

Vermont Bar Association

Board of Bar Managers

Friday, April 19, 2024

2:00 PM

VBA Office And Via zoom

Present: Jessica Bullock, Lisa Campion, Rich Cassidy, Josh Diamond, Judith Dillon, Pam Eaton, Jordana Levine, Andrew Manitsky, Tim Tomasi, Matt Valerio, Alfonso Villegas, Breanna Weaver

Staff: Bob Paolini, Lisa Maxfield, Mary Ashcroft, Kim Velk

1. Call to Order: President Dillon called the meeting to order at 2:01 PM.

2. Minutes: There was one amendment: the first sentence of the second paragraph on page 2 should read: "Judith had a brief meeting with Teri Corsones and the judiciary". With that change, upon motion made by Matt Valerio and seconded by Tim Tomasi, the minutes were unanimously approved as corrected. Andrew Manitsky abstained from voting.

3. Treasurer's report: Lisa Maxfield reported membership renewals are doing well—we are only about \$7,400 shy of our target. LRS percentage income is also doing well. Lisa reminded the Board that CLE income is down compared to last year as we did not conduct a notary public training this year. We have not yet received a final bill from The Hilton for our mid-year meeting--it is possible that we may make a profit. On the expense side, all expenses are within range. Upon motion made by Matt Valerio, seconded by Andrew Manitsky, and unanimously voted, the Treasurer's report was approved.

4. Emerging Issues:

None.

5. Reports:

A. Board Committee Reports:

i. Operations: Did not meet

ii. Membership/program and planning: Jordana reported that the committee met briefly to check in with staff and will have a larger discussion in May.

iii. Governance: Did not meet.

iv. Workforce Development: Alfonso said that the committee met and heard a report from Mary Ashcroft on the VBA/VLGS Lawyer Incubator Project. Of the 27 graduates of the Project, 23 are still practicing in Vermont. Incubator lawyers participate in a number of access to justice cases through the VBA's Low Bono Projects. Alfonso reported that Law Day programs will be held in Washington and Chittenden

Counties. VLS student and alumni should be reminded to review the VBA classifieds for job openings. There was discussion of linking new lawyers with retiring attorneys who wish to turn over their law firms. Josh urged the VBA to do more with UVM students who are in prelaw and considering a career in the law.

v. Executive Committee: Did not meet.

vi. Access to Justice/Flat Fee Study Committee: Richard Cassidy said the committee met on 4-15-24. They discussed how to promote more legal services to low- and mid-income Vermonters. The VBA should consider offering a CLE program on alternate fee structures including flat fee agreements. VBA has established a connect page for A2J issues. The committee will work to support the low bono work that the VBA does and serve as the VBA resource to A2J Coalition.

B. President's Report: President Dillon reported on the following:

--She received positive feedback from MYM attendees, and thanked the staff for their work

--The Supreme Court has established an AI committee, and Judith appointed Ott Lindstrom to serve as VBA representative to the committee.

--She participated in meetings of the A2J/flat fee committee and workforce development committee.

--Yesterday Judith co-presented with Heather Devine at a U-32 history class. She encouraged all counties to offer a Law Day school program, as the Rutland County Bar has done for decades.

--At the monthly meeting of county bar presidents and section chairs, one attorney raised the need for litigants and attorneys to have places in courthouses where they can nurse babies and express milk safely and comfortably. The judiciary seemed surprised that children would be in court but will look into suitable places in each courthouse. Discussion ensued by VBA board members. Judith will continue to pursue this.

C. Executive Director's Report: Bob Paolini reported on the following activities:

--The Legislature is nearing the end of the session. Two trust bills have moved out of Senate Judiciary. Funding of A2J programs did not fare well in the Senate Appropriations, as the judicial system spending was reduced from \$22 million as passed by the House to \$8.5 in the Senate version. The A2J Coalition's funding attempt was eliminated, and states attorneys and judiciary requests were reduced. The Human Rights Commission, Vermont Legal Aid, and Crime Victims Services received no additional funding. May 10th is the target for adjournment.

