



THE CANADIAN
BAR ASSOCIATION
Alberta Branch

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023 DRAFT MINUTES

March 22, 2023 12:00 pm

Via Videoconference

In attendance:

Maureen Armitage	Clinton Docken, KC	Amanda Lindberg
Laurie Baptiste	Olufunke Fasunon	Hon. Judge Indra Maharaj
Shannon Belvedere	Jillian Gamez	Michael McKinney, KC
Oluwaseun Ben-Omotehinse	Donna Gee	Jenny McMordie, KC
Lucille Birkett, KC	Meghan Golden	Sandra Meyer
Susan Borsic, KC	Britta Graversen	Renn Moodley
Teri Bougie	Stacey Haskins	Adam Norget
Rebecca Brown	Lee-Anne Hateley	Mina Okumura
Tracey Brown	David Hiebert, KC	Randall Osgood
Steeves Bujold	Tara Iles	Sandra Petersson, KC
Kimberley Buuren	Daniel Jackman	Ken Proudman
Suchetna Channan	Michelle Karasinski	Chani Samresh
Janice Cherniak	Kyle Kawanami	Sifa Serushago
Ian Clarke	Kimberley Ketsa	Miranda Sharpe
Ashley Cox	Bryan Kidder	Donna Shelley
Allan Damer	Benjamin Kormos	Latife Tekin
Meena Deccan	Nancy Kortbeek	Laura Triana
Krista Dejager	Bianca Kratt, KC	Heather Walsh
Abhishek Deore	Alexander Kubish	Marian Yuzda

1. Welcome

CBA Alberta President - Amanda Lindberg

President Amanda Lindberg confirmed quorum and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved: Meena Deccan Seconded: Michelle Karasinski

That the agenda be approved as presented.

Motion carried.

3. Approval of Minutes of March 16, 2022 AGM

Moved: Bianca Kratt, KC Seconded: Adam Norget

That the minutes of the March 16, 2022 annual general meeting be approved as circulated.

Motion carried.

4. Introductions

CBA Alberta President - Amanda Lindberg

a. Board and Executive Committee

- Amanda M. Lindberg (President), Kyle Kawanami (Treasurer), Robert Bassett (Secretary), Bianca Kratt, KC (Past President), Jillian Gamez, Patrick Heinsen, KC, Adam Norget, Israel Waive, Sania Chaudhry, Stacey Haskins, Ben Kormos, Sifa Serushago (Directors)

b. Special Guests

The Honourable Donna Shelley (retired Court of King's Bench),
The Honourable Judge Indra Maharaj of the Provincial Court of Alberta,
Past Presidents - Lucille R. Birkett, KC, Jenny McMordie, KC and David Hiebert, KC
Executive Director of Alberta Law Reform Institute Sandra Petersson, KC
Michael McKinney, KC, CBA National Board member of Alberta

i. Greetings from CBA National President Steeves Bujold

- Steeves Bujold thanked all the CBA Alberta Branch Section Chairs who serve as National Section executives and have an important role to play as a conduit between the local and national members. The work done by our members in our branches is what makes our association so exceptional and vibrant.
- His first priority for the year as the CBA National President is the independence of the judiciary. This principle is well understood and defended in Alberta; the Agenda for Justice produced by CBA Alberta ahead of the provincial election includes recommendations on judicial independence. He emphasized that, as the leaders of Canada's legal community, we must defend judicial independence when it comes under attack.
- With his second priority being diversity, Steeves envisions a future where the complete diversity of our great country would be reflected in the legal community and on the bench.
- CBA had called for the appointment of an Indigenous justice to our highest court and Steeves believes Justice O'Bonsawin will be a great asset.
- CBA National's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion committee is working really hard and closely with the Indigenous Bar Association, the Canadian Association of Black Lawyers, the South Asian Bar Association and the Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers to help and assist racialized lawyers, Indigenous lawyers, women and persons of other diverse backgrounds to prepare for judicial appointments.
- As a proud member of the 2SLGBTQ+ community and the first President of CBA with a same sex partner, Steeves has taken a particular interest in addressing the inequalities and discrimination experienced by the members of his community and non-binary and trans people in the country.
- The CBA recently released a report on access to justice for trans people and it reveals some very sobering facts, including that trans people experience many more legal problems and legal needs compared with the general population of Canada.
- The CBA National Board of Directors created an advisory group on inclusion and access to justice for trans, non-binary and gender-diverse people to advise our association on initiatives, programs and policies our association should be pursuing to address the compelling issues faced by members of the trans and non-binary communities in this country.

- Another important issue is well-being and mental health. The comprehensive report on mental health and wellness in the legal profession released by the CBA, in partnership with the Federation of Law Societies of Canada and the University de Sherbrooke, painted an alarming picture of wellness in all areas of practice. In all jurisdictions lawyers suffer from significantly higher levels of psychological distress, depression, anxiety, burnout and even suicidal ideation. The report contains several recommendations to help firms, law societies and associations like the CBA reverse these trends and help legal professionals to be as healthy as they can be. These recommendations will help guide CBA's continued work in the years ahead.
- Former CBA president Brad Regehr, the CBA's first Indigenous president, invited all members to have uncomfortable conversations regarding the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the association has developed resources for lawyers, professors and students to support our reconciliation journey. CBA is proud of The Path, the culture awareness training program. The Government of Canada is recognizing how it supports efforts to improve access to justice and fairness in our criminal justice system, and granted funding to expand The Path.
- As the largest association of legal professionals in the country, the CBA works every day to provide lawyers with the tools they need to be the best they can be. It also works to ensure that Canadian legal profession is more diverse and inclusive of everyone.

