

**THURSTON COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION**  
**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, May 14, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.**  
**hosted by Marie Docter & Jerry Gray at John Kesler's Office**

Members Present: John Kesler III, Marie Docter, Bill Pope, Jerry Gray, Rosemary Fitzgerald, Joe Scuderi, Michael Young, Melissa Goldmann, and Jenna Norden.

Members Absent: Jeffrey Carr, Wayne Graham, Brandon Koenig

Others Present: Heather Ligtenberg

1. **Call to order** 5:39 p.m.
2. **Approval of Minutes of April 9, 2025, Board Meeting** – Joe moved to approve, seconded by Michael. The motion carried without objections.
3. **New Business**
  - 3.1 No new business
4. **Old Business**
  - 4.1 Venue/Dates for fall CLEs (Heather) – Heather shared the dates for the fall CLEs: September 26, October 24, November 14 at Tugboat Annie's
  - 4.2 Annual Meeting – Program, sponsors (appetizers), music (Heather) – Heather confirmed the agenda for the annual meeting, shared that HomeStreet Bank and Bean Gentry Wheeler Peternell donated money for the appetizers at the annual meeting, and that Brandon is making the music playlist on Spotify that Mark Wheeler selected to be played during the happy hour.
5. **Treasurer's Report** (Brandon) – March & April 2025 Financial Reports – this will be discussed at the meeting in September as Brandon is not at the meeting tonight.
6. **Monthly Luncheon Update** (Marie) – Jerry will be organizing the CLEs starting in the fall.
7. **Committee Reports**
  - 7.1 Bench/Bar (President) – John reminded everyone that the next Bench-Bar meeting is on June 10 at 12:00 p.m. The TCBA will provide lunch. Heather will order Meconi sandwiches.
  - 7.2 CLE (Bill, Brandon, Wayne, Melissa, Jeffrey) – Bill shared that the half day CLE is on October 8. Commissioner Rawnsley will be one of the presenters. Some attorneys from Sound Legal Aid are presenting on Landlord/Tenant Laws. Heather will send Bill the information we need from the presenters in order to request CLE credits from the WSBA.
  - 7.3 Rules Committee (Marie) – Marie said the proposed rules went out for comment including the interrogatory rule. Please send in your comments. Bill asked Heather to send him the proposed rules and if Heather can't find them, Marie said she can look for them.
  - 7.4 Social Events Committee (Jerry (Chair), Heather, Joe, Jenna, Jeffrey, Wayne, Brandon) – Jerry said there has been a low turnout at the social nights. The next social night is on May 22 at Northwest Beerwerks after work.  
Game Night (D&D) – Mike will have a game in June.
  - 7.5 Newsletter & Marketing (Heather) – In Re for September Legal Brief – Heather said the May Legal Brief will be sent to members at the end of May or early June. Michael said he will organize the IN RE Spotlight for the September Legal Brief.

- 7.6 Judicial Evaluation Survey & Bylaws Committee (Michael, Wayne, Joe, John, Jenna, Chris Meserve) – No report.
- 7.7 Law Library (Michael and Marie) – Marie said financially it is not going to be feasible to hire an employee to staff the Law Library. The law library is getting rid of the law books if anyone wants them.
- 7.8 Law Day Speech Contest (Marie, Melissa, Rosemary, Jeffrey) –The students did a great job presenting their speeches. We had a great crowd at the finals during the West Olympia Rotary Club meeting.
- 7.9 New Courthouse (Marie) – No report.
- 7.10 Bigelow House & Community Connections (Marie) – No report.
- 7.11 County Charter Effort (Michael) – No report.

## 8. Section Reports

- 8.1 Family Law (Meredith Gerhart) - We had one of our most robust meetings (in what seems like years) this afternoon. We had a fairly packed agenda, and there was a lot of discussion among the section members. I don't remember the last time our meeting went passed 1:00 PM. We discussed the following:
- Budget constraints on the horizon.
  - Preferred procedure for striking settlement conferences and trial dates.
  - HB 1620 has launched and it's a doozy.
  - Attorneys have been slacking on court-appropriate attire, so our judicial officers discussed the importance of professionalism and decorum in the courtroom, including ex parte calendars and Zoom appearances.
  - We recapped the trauma-informed work we would like to see at FJC and encouraged attorneys (and court staff) to focus on self-care.
  - Jennifer Johnson provided guidance on two topics: QDRO preparation and filing a de facto parentage action.
  - Lastly, we discussed a recent issue with weapons surrender orders not being enforced at the temporary stage in protection order proceedings. The court requested our assistance in helping alert the bench to issues with weapons surrender. The dockets are quite full, and it is not always possible for the judicial officer to catch every nuance of every case.

And we will not be having a June meeting because I'm telling everyone to attend the Bench Bar Meeting.

- 8.2 Pro Bono (Jenna Norden) – Jenna shared that Sound Legal Aid has online intake forms instead of calling the CLEAR phone number. It's cutting down on time people are spending on the phone. The Sound Legal Aid breakfast fundraiser went well.
- 8.3 Young Lawyers (Devin Kohr & Peter Lindgren) – John said three new attorneys were sworn in at the swearing in in April.
- 8.4 Criminal Law (Rosemary Fitzgerald & Jenna Norden) – No report.
- 8.5 Real Estate, Land Use, and Environmental Law (?) – No report.
- 8.6 Diversity and Inclusion (Susan Pai) – John said Susan would like to attend one of the board meetings in the future. Susan has scheduled small group meetings with the section members. We will be discussing the following:  
 What would you like this section to accomplish? Your insights will directly shape our 2025–2026 action plan. Consider:
- Initiatives: What programs or partnerships should we prioritize (e.g., mentorship, CLEs, community outreach)?
  - Challenges: What barriers to inclusion have you observed in our legal community?
  - Impact: How can we better serve Thurston County's diverse populations through our work?

9. **Additions to agenda**

9.1 Government Lawyers Bar Association Annual Meeting – Michael said it went well and was well attended.

10. **Announcements**

10.1 Everyone thanked John for his year as President.

10.2 Bill thanked Marie and Jerry for providing the food/drinks for the meeting tonight.

11. **Date/location of next meeting:** September 10, 2025, hosted by Jeffrey Carr & Joe Scuderi at John's Office

12. **Adjourn** 6:16 p.m.