by law. ... " I note that s.1 12(3) does not even refer to the preservation of privilege. Moreover, as discussed later, **there is no common law right to absolute immunity for quasi-judicial bodies. Rather, any absolute immunity for***



those bodies derives from statute. That being the case, the Legislature could not have intended s. 112(3) to preserve a common law right to absolute immunity where none exists [Emphasis added].¹

As there was no common law defence of absolute privilege in a quasi-judicial proceeding, s. 115(3) could not be interpreted to preserve absolute privilege. It was not a law in any event.²

WHEREAS the Law Society of Alberta has been granted status of intervenor in the Reconsideration Application.

WHEREAS as a matter of professional code of conduct, a lawyer, among others,

- (a) has a duty to carry on the practice of law and discharge all responsibilities to clients, tribunals, the public and other members of the profession honourably and with integrity;
- (b) has a duty to uphold the standards and reputation of the legal profession and to assist in the advancement of its goals, organizations and institutions.
- (c) must be courteous and civil and act in good faith with all persons with whom the lawyer has dealings in the course of his or her practice.

WHEREAS it is critical to the rule of law and the public interest that LSA members shall have

- (i) a complete freedom from being subject to any investigation of LSA based on any malicious complaints or false statements it receives and
- (ii) an absolute right to hold the person, **who made malicious complaint or deliberately made any false statement to the LSA against a LSA member** [Emphasis added], liable for defamation without any defense including any defense of qualified or absolute privilege.

Resolved, That, as Intervenor the Law Society should advocate and advance the position that:

1. The Rules of LSA or the Code of Conducts of LSA have been and remain to the effect that no one shall have any absolute or qualified privilege to make malicious complaints or intentional false statement to LSA against any LSA member.
2. The Rules of LSA or the Code of Conducts of LSA shall be amended by clarifying provisions to the effect that *"no member of LSA shall have any qualified or absolute privilege to make any malicious complaints or intentional*

¹ Dechant at para 28

² Dechant at paras 27 to 29

false statement to LSA against any LSA member without the liability of defamation."

3. LSA is hereby instructed to take the position at all legal proceedings including in quasi-judicial settings to the effect that a LSA member or any person shall have neither qualified nor absolute privilege to make any malicious complaints or intentional false statement to LSA against any LSA member without taking the liability of defamation under laws.

Debate on the proposed motion began at 9:43 a.m. and lasted until 10:03 a.m., when the 20-minute time limit for debate expired.

The Chair recognized Mr. Song as entitled to preference in speaking in debate. Debate then alternated between those speaking against and those speaking for the motion.

Points made in debate for the motion included:

- Absolute immunity provides permission to lie, make false statements in bad faith to the Law Society and violates the supremacy of God.
- Section 115 of the Act only provides for qualified immunity.
- Absolute immunity adversely impacts the lives of those affected by false statements.
- The motion is not to amend; it is to confirm the current law of qualified immunity and showing good faith.
- The Law Society is trying to overturn the *Dechant v. Stevens* decision.
- The proposed motion is the standard of conduct citizens are subjected to in either side of a defamation case and should be adopted.
- Absolute privilege and qualified privilege should not be protecting those who intentionally make defamatory statements against lawyers.
- This is a serious issue evidenced by the increase in numbers of complaints against lawyers initiated at the Law Society. The checks and balances do not work. It is not right that the complainant has total indemnity while the lawyer suffers lengthy disciplinary proceedings.

Points made in debate against the motion included:

- The Law Society has a robust complaint intake and investigation process to determine whether a complaint is malicious and disciplinary processes to deal with complaints made by lawyers found to be malicious.
- There is an obligation to file complaints when warranted.
- Removing absolute immunity would deter complaints from being filed.
- The issue being raised by Mr. Song is for the Court of Appeal to decide and should not be dealt with through this motion in this forum.
- If members vote for this motion in this forum, it will set a negative precedent.
- The motion references a matter that is currently before the Court and it is inappropriate to use this forum as a means to instruct Law Society counsel.