5. President's Report 2021-22

CBA Alberta President - Amanda Lindberg

- Amanda highlighted the six elements of the CBA Alberta's Strategic Plan that were identified last year which the board believes CBA Alberta should be working towards on behalf of our over 5000 members, and outlined some of the progress that we are making toward achieving this vision.
- This is the fourth year that our new Board structure has been in place, and the Board has been busy setting in place processes to ensure High Performance in Leadership, including establishing policies and processes and bringing forward the strategic plan. She also reminded the members about the upcoming nominations opening April 3 for the CBA Alberta Board and Executive positions and encouraged members to put their names forward.
- As per Steeves' comments, the National Study on the Health & Wellness Determinants of Legal Professionals in Canada, the report confirmed that the legal profession is not all right. We need to make changes at the individual, firm and profession level to improve the well-being of lawyers in Canada and CBA Alberta takes seriously its commitment to Wellness in Practice. Since the release of the recommendations in December, CBA Alberta has been meeting with other legal stakeholders including CBA National to collaborate on a response to this report to ensure members can be their best, personally and within our profession.
- A Healthy Culture within the Profession is about building civility and respect and embracing diversity. Amanda thanked the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee, for their leadership on this vision element. Over the past few years, they have developed excellent resource programs and toolkits on anti-racism and allyship. Presently they are working on expanding the Inclusive Workplace Toolkit, a pronoun resource guide, and improving accessibility.
- For CBA members to deeply value their membership, it is necessary to ensure that the members are positioned to be exemplary leaders in the profession and within the CBA. In the past, there

have been several programs to expand both membership and supports to members, including: Mentor circle pilot program for Young Lawyers, hosting of roundtable meetings with firm managing partners to discuss challenges and opportunities, universal student membership program at the University of Calgary, and a compassionate dues relief program.

- CBA Alberta has supported members' quest for Adaptive and Innovative Practices in the past year with the launch of a new search tool on our Branch website that makes it easier to find relevant content and resources, boundaryless access to Sections, giving our members option to enjoy the flexibility and choice of attending hybrid Section meetings. CBA Alberta is also excited to share that the Inns of Court program for Young Lawyers is now active in three centres: Edmonton, Calgary & Red Deer.
- Amanda welcomed Susan Borsic, KC who recently joined CBA Alberta team as the Manager, Professional Development.
- She reminded that CBA Alberta members can enhance the member value by taking advantage of a number of additional PD programs available to members at no additional cost in programs such as Leadership Forum and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion. Watch out for the upcoming webinars in May.
- CBA Alberta has been very active on the advocacy front this year and had regular meetings with Ministers and other government officials, Courts, Law Society and law schools. Our legislative and law reform committees review in great detail all bills brought before the legislature. Our Access to Justice committee curates an Access to Justice Week, and Sections participate in consultations and submissions on particular government and court initiatives. Special thanks to both our Agenda for Justice and our Voice of the Profession committees for their work to ensure that CBA's advocacy is responsive, influential and relevant.
- Our Agenda for Justice committee in particular provided countless hours of thought and research into the development of our current Agenda for Justice. The theme of the Agenda is Innovations Solutions and Resources, and it calls on government to use a lens of fair access, inclusivity, sustainability and fair outcomes to both save money and improve results in our justice system. The Agenda provides suggestions for improving legal aid, makes the case for unified family court, greater support for specialized courts and support for Justice Digital and other innovations that will help modernize the court. It reminds the government of their duty to support judicial independence and urges them to commit to ongoing civic education for MLAs as well as the public. Amanda encouraged members to take a look at the Agenda for Justice.

6. Treasurer's Report

CBA Alberta Treasurer – Kyle Kawanami

Presentation of 2021-22 Financial Statements

- The auditors provided a clean audit report, noting no deficiencies. There were no changes in accounting policies or material differences in significant management estimates for doubtful accounts, legal contingencies, amortization, or impairment assessments. The auditor also asserted that the going concern assumption is appropriate for the Branch as there is nothing indicating an inability of the organization to continue at least 12 months.
- CBA Alberta ended the 2021-22 fiscal year with \$4,119,134 in net assets and \$1,132,150 in restricted funds, representing 6 months operating budget in case of business closure.
- Revenue for the 2021-22 fiscal year was \$1,917,575 and expenses were \$1,610,675 before Gain/Loss on investments and Amortization, resulting in a net surplus of \$108,290.
- The continuation of the pandemic greatly impacted the Branch's ability to deliver its planned activities, although we slowly saw a return to some in-person events, including Section meetings in the latter part of the year, resulting in increased expenses. We also

paid a share of the ongoing website revision project. The Section expenses shown in the statements are direct expenses for meetings and Section executive meetings and travel, and do not include the overhead costs for running Sections, including office rent, staff and webcasting equipment, which are included in administrative and personnel expenses.

- The CBA Alberta approach is to be prudent with expense and to watch changes in revenue carefully. The Board has adopted a new strategic plan for the Branch, and the reserves give the Branch the resources and the opportunity to invest in the changes necessary to assist members to adjust to new realities post-pandemic, and to greatly enhance member value going forward.

Approval of 2022-23 Auditor

Moved: Kyle Kawanami Seconded: Michelle Karasinski

That CBA Alberta appoint MNP LLP as the auditors for 2022-23.

Motion carried.

7. Presentation by Dr. Kimberley Amirault-Ryan.

Excellence – Winner's traits

8. Adjournment – 1:33 PM

Moved: Jillian Gamez Seconded: Teri Bougie

That the meeting do now adjourn.

Motion carried.