

# Law Society *of British Columbia*

## Bencher Meeting: Minutes

**To:** Benchers

**Purpose:** Approval (Consent Agenda)

**Date:** Friday, December 5, 2025

**Present:** Brook Greenberg, KC, President  
Thomas L. Spraggs, KC 1st Vice-President  
Michael Welsh, KC, 2nd Vice-President  
Simran Bains  
Paul Barnett  
Aleem Bharmal, KC  
Tanya Chamberlain  
Nikki Charlton, KC  
Jennifer Chow, KC  
Christina J. Cook, KC  
Tim Delaney  
Cheryl S. D'Sa, KC  
Katrina Harry, KC  
Ravi R. Hira, KC  
Sasha Hobbs  
James A.S. Legh  
Benjamin D. Levine  
Dr. Jan Lindsay  
Jaspreet Singh Malik  
Marcia McNeil  
Jay Michi  
Georges Rivard, KC  
Michèle Ross  
Gurminder Sandhu, KC  
Nicole E. Smith  
Barbara Stanley, KC  
James Struthers  
Natasha Tony  
Kevin B. Westell  
Gaynor C. Yeung, KC  
Jonathan Yuen

<b>Staff present:</b>	Avalon Bourne	Alison Luke
	Kim de Bruijn	Tara McPhail
	Barbara Buchanan, KC	Doug Munro
	Gigi Chen-Kuo	Michelle Robertson
	Michaela David	Carrie Robinson
	Su Forbes, KC	Lesley Small
	Kerryn Holt	Sherry Small
	Jeffrey Hoskins, KC	Arrie Sturdivant
	Joyce Johner	Christine Tam
	Jane Ladesma	Adam Whitcombe, KC
	Nicolette Lang-Andersen	Charlene Yan
	Michael Lucas, KC	Vinnie Yuen

<b>Guests:</b>	Nazanin Aram	2026 Bencher-elect
	Dom Bautista	Executive Director, Amici Curiae Friendship Society & ED of Law Courts Center
	Patricia D. Blair	President, Canadian Bar Association, BC Branch
	Ian Burns	Digital Reporter, The Lawyer's Daily
	Annabelle Donovan	Consultant (Item 13)
	Tanya Heuchert	2026 Bencher-elect
	Sara K. Hopkins	2026 Bencher-elect
	Derek LaCroix, KC	Co-Executive Director, Lawyers Assistance Program of BC
	Desmond MacMillan	Assistant Dean of Law, Thompson Rivers University
	Claire Marchant	Co-Executive Director, Lawyers Assistance Program of BC
	Arun Mohan	2026 Bencher-elect
	Caroline Nevin	Chief Executive Officer, Courthouse Libraries BC
	Linda W. Russell	Chief Executive Officer, Continuing Legal Education Society of BC
	Kerry Simmons, KC	Executive Director, Canadian Bar Association, BC Branch
Michael Zimmerman	2026 Bencher-elect	

## Consent Agenda

### 2. Minutes of October 24, 2025, meeting (regular session)

The minutes of the meeting held on October 24, 2025 were approved unanimously and by consent as circulated.

### 3. Minutes of October 24, 2025, meeting (*in camera* session)

The minutes of the *in camera* meeting held on October 24, 2025 were approved unanimously and by consent as circulated.

### 4. External Appointment: Land Title and Survey Authority

Marcia McNeil recused herself from this item.

The following resolution was passed unanimously and by consent:

**BE IT RESOLVED** the Benchers put forward five eligible candidates as the Law Society nominees for consideration by the LTSA for appointment for a three-year term commencing April 1, 2026.

### 5. External Appointment: Canadian Centre for Professional Legal Education

The following resolution was passed unanimously and by consent:

**BE IT RESOLVED** the Benchers approve putting forward Lesley Small, Senior Director, Credentials, Professional Development, and Practice Support, as the Law Society’s nominee for appointment to the CPLED Board of Directors.

### 6. Proposal to Amend Commentary [4] of BC Code Rule 3.3-3 (Future Harm/Public Safety Exception to Confidentiality)

This item was deferred to a future Bencher meeting.

