

**THURSTON COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION**  
**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, April 15, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.**  
**hosted by Jeffrey Carr & Joe Scuderi at John Kesler's Office**

Members Present: Marie Docter, Jerry Gray, Michael Young, Wayne Graham, John Kesler III, Melissa Goldmann, Jeffrey Carr, Bill Pope, Joe Scuderi, and Brandon Koenig (by Zoom).

Members Absent: Jenna Norden, Rosemary Fitzgerald  
Others Present: Heather Ligtenberg, Kent Markley

1. **Call to order** 5:33 p.m.
- 1a. **County Charter** – Kent Markley from Renew Thurston County came and spoke to the board regarding a campaign he is involved with to create a county charter for Thurston County. They would like to have a strong relationship with the TCBA and open the line of communication and get input. This is an opportunity to make reform happen, including changes to the county government that would impact practicing lawyers, such as making the county clerk an appointed, rather than elected, position. Michael said he is willing to be the contact between the board and Mr. Markley. Mr. Markley said the plan is to have election of the charter drafters on the ballot in November 2026. The draft charter will then be presented for the November 2027 vote by the county voters. The drafters are volunteers. There will be costs for the ballot being sent. The other cost is the County provides staff time as they work through it.
2. **Approval of Minutes of March 11, 2026, Board Meeting** – John moved to approve, seconded by Michael. The motion carried without objections.
3. **New Business**
  - 3.1 Non-officer Board Vacancy Applicants - Position#6 (Marie) – A discussion took place. Marie motioned to approve Jason Foust for the open board position to be voted on at the annual meeting, and will invite Kevin Hayes to be the Real Estate and Land Use section chair, invite Alec Graham to be on the CLE planning committee, and invite Christopher Taylor to be the TCBA representative on the rules committee and co-chair of the Criminal Law Section. Michael moved to approve, seconded by Bill. The motion carried with one objection.
  - 3.2 Swearing-in Ceremony (Heather) – Heather shared that the swearing-in ceremony will be on May 1 at 1:30 p.m. at Thurston County Superior Court.
  - 3.3 Bigelow Award Nominations (Marie) – A discussion took place. Brandon moved to approve Christopher Coker, seconded by Melissa. The motion carried, with Wayne and Rosemary abstaining.
  - 3.4 Leadership Thurston County Email (Marie) – Marie shared that we received an email from Leadership Thurston County who asked if we could send an email to the TCBA members about their leadership class. A discussion took place. Marie will let them know that they are welcome to advertise in the next Legal Brief.
4. **Old Business**
  - 4.1 Section Chairs Policy (Michael) – The proposed changes to the section chairs policy in the bylaws was emailed to the members to be voted on at the Annual Meeting & Dinner on May 8, 2026.
  - 4.2 TCBA Annual Golf Tournament (Heather) – May 29 at 1pm at Tumwater Valley Golf

Course

- 4.3 Request to send letter to the County Commissioner about funding to the clerk's office (Marie) – Marie met with Judge Murphy and Matt Morbello who said main campus is doing ex parte on Fridays, call in line, and paper only ex parte docket. They are open to suggestions. This does not pertain to Family and Juvenile Court. Marie said we can't take a position or write a letter as we can't take a side on this as we represent everyone that practices many different areas.
  - 4.4 Live Presentation Sales Tax (Marie) – We received another letter from the Department of Revenue regarding the new Live Presentations Sales Tax law. Jerry and Heather will work on an exception letter to send to the Department of Revenue.
5. **Treasurer's Report** (Brandon) – February & March 2026 Financial Report & \$15,000 transfer to CD, Heritage Bank and its continued use by the TCBA, credit card machine fees – Brandon provided February and March financial reports. Joe moved to approve, Wayne seconded. The motion carried without objections. Brandon reported that \$15k was transferred into a new CD at Heritage Bank. Brandon shared that when we reached out to Heritage Bank about getting a credit card machine that he was told the transaction fees would be waived, but this is not the case. We are charged a merchant fee for each transaction; it's 3.4% + .10 for each transaction where we enter the number into the machine and 2.5% + .10 for each transaction when the customer credit card is present. We're not passing this merchant fee onto our members and the board said we do not want to at this time and that we can always revisit this later.
6. **Monthly Luncheon Update** (Jerry) – Jerry said the March CLE went well. On April 24 the CLE is about threats to the judiciary with the WSBA. Hon. Judge Coughenour, Justice Montoya-Lewis, Judge Thomas, and Judge Buckley are the speakers. Jerry said that Judge Buckley's wife and daughter are planning on attend, so he asked to pay for their lunches. Marie said we can use the President's Discretionary Fund to pay for their lunches. What food do we want for the buffet lunch on April 24? (Heather) – The board selected the taco bar for the buffet at the luncheon and would like to add the cookies and coffee too. The cookies are \$2 extra per person.
7. **Committee Reports**
- 7.1 Bench/Bar (President) – The next Bench/Bar meeting will be on June 3, 2026.
  - 7.2 CLE (Bill, Brandon, Wayne, Melissa, Jeffrey) – Jerry emailed a DEI CLE speaker, Susan Coskey, to see if she wants to do a 1-hour lunch CLE or a half day CLE.
  - 7.3 Rules Committee (Jerry) – Marie will ask Christopher Taylor if he is interested in co-chairing this committee.
  - 7.4 Social Events Committee (Brandon (Chair), Heather, Joe, Jenna, Jeffrey, Wayne, Jerry) – John shared that Robbi Kesler won the March Madness competition. The prize is two free tickets the TCBA Annual Dinner. Jerry is thinking of organizing a social beer night this summer. In 2027, around Law Day, he'd like to organize a 5k run around Capitol Lake. D&D Game Night (Mike DeWitt) – Nothing to report.
  - 7.5 Newsletter & Marketing (Heather) – Heather said the next Legal Brief will be emailed to members in late May. Marie said Judge Meyer will write the *View from the Bench* article.
  - 7.6 Judicial Evaluation Survey & Bylaws Committee (Michael, Wayne, Joe, John, Jenna, Chris Meserve) – Michael said the Bylaw amendments have been emailed to the members.
  - 7.7 Law Library (Michael and Marie) – A meeting is coming up.
  - 7.8 Law Day Speech Contest (Marie, Melissa, Rosemary, Jeffrey) – Heather said we have eight students signed up. The preliminary round is tomorrow.
  - 7.9 New Courthouse (Marie) – Nothing new to report.
  - 7.10 Bigelow House & Community Connections (Marie) – Marie shared that the Prosecutors and Public Defenders offices have a yearly competition to raise money to help support the