Voting on the adoption of Motion #1, as presented, was conducted via anonymous Zoom poll. The tellers' committee report was given as follows:

The number of votes cast: 515

The number of votes necessary for adoption (majority): 258

Votes for resolution: 84

Votes against resolution: 431

The Chair declared that the motion was lost.

b. Member Motion #2

The Chair confirmed that the following proposed motion was moved Mr. Yue (Roger) Song, as the submitter of the motion, and seconded by Ms. Katherine Kowalchuk.

Resolution of the 2025 Annual General Meeting of the Law Society of Alberta

WHEREAS the Constitution of Canada proclaims that Canada is founded upon the principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law.

WHEREAS the Law Society of Alberta regulates the legal profession in Alberta under the *Legal Professions Act* of Alberta.

Resolved, That, Law Society of Alberta use its regulatory power and authority to promote, protect and comply with the principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law and to that end, promote and protect the loyalty of the legal profession and lawyers to the Constitution, including the laws as they currently are and to clients or zealous advocacy on behalf of each client's self-determined interests under the rule of law.

Debate on the proposed motion began at 10:11 a.m. and lasted until 10:30 a.m., when a motion to call the previous question was adopted.

The Chair recognized Mr. Song as entitled to preference in speaking in debate. Debate then alternated between those speaking against and those speaking for the motion. Points made in debate for the motion included:

- The Canadian rule of law is built on the Constitution of Canada that recognizes the supremacy of God unlike other countries like China. Ask that the society use its regulatory power to promote the foundation of Canada, which is principles recognizing God.
- Canada was founded on Christian principles and values. Canada's Constitution proclaims that Canada was founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law as a conjunctive statement to be read together.

- Deviating from these principles to create and enforce equity, diversity and inclusivity, social justice advocacy and Truth and Reconciliation affirmative action policies may be viewed as discriminatory and will diminish the rule of law in Canada.
- The impact to our society of deviating from the supremacy of God principle, includes, among other things, erosion of freedom of speech, compelled speech, cancel culture, destabilizing economy, victimhood culture, unhealthy reliance by citizens and governments, and associated bodies.

Points made in debate against the motion included:

- Why ask the Law Society to promote the supremacy of God principle and not the full Constitution?
- The Constitution, in all its parts, contains many provisions that do not align with this motion.
- The motion is fundamentally flawed. Clients do not self-determine their interests under the rule of law. Legal interpretation is the lawyer's job.
- The Courts have previously looked at the preamble to the Charter and the supremacy of God portion goes against Section 2, Freedom of Conscience.
- The Courts have previously declared the preamble to the Charter dead letter.
- It is difficult to understand what the Law Society is being asked to do.

During debate, a point of order was moved by Paul Welke questioning the appropriateness of a member taking multiple actions during their turn to debate. The Chair ruled the point well taken.

Immediately following the ruling on the point of order, it was moved by Mr. Andrew Stewart and seconded to call for the previous question.

Voting on the motion to call for the previous question was conducted via anonymous Zoom poll. The tellers' committee report was given as follows:

The number of votes cast: 498

The number of votes necessary for adoption (2/3): 332

Votes for motion: 449

Votes against motion: 49

The Chair declared that the motion to call for the previous question was adopted.

The Chair then called the question on the adoption of Motion #2.

Voting on the adoption of Motion #2, as presented, was conducted via anonymous Zoom poll. The tellers' committee report was given as follows:

The number of votes cast: 496

The number of votes necessary for adoption (majority): 249

Votes for motion: 43

Votes against resolution: 453

The Chair declared that the motion was lost.

In response to a question, the Chair agreed that Mr. Song would be provided with a signed audit report of the voting results.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:36 a.m.

Approved by Minutes Approval
Committee:

December 9, 2025

Minutes Approval Committee Chair:

“Ronald A. Sorokin, KC”

Ronald A. Sorokin, KC

Secretary:

“Christine Schreuder”

Christine Schreuder