### 7. Proposed Revision to Terms of Reference: Truth and Reconciliation Advisory Committee

The following resolution was passed unanimously and by consent:

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the ‘Composition’ section 5 of the Truth and Reconciliation Advisory Committee’s Terms of Reference is amended to the following clause, as set out in Appendix A and B:

“5. The Committee will have two Co-Chairs: an Indigenous representative and an Indigenous member of the Executive Ladder of the Law Society of British Columbia. If there is not an

Indigenous member on the Executive Ladder, then the Indigenous representative will serve as Chair and a member of the Executive Ladder will serve as Vice-Chair.”

## **8. 2026 Committees and Task Forces**

The following resolution was passed unanimously and by consent:

**BE IT RESOLVED** the Benchers approve the establishment of a Judicial Liaison Committee with proposed terms of reference to be brought back to Benchers for approval.

## **Reports**

### **9. President’s Report**

President Brook Greenberg, KC confirmed that no conflicts of interest had been declared for the regular portion of the meeting, aside from the recusal that Ms. McNeil had noted for item 4.

Mr. Greenberg began his report by congratulating the Benchers that were elected to the 2026 Executive Committee and thanking all those who put forward their names for consideration.

Mr. Greenberg provided an overview of his recent and upcoming meetings and events, including call ceremonies in Victoria, Vancouver, and Nanaimo, welcome ceremonies, and the Yale County Bench and Bar Dinner. He thanked those Benchers who had attended welcome ceremonies on his behalf.

Mr. Greenberg indicated that he had observed the majority of the single legal regulator litigation hearing, and he was of the view that the Law Society’s counsel had done an excellent job. He spoke about the importance of standing up for the independence of the profession and for the rule of law.

Mr. Greenberg then spoke about the importance of the Rule of Law National Campaign and of the Law Society’s involvement with this initiative.

Mr. Greenberg concluded his report by informing Benchers that the next meeting of the Federation of Law Societies of Canada (“Federation”) Council would take place on December 8, 2025 and he would provide a written report on the outcome of that meeting for the next Bencher meeting.

### **10. CEO’s Report**

Gigi Chen-Kuo, Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director, began her report with an update regarding interviews conducted by the Financial Action Task Force with representatives from the Federation and all of the Canadian law societies. She indicated that the interviews were focused on the law societies’ educational requirements, anti-money laundering compliance measures, the audit process in regard to focusing on anti-money laundering measures, and how money laundering risks were assessed in each jurisdiction. Ms. Chen-Kuo further indicated that

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the Law Society of BC was the only law society to provide its own BC-focused set of submissions. She informed Benchers that the Financial Action Task Force's final report is expected in June 2026.

Ms. Chen-Kuo then spoke about the transition from the Professional Legal Training Course to the Canadian Centre for Professional Legal Education's Practice Readiness Education Program and reviewed the available resources for the profession and for students.

Ms. Chen-Kuo provided an overview of the Law Society's recently launched Practice Coverage Network, which is a new resource designed to support lawyers who are seeking to take time away from practice, which was developed in response to one of the recommendations of the Mental Health Task Force. She provided an overview of the Network, as well as the available resources, which are available on both the Law Society website and within the Member Portal. Ms. Chen-Kuo thanked the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee for overseeing this work and providing guidance and feedback to staff.

Ms. Chen-Kuo provided an overview of recent events she had attended, including the Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers Annual Gala and the Yale County Bench and Bar Dinner.

Ms. Chen-Kuo concluded her report with some operational updates, including staffing updates. She also thanked Benchers and staff for their support and hard work over the past year.

Benchers discussed Bill 13, which was recently tabled by the Alberta provincial government, and if passed, would limit regulators' ability to discipline members for off-duty conduct, as well as limit the types of training that can be mandated by regulatory bodies.

## **Discussion**

### **11. Implementing the Law Society's New Approach to Demographic Data Collection and Use**

Kerryn Holt, Chief Operating Officer, introduced the item and provided some information on the implementation of the Law Society's new approach to demographic data collection and use. Sara Pavan, Senior Policy Analyst, then presented on the governing principles of the new approach to demographic data collection, the operationalization of these principles, the collection of demographic data, and the review and revision of the current demographic data questions, as well as next steps.

Benchers discussed the presentation and provided some feedback regarding the planned new approach to demographic data collection and use, and the proposed demographic data questions.

Benchers also spoke about the importance of collecting demographic data from the profession in a manner that builds trust, benefits the profession, and allows for an evidence-based approach.

