

**OFFICIAL
MINUTES
STATE BAR OF TEXAS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Wednesday, June 19, 2024 – 1:00 p.m. CDT**

**Hilton Anatole
Wedgwood Ballroom
2201 N. Stemmons Fwy.
Dallas, TX 75207**

A. Call to Order at 1:00 p.m. CDT from Chair of the Board Kennon Lily Wooten

B. Roll Call from Executive Director Trey Apffel

Present:

Executive Director Trey Apffel*, Immediate Past Chair of the Board Chad Baruch*, President-elect Steve Benesh, Cade Browning, Jerry Bullard*, Elizabeth Sandoval Cantu, Luis Cavazos, Jason Charbonnet, Craig Cherry, Kelly-Ann Clarke, Jeff Cochran, David Courreges, Tom Crosley, Kenda Culpepper*, General Counsel Ross Fischer*, Immediate Past President Laura Gibson, Bob Goss*, Pierre Grosdidier*, August Harris, Britney Harrison, Noelle Hicks, Matthew Hill, Sonya Hoskins*, Forrest Huddleston, Rakhi Israni*, Krisi Kastl, Lori Kern, Senior Justice Debra Lehrmann*, Chief Justice Rebeca Martinez*, TYLA President-elect Hisham Masri, Judge Jesse McClure III*, Dwight McDonald, Kimberly Naylor, Rosalind Perez, Chris Pineda, TYLA President Laura Pratt, Judge Jason Pulliam*, Shannon Quadros, TYLA Immediate Past President Michael Ritter, Audie Sciumbato, G. David Smith, Paul K. Stafford, Alex Stelly, Jr., Nitin Sud, Carlo Taboada, Radha Thiagarajan, President Cindy Tisdale, Dr. Martin Tobey, Robert Tobey, Aaron Tobin, Michael Vasquez, Stephen Venzor, Brandy Wingate Voss*, Chair of the Board Kennon Lily Wooten, Michael Wynne, Justice Evan Young*

Excused Absence:

Bill Kroger, Rudy Metayer, Lawrence Morales, Chris Popov, John Sloan

**Nonvoting member*

C. Invocation by Director Britney Harrison on behalf of Rudy Metayer

D. Pledge to the U.S. and Texas Flags by Director Dwight McDonald

E. Remarks from General Public

Members of the public were given the opportunity to comment during the meeting. One public member, Steve Fischer, signed up to speak by Zoom and comments were given. One public member, Tonya Parks, signed up to speak in person and comments were given.

F. Report from Chair of the Board Kennon Lily Wooten

Chair of the Board Kennon Lily Wooten called for a motion and a second to approve the consent agenda with the removal of Item C3-e(1) regarding the appointment of Katie Fillmore. Director Dwight McDonald made such motion. Seconded by Director Jason Charbonnet. No discussion; motion carried.

Chair of the Board Wooten provided a general report and overview of the Bar year.

Chair of the Board Wooten presented Director Robert Tobey the Outstanding 3rd Year Director Award and Director Forrest Huddleston the Public Member Award.

G. Report from Executive Director Trey Apffel

Executive Director Trey Apffel provided a general report on the 1415 Lavaca Building Project, communication review processes to ensure Boudreaux compliance, the approval of the 2024-25 budget, and

updates on Bar departments. Executive Director Apffel recognized Hedy Bower, Director of Texas Bar CLE, as the 2024 Gene Cavin Award winner. Executive Director Apffel presented the quarterly Staff Excellence Award to Bree Trevino, Program Coordinator, Texas Young Lawyers Association.

H. Report from President Cindy Tisdale

President Cindy Tisdale presented Presidential Citations to Kennon Lily Wooten, Laura Pratt, Trey Apffel, Chris Ritter, Lowell Brown, Amanda Engle, Ian Steusloff, Rebecca Johnson, and Claire McDaniel.

President Tisdale provided a general report on travels and meetings, and update on the Building Planning Special Committee, and presidential initiatives Well-Being and Vacation Letter Portal. President Tisdale then gave an update on the Taskforce for Responsible AI in the Law.

President Tisdale made a motion to refer the Taskforce for Responsible AI in the Law Report to the Administration Committee for review and potential recommendations to the Board. Seconded by Director Kelly-Ann Clark. No discussion; motion carried.

I. Report from President-elect Steve Benesh

President-elect Benesh provided a general report on meetings and travels.

President-elect Benesh made a motion to consider and discuss approval of continuation of the Taskforce for Responsible AI in the Law, including approval of its roster. Seconded by Director David Courreges. No discussion; motion carried.

President-elect Benesh made a motion to consider and discuss approval of continuation of the Building Planning Special Committee, including approval of its roster, and grant authority to the committee to work with State Bar staff regarding decisions regarding modeling, repairs, and uses of space in the 1415 Lavaca Building. Seconded by Director Kelly-Ann Clarke. No discussion; motion carried.

President-elect Benesh provided an update on the approved FY 2024-25 budget as well as the dues increase that was approved for June 2025.

J. Report from Immediate Past President Laura Gibson

Immediate Past President Gibson provided an update on Succession Planning initiative.

K. Nominations & Elections Subcommittee

Immediate Past Chair Chad Baruch provided a general report on the 2024 election ballot results and indicated that the Nominations & Elections Subcommittee will make recommendations whether ballots should be paper and electronic or electronic only to the Board of Directors in 2025.

L. Audit & Finance Committee

Director Forrest Huddleston provided a report on financial reports and a general review of financial statements.