Community Resource Hub. Nate Block of the Community Resource Hub and Marie discussed doing this with the civil attorneys but decided it would not be feasible. Instead, it was agreed that the Resource Hub flyer would be sent to the members and that was done recently. In addition, Nate will send us information about upcoming activities at the Hub to include in the Legal Brief.

- 7.11 Annual Meeting & Dinner (Heather) – Heather shared that we received donations from Judge Glasgow and Bean Gentry Wheeler Peternell, PLLC, so we can add dessert for \$3.50 per person. Heather also shared that the Heritage Room requires payment in full by May 7<sup>th</sup> so they will be charging the credit card on file on May 7<sup>th</sup>, which is Heather’s credit card, so she will ask for reimbursement afterwards. Heather explained that the Heritage Room does not have centerpieces for the tables that we can use, so she asked if she could purchase some flowers to put on the tables. The board said yes. She has some votive candles that she will put on the tables also.
- 7.12 County Charter (Michael) – see 1a.

## 8. **Section Reports**

- 8.1 Family Law (Meredith Gerhart) - We had our monthly section meeting yesterday (4/14), and it was a very brief meeting. We discussed upcoming calendar changes at FJC with the judge’s motion calendars and dependency calendars moving to Fridays (from Wednesdays), updates to the court’s website, and that Comm. Kortokrax is taking over the civil protection order compliance review hearings in June. The Clerk’s Office also provided an update that they might be getting two new FTE, which might allow the Clerk’s Office to reopen to in-person services for a few hours each day at each campus.
- 8.2 Pro Bono (Jenna Norden) – Jenna provided an update via email that Sound Legal Aid’s Annual Breakfast is Wednesday May 20, 2026, at 7 AM at the Heritage Room. I think it would be great if there was good TCBA board member turnout. I am hoping that TCBA can send out another email reminding folks of the event/how to sign up now that we are closer in time to the event.
- 8.3 Young Lawyers (Devin Kohr & Peter Lindgren) – A lunch meeting is scheduled for next week. The next swearing-in ceremony is on May 1 at 1:30 p.m.
- 8.4 Criminal Law (Rosemary Fitzgerald & Jenna Norden) – Rosemary and Jenna organized a Criminal Law section CLE on April 8 CLE. It was well attended with approximately 30 people. Marie will ask Christopher Taylor if he is interested in co-chairing this section.
- 8.5 Real Estate, Land Use, and Environmental Law (Kelly Wood) – No report. Kelly Wood is not a TCBA member. Marie will ask Kevin Hayes if he is interested in chairing this section.
- 8.6 Diversity and Inclusion (Susan Pai) – Johanna Martinez is working on getting the TC Mentorship Program up and running and the D&I Section is waiting to hear from the board on two matters: Active bench portrait and welcome sign at TCSC both buildings and the CLE with Susan Coskey.

## 9. **Additions to agenda**

- 9.1 Bill thanked Joe and Jeffrey for providing the food/drinks for the meeting and John for providing the meeting space.

## 10. **Announcements**

- 11. **Date/location of next meeting:** May 13, 2026, hosted by Marie Docter & Jerry Gray at John’s Office

- 12. **Adjourn** 7:20 p.m.