## **12. Report from the Access to Justice Advisory Committee on the Need for Better Data to Improve Access to Justice and Legal Services**

Tanya Chamberlain, Chair of the Access to Justice Advisory Committee, introduced the item and provided some background regarding the report from the Access to Justice Advisory Committee on the need for better data to improve access to justice and legal services.

Benchers discussed the report and provided some feedback, including considering changing the name of the Access to Justice Advisory Committee to incorporate access to legal information and legal knowledge. Benchers also discussed plans to convene a workshop to bring together different perspectives from the justice system and data collection and analysis experts to explore how to improve data collection, analysis and sharing across the justice system.

## **Discussion & Decision**

### **13. 2026 - 2028 Strategic Plan**

Annabelle Donovan joined for this item.

Mr. Greenberg introduced the item and provided some background regarding the development of the proposed 2026-2028 Strategic Plan.

The Benchers unanimously agreed to adopt the Law Society's New Strategic Plan: 2026 to 2028 as set out in Appendix B of the materials.

### **14. Whistleblower Policy**

Mr. Greenberg introduced the item and provided some background regarding the development of the draft Whistleblower Policy. He summarized past discussions regarding this draft Policy, as well as the importance of having such a policy in place.

Following some discussions, the Benchers unanimously agreed to approve the Whistleblower Policy as set out in Appendix A of the materials.

### **15. Governance Proposals**

Mr. Greenberg introduced the item and provided some background regarding the governance proposals being recommended by the Executive Committee to Benchers for consideration.

- **Proposed Revisions to Bencher *in camera* Policy**

Mr. Greenberg first provided an overview of the proposed revisions to the Bencher *in camera* policy.

Benchers discussed the proposed revisions and provided some feedback. Mr. Greenberg indicated that further thought would be given to the proposed revisions and this matter would be deferred to a future meeting.

- **Proposed new Bencher Leave Policy**

Mr. Greenberg then provided an overview of the proposed new Bencher Leave Policy. He indicated that the Policy set out to codify existing practices.

Benchers discussed the proposed Policy with discussions focusing on the Benchers' authority to determine policies applicable to Benchers and different scenarios that could potentially fall under the purview of the proposed Policy.

The following resolution was passed unanimously:

**BE IT RESOLVED that the Benchers approve the adoption of a Bencher Leave Policy as set out in Appendix C of the materials.**

- **Developing a Board Evaluation Process**

First Vice-President Thomas L. Spraggs, KC provided an overview of the proposal to develop a board evaluation process and provided some background. He indicated that based on the outcome of Benchers' consideration of this matter, a new board evaluation program would be planned for 2026.

Benchers discussed the proposal to re-institute a board evaluation program with discussions focusing on the importance of gathering data, as well as the scope of the evaluation, associated costs, and overall process. Ms. Chen-Kuo advised that the process would be determined with the guidance of a consultant, and would likely include gathering input on a number of areas, which would then form the basis of an action plan for the organization.

The following resolution was passed unanimously:

**BE IT RESOLVED that the Benchers approve the re-institution of a Board Evaluation program.**

## Update

### 16. Financial Matters

- **2025 Enterprise Risk Management Plan: Update**

Mr. Spraggs introduced the item and provided some background regarding the Law Society's Enterprise Risk Management Plan for 2025.

Ms. Chen-Kuo then provided an overview of the Enterprise Risk Management Plan and reviewed the changes from the 2024 plan.

- **Financial Report - 2025 - Q3 and Forecast**

Jeanette McPhee, Chief Financial Officer and Senior Director of Trust Regulation provided an overview of the financial results and highlights to the end of September 2025, as well as an overview of forecasted 2025 year-end results. She also provided an overview of how the Law Society's net asset reserves are invested.

## **For Information**

### **17. Year-End Advisory Committee Reports**

There was no discussion on this item.

### **18. Update on the Health Justice Alliance**

There was no discussion on this item.

### **19. External Appointments: Law Foundation of BC**

There was no discussion on this item.

## **Final Remarks**

Ms. Chen-Kuo and Mr. Spraggs paid tribute to outgoing President Greenberg and thanked him for his dedication, commitment, and significant contributions to the Law Society in service of the public interest. Mr. Greenberg thanked Ms. Chen-Kuo and Mr. Spraggs for their kind words, and thanked Benchers and staff for their support during his time as Bencher and President. He then welcomed Mr. Spraggs as incoming President for 2026 and presented him with the President's pin.

The Benchers then commenced the *in camera* portion of the meeting.

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