

THURSTON COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 9, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.
hosted by Marie Docter and Jerry Gray at John Kesler's Office

Members Present: John Kesler III, Marie Docter, Bill Pope, Jerry Gray, Michael Young, Brandon Koenig, Melissa Goldmann, Rosemary Fitzgerald, Jeffrey Carr, Joe Scuderi and Angela Colaiuta.

Members Absent: Wayne Graham

Others Present: Heather Ligtenberg

1. **Call to order** 5:30 p.m.
2. **Approval of Minutes of September 11, 2024, Board Meeting** – Joe moved to approve, seconded by Bill. The motion carried without objections.
3. **New Business**
 - 3.1 Welcome Jeffrey Carr to the TCBA Board of Directors (John) – John welcomed Jeffrey Carr to the TCBA Board.
 - 3.2 Date for 2025 TCBA Annual Meeting & Dinner (Heather) – Heather shared that she reserved the Olympia Country and Golf Club (OCGC) for May 16, 2025. John said thank you to Greg Rhodes, who is an OCGC member, for sponsoring the TCBA so we can hold our event there.
 - 3.3 Board Retreat Date Change, Agenda, Food/Drinks (Heather) – Heather said the date was changed to November 2, 2024, at John's office. John said he will buy the food and drinks for the meeting.
 - 3.4 Salvation Army's Adopt-A-Family Program (John) – John asked if anyone has any objections to doing the Salvation Army's Adopt-A-Family program again this year. Jeffrey said he would like to see if there are other organizations out there that we can support since the Salvation Army has not been inclusive for the LGBTQ+ community. Some organizations that board members suggested to look into are Toys for Tots, GRuB, 4 the Love Foundation. Jeffrey said he will look into it and see if there is another organization to donate to.
 - 3.5 National Adoption Day Donation Request (Heather) – Heather said Melanie Hantze has requested a donation of \$250 from the TCBA for the annual Thurston County Adoption Day celebration. John said we will discuss this at the Board retreat on November 2.
 - 3.6 Holiday Lunch Menu, Cost & Agenda (Heather) – Heather shared that the cost of food has increased at the Olympia Country and Golf Club. The lunch will cost \$65 per person. The board agreed to charge young lawyers \$30 per person. The agenda was not discussed.
 - 3.7 Board Vacancy (John) – John said Angela's last meeting is today. Angela said that Lindsey Trakel or Jenna Norden are interested in replacing her on the board. Angela will talk to Lindsey and Jenna.
4. **Old Business**
5. **Treasurer's Report** (Brandon) – September 2024 Financial Report – Brandon shared a September 2024 financial report. Melissa moved to approve, seconded by Joe. The motion carried without objections.
6. **Monthly Luncheon Update** (Marie) – Marie shared that Cynthia Worth will be presenting the Tax Toolbox at the October 25 lunch CLE. The November CLE will be about the Sammamish case. The February or April CLE might be Justice Montoya-Lewis presenting on childhood trauma. Vonda

Sargent will present a DEI CLE in February or April. Marie said maybe the CLE about Judge Doran could be in January if Wayne is able to organize it for that month. Marie will follow-up with Wayne about the Judge Doran CLE for mid-January. The half day Evidence CLE has been rescheduled to January 31. Marie talked to Stacy at Sound Legal Aid who said she'd talk to Bill about doing a training/CLE for new attorneys.