--Judge Toor is retiring at the end of June, and the VBA will assist with a function honoring the judge.

--The Environmental Law section will host a bench bar meeting at which Judge Durkin will be honored and thanked.

--Bob has been invited to talk to the Senate Judiciary Committee about the judicial nominating process and proposed changes.

--Bob reminded the VBA Board's Operations committee that it needs to start discussing the VBA budget for next fiscal year.

D. Division & Section Reports:

--Young Lawyers Division: Pam Eaton reported that Justin Brown is the new YLD chair.

--Women's Division: Breanna said that the division is trying to schedule a series highlighting women in the judiciary. The committee has also been in touch with Kim and Laura about possible CLE events. The Women's Division supports the proposal for nursing areas in every courthouse.

--Government and Non-Profit Division: No report.

E. Staff Reports:

Kim Velk has posted a long report about the mid-year meeting on the website. All went well. The spring VBA Journal will be out soon. Kim and Laura have started planning for the annual meeting at Lake Morey in September. They are looking into a CLE program on collections on judgments.

Mary Ashcroft said that the VBA/VLGS Incubator Project had lost 4 lawyers recently; three had taken jobs with firms or government agencies in Vermont, and one dropped out due to health reasons. She needs ideas for theme and panels for the Pro Bono Conference to be held this coming October. Ideas suggested were basics of contract law, the basics of divorce law, and human trafficking. Mary is awaiting word on 3 grants she has applied for.

Lisa Maxfield is hoping to work soon with the Operations committee on the coming year's fiscal budget.

F. VBF Report: Rich Cassidy reported that The VBF's executive Director, Jose Herrera is resigning as of 4-26-24. VBA staff, particularly Bob and Lisa have offered to cover the VBF for a bit. The Chair of the VBF expressed gratitude to Jose for his work over the past 18 months.

G. ATJ Coalition: See discussion above in ED's report about A2J Coalition legislative funding attempts.

6. Action:

A. Enrollments: Upon motion by Matt, seconded by Andrew, and unanimously approved, the following were enrolled as new VBA members: Legal members: Alexander Canzoneri, Jason Gerrol, Kai Hardy, Ashley Johns, Richard Segal, and William

Strehlow; Law Student Associate Member: Devin Brennan; Licensed in Another State: Tommi Mandell.

B. Statement Condemning Personal Attacks on Judges: In response to a statement issued by the American Bar Association, Andrew Manitsky and Josh Diamond drafted a VBA statement for consideration. [See attached] Andrew and Josh stated that the judiciary needs our support. Upon motion made by Rich and seconded by Matt, the statement was unanimously adopted.

7. New business:

A. June Board and Staff Retreat: Lisa is looking into The Woods Lodge in Northfield—the Woods as the location. Josh is in charge of the program and will work with Bob and Lisa on this. There will be more information at the May Board meeting.

B. Survey on Retirement Planning: The results are being compiled into a report by the Workforce Development Committee. There were 361 responses and much good information. The highlight of the survey was that 75% of those retiring felt satisfied with their career in the law.

C. Bob introduced Lisa Campion, who was elected to the Board at the MYM to take office at the close of the annual meeting.

Old business:

A. Judith encouraged Board members to attend Board meetings in person if possible. The VBA conference room is rather small, so other venues in other parts of the state will be explored.

B. Erin Gallivan, Vice Chair of the Board of Bar Examiners, asked whether the VBA Board should include a representative from the BBE. After discussion, it was generally felt that another Board member was not necessary, but that periodic reports from the BBE would be useful, particularly to keep communications open about bar exam results and first year requirements for new lawyers.

C. New VBA Board committee structure: The Board reviewed the new committee structure and assignments. The memo is attached [See attached.].

9. Adjourn:

Upon motion made by Andrew, seconded by Pam and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned at 3:57PM.

Respectfully submitted: VBA Staff