M. Administration Committee

Director Dwight McDonald provided a general report.

N. Performance Measures & Strategic Planning Subcommittee

Director David Courreges provided an update on strategic planning that will begin on July 24, 2024 at the Board of Directors Retreat. Proposed updates to the strategic plan will be submitted to the Board of Directors in January 2025 and performance measures will be presented in June 2025.

O. DCAAP Subcommittee

Director Robert Tobey provided an update on the referendum. The Supreme Court of Texas has until August 30, 2024 to approve the rules and comments.

P. Client Security Fund Subcommittee

Director Kimberly Naylor provided a general report. Fiscal year 2023-2024 totals to date are 184 applications reviewed with 105 approved for a total of \$901,758.48.

Q. New Directors Orientation Subcommittee

Director Elizabeth Sandoval Cantu provided a report on the 2024-25 New Directors Orientation that took place the morning of June 19, 2024.

R. Insurance/Member Benefits Subcommittee

Director Audie Sciumbato provided a general report.

S. Professional Development Subcommittee

Director Radha Thiagarajan provided a general report on Texas Bar CLE, Texas Bar Books, and Texas Minority Counsel Program.

T. Affordable Legal Services Subcommittee

Director G. David Smith provided a general report.

U. Section Representatives to the Board

Director Sonya Hoskins reported that section membership is up to a total section membership of 89,545 members and provided highlights on various sections.

V. Commission for Lawyer Discipline/Chief Disciplinary Counsel

Judge Monica Gonzalez provided a general report and reported that for FY 2023-24 336 complaints were resolved through 293 sanctions, and revenues collected for attorney fees was \$284,138.

W. Texas Access to Justice Commission

Harriet Miers provided a general report.

X. Texas Young Lawyers Association

Texas Young Lawyers Association President Laura Pratt provided a report on meetings, travels, and TYLA projects.

Y. Supreme Court of Texas Liaison

Senior Justice Debra Lehrmann provided a general report and reported on the status of rule changes being considered by the Court.

Z. Court of Criminal Appeals Liaison

Judge Jesse McClure III provided a general report.

AA. Judicial Section Liaison

Chief Justice Rebeca Martinez provided a general report.

BB. Federal Judicial Liaison

Judge Jason Pulliam provided a general report.

CC. Out of State Liaison

Director Rakhi Israni provided a general report.

DD. Report from General Counsel

No report was given by General Counsel Ross Fischer.

EE. Report from Chief Legal Counsel

Chief Legal Counsel Chris Ritter provided a general report on communications review for Boudreaux compliance during the open session.

1. Chair of the Board Kennon Lily Wooten recessed the open session and reconvened in closed session at 4:23 p.m. as authorized by Texas Government Code Section 551.074 for the purpose of discussing the evaluation of the general counsel and the evaluation, duties, and compensation of the executive director and by Texas Government Code Section 551.071 for the purpose of consulting with legal counsel regarding *Boudreaux v. Louisiana State Bar Association*, 86 F.4th 620 (5th Cir. 2023), *Turnbull v. Commission for Lawyer Discipline, et al.* (No. 1:23-cv-00314) (W.D. Tex.), *Washington v. State Bar of Texas et al.* (No. 1:23-cv-00526-RP) (W.D. Tex.), *Yan v. State Bar of Texas et al.* (No. 4:23-cv-758) (N.D. Tex.), *Butler v. State Bar of Texas et al.* (No. 4:23-CV-01070) (E.D. Tex.), *Robins v. State Bar of Texas, et al.* (No. 202418660) (129th District Court, Harris County), *Turnbull v. Commission for Lawyer Discipline, et al.* (No. D-1-GN-24-002025) (201st District Court, Travis County), legal matters related to 1415 Lavaca, and as authorized by Texas Government Code Section 551.074 to deliberate regarding personnel matter(s).
2. Chair of the Board Kennon Lily Wooten reconvened the open session at 5:18 p.m. During the closed session, only matters relating to consultation with legal counsel regarding the evaluation of the general counsel and the evaluation, duties, and compensation of the executive director and regarding *Boudreaux v. Louisiana State Bar Association*, 86 F.4th 620 (5th Cir. 2023), *Turnbull v. Commission for Lawyer Discipline, et al.* (No. 1:23-cv-00314) (W.D. Tex.), *Washington v. State Bar of Texas et al.* (No. 1:23-cv-00526-RP) (W.D. Tex.), *Yan v. State Bar of Texas et al.* (No. 4:23-cv-758) (N.D. Tex.), *Butler v. State Bar of Texas et al.* (No. 4:23-CV-01070) (E.D. Tex.), *Robins v. State Bar of Texas, et al.* (No. 202418660) (129th District Court, Harris County), *Turnbull v. Commission for Lawyer Discipline, et al.* (No. D-1-GN-24-002025) (201st District Court, Travis County), and legal matters related to 1415 Lavaca.
3. No action was taken in closed session.
4. **President Cindy Tisdale made a motion on behalf of the Evaluation Subcommittee, with regard to Agenda Item 23-A, to approve the recommendation for Executive Director Trey Appfel to receive a 7% increase in compensation effective June 1, 2024. Seconded by Director Laura Pratt. No discussion; motion carried.**

FF. SBOT Mission Statement

Director Noelle Hicks led the Board in reciting the mission statement.

GG. There being no further business, Chair of the Board Kennon Lily Wooten adjourned the meeting at 5:21 p.m.