7. **Committee Reports**

- 7.1 Bench/Bar (President) – John said the Bench Bar meeting will be on November 4 in the jury selection room. The TCBA will provide the food. Heather will pick up Meconi's sandwiches, chips, and water. Heather will send an email to the members asking for agenda items.
- 7.2 CLE (Bill, Brandon, Wayne, Angela, Melissa) – Melissa said the half day Evidence CLE has been rescheduled to January 31, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. at Tugboat Annie's.
- 7.3 Rules Committee (Marie) – No report.
- 7.4 Communicating with the Court about court administration (John, Melissa, Marie) – This item needs to be removed from this list.
- 7.5 Social Events Committee (Brandon (Chair), Heather, Joe, Wayne) – Brandon said he received a couple of comments from members who have attend the Trivia at Well 80 and they feel that it is too long and too crowded. Brandon proposed doing Trivia Night at Brewery City Pizza on the Westside of Olympia on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. Joe said the Two Mile House also has Trivia Night. Other places that have Trivia Nights are Farrelli's Pizza, Inferno's Pizza, and Leaning Maple. Brandon said he is happy to stay the chair of this section, but he can't host Trivia Night every month. Brandon said he can host on October 22 at Brewery City Pizza. Brandon shared that Mike DeWitt approached him and said he is interested in starting a DND group. John suggested we include an advertisement in the next Legal Brief about the DND opportunity.
- 7.6 How to Increase Membership Committee (Michael) – This item needs to be removed from this list.
- 7.7 Newsletter & Marketing (Heather) – IN RE Spotlight – Heather said Jerry volunteered to find an attorney to complete the IN RE Spotlight. Jerry asked if anyone knows a member who would be interested in completing it to let him know.
- 7.8 Courthouse Badges (Wayne and Brandon) – This item needs to be removed from this list.
- 7.9 Judicial Evaluation Survey & Bylaws Committee (Michael, Wayne, Angela, Joe, John, Chris Meserve) – Michael will set up a meeting.
- 7.10 Law Library (Michael and Marie) – Michael said there is a meeting in a couple weeks, so no report today.
- 7.11 Law Day Speech Contest (Marie, Melissa, Rosemary, Jeffrey) – Rosemary and Jeffrey volunteered to be on this committee. Marie said we send the topic information to the local schools in February each year.
- 7.12 New Courthouse (Marie) – No report.
- 7.13 Bigelow House Connections (Marie) – Marie said Shirley Battan responded to her email and expressed excitement about strengthening the relationship between the TCBA and the Bigelow House and Shirley likes the idea of having a social event at the Bigelow House. Brandon said he'd be happy to meet with the Bigelow House to discuss having an event there. Joe suggested having the BBQ at the Bigelow House next summer.
- 7.14 County Charter Effort (Michael) – No report.

8. **Section Reports**

- 8.1 Family Law (Meredith Gerhart) - Meredith shared a Family Law Section Meetings update: We had a meeting every month with the exception of July 2024, which we historically cancel due to summer vacation plans and the meeting usually falling close to the 4th.
 - Our meetings in May and June were very short, but well-attended. The court did not have many updates and section members did not have much to add to the discussion.

- Our August 2024 meeting was the first meeting with Judge Amamilo in her current role at FJC, and there were not many topics to address apart from general pleasantries and welcoming Judge Amamilo to the team.
- Our September 2024 meeting was a little more lively with discussions about mandatory court forms and the court's request for willing volunteers to assist with the upcoming Self-Represented Parties workgroup.
- We had our October 2024 section meeting yesterday, and we actually had the most participation so far this year. The discussion topic that provided the most feedback was the court's request that we not attempt to "bootstrap" a child support modification into a parenting plan modification b/c there are only two bases for modification contemplated by the court (and the mandatory forms). We then had a respectful, yet diverse, discussion on whether our civil rules allow us to include all prayers for relief in a single petition (most attorneys concur that it does / most attorneys also concur this is a more efficient use of everyone's resources). This segued into another discussion about what types of changes/modifications we can make to the mandatory court forms while still respecting the statute and procedural requirements. Eventually, we agreed to "put a pin" in the topic and to circle back next month for a continuation of what we can and cannot include in a petition. We also discussed a fairly recent unpublished opinion from Div. III that took a very interesting take on defining a Committed Intimate Relationship. And lastly, I provided a recommendation to everyone on work-life balance and how to manage the incessant influx of emails by suggesting everyone listen to a particular episode of the "Less Stressed Lawyer" podcast.

8.2 Pro Bono (Joe Scuderi) – No report.

8.3 Young Lawyers (Devin Kohr & Peter Lindgren) – Melissa said the swearing-in ceremony went well. There were five new attorneys being sworn in by Judge Wilson. Stacy Hicks shared information about Sound Legal Aid and Melissa shared information about the TCBA to the new attorneys.

8.4 Criminal Law (Rosemary Fitzgerald & Angela Coliauta) – No report.

8.5 Real Estate, Land Use, and Environmental Law (?) – Michael asked Heather to email him the Real Estate and Land Use section list.

8.6 Diversity and Inclusion (Kelsey Gasseling) – Heather said she still hasn't heard from Kelsey. Angela said she will talk to Kelsey.

9. **Additions to agenda**

10. **Announcements**

10.1 Thank you Angela for volunteering on the TCBA Board.

11. **Date/location of next meeting:** November 13, hosted by Joe Scuderi & Jeffrey Carr at John's office

12. **Adjourn** 6:35 p.m.