

MINUTES

Benchers

Date:	Thursday, October 30, 2025	
Time:	12:30 pm	
Location:	Law Society Offices and via Videoconference	
Present:	Kyle Dear, President Ken Mandzuik, KC, Vice-President Gerri Wiebe, KC, Past President Carmen Nedohin, Officer-at-Large Kassy Baker Kathrine Basarab Gordon Daman Serena Ehrmantraut Patrick Fortier Jason Gisser Nicole Hamilton Sharyne Hamm	Simon Jack Teresa Jaenen Tehani Jainarine Dr. Richard Jochelson Timothy Kurbis Mathieu Lafrenière Rhea Majewski Kirsten Nynych Trent Sholdice Leah Unruh Joshua Weinstein Deanna Wilson
Regrets:	Penny Piper	
Guests:	Erin Wilcott	
Staff:	Leah Kosokowsky Rennie Stonyk Sandra Alleyne Noelia Bernardo Pat Bourbonnais Eileen Derksen Linda Fontaine	Sharon Kravetsky Kathy Levacque Deirdre O'Reilly Sean Rivera Alissa Schacter Amy Tung Betta Wishart

Joan Holmstrom

1.0 PRESIDENT'S WELCOME AND TREATY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Ms Dear, President, called the meeting to order at 12:40 pm. Benchers, guests and staff were welcomed to the meeting, including newly elected student bencher, Kirsten Nynych. Treaty 1 lands were acknowledged with gratitude.

2.0 IN MEMORIAM

Benchers observed a moment of silence for Donald Sigurd Fjeldsted, Edwin Kenneth Morrison, Bjorn Neil Johannson and the Honourable Morris Kaufman.

3.0 CONSENT AGENDA

3.1 Minutes of September 4, 2025 Meeting

Benchers considered the minutes of the September 4, 2025 bencher meeting.

3.2 Governance Policies – Housekeeping Amendments

Benchers considered the proposed amendments to End 2(c) of the Governance Policies.

3.3 Report of the Complaints Investigation Committee

Benchers received for information the report of the Complaints Investigation Committee.

3.4 Report of the Discipline Committee

Benchers received for information the report of the Discipline Committee dated October 20, 2025.

Motion: That the consent agenda items be approved as presented.

MOVED: Mr. Lafrenière
Seconded: Mr. Gisser
Carried unanimously.

4.0 PRESENTATION

4.1 Request to Address Benchers

Benchers considered a member's request for leave to appear at their December meeting. The request was unanimously denied.

5.0 EXECUTIVE REPORTS

5.1 President's Report

Benchers received for information Ms Dear's report dated October 21, 2025.

5.2 Chief Executive Officer's Report

Benchers received for information Ms Kosokowsky's report dated October 21, 2025. Ms Kosokowsky advised that a suspended member has now filed three separate applications for leave to appeal his suspension to the Supreme Court of Canada. Counsel will be retained to file a response on behalf of the Law Society. Benchers were reminded that the member had recently been declared a vexatious litigant by the Manitoba Court of Appeal.

Benchers were also advised that another member, who briefly practised in Manitoba and is currently administratively suspended in Ontario, is seeking judicial review of a decision of the Complaints Review Commissioner. The Law Society will be retaining counsel on this matter.

5.3 2025-2028 Activity Plan – October 2025

Benchers received for information an update on the 2025-2028 Activity Plan for the October 2025 period. Ms. Schacter highlighted some of the activities currently underway to advance the desired outcomes within the four pillars of the Strategic Plan.

6.0 DISCUSSION/DECISION

6.1 Electronic Banking Initiative – Approval of Finalized Rule Amendments

Benchers considered a memorandum prepared by Ms Stonyk, dated, October 21, 2025, which invited benchers to approve Rule amendments at Part 2: Division 8 – Members and Division 4 – Financial Accountability in final form in both English and French. It was recommended that the rules come into effect on November 13, 2025 to coincide with newly enacted amendments to *The Real Estate Services Act*.

Benchers were reminded that adoption of these amendments will permit all law firms with trust accounts to electronically transfer trust funds, provided they are in compliance with the new rules. Benchers were advised that Practice Direction 03-02 will be updated to reflect the rule amendments, and guidelines and learning materials are also being prepared for the profession. Banking institutions will receive notice of these practice changes as well.

Motion: That the amendments to Part 2: Division 8 – Members and Division 4 – Financial Accountability of the Rules be approved in both English and French as presented and take effect on November 13, 2025.

MOVED: Mr. Kurbis
Seconded: Ms Hamilton
Carried unanimously.

Ms Baker joined the meeting at 1:15 pm.

6.2 Appointment of Vice-Chair of the Indigenous Advisory Committee

Benchers considered a memorandum prepared by Ms Wishart, dated October 21, 2025, which recommended that benchers endorse the appointment of Sacha Paul as vice-chairperson of the Indigenous Advisory Committee. Benchers were reminded that Mr. Paul has been an appointed member of the committee since 2023 and previously served as an ex

officio member of the committee during his tenure as president and vice-president of the Society.

Ms Wishart advised that at the recommendation of the IAC, she and Ms Saunders had met with Elder Sherry Copenace to confirm her interest in filling one of two existing vacancies on the committee. Benchers were advised that Ms Copenace has confirmed her willingness to serve on the committee if appointed.

Motion: That Mr. Paul be appointed vice-chairperson of the Indigenous Advisory Committee and that Ms Copenace be appointed to serve as a member of the committee.

MOVED: Mr. Weinstein
Seconded: Ms Ehrmantraut
Carried unanimously.

7.0 MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

7.1 Rule of Law – Campaign Update

Benchers received for information a memorandum prepared by Ms Kosokowsky, dated October 22, 2025, which provided an update on the status of the Rule of Law Campaign. Benchers were advised that the launch of the campaign had been postponed to November 4, 2025.

7.2 Access to Justice Initiative – Update

Benchers received for information a briefing note prepared by Ms Kalinowsky dated October 17, 2025. Ms Schacter confirmed that a report summarizing the data collected through stakeholder consultations will be shared with benchers at their December meeting.

7.3 FLSC Council Report – October 2025

Benchers considered a report prepared by Ms. Troup, dated October 20, 2025, which provided a detailed summary of the Federation Council meeting held in Winnipeg on October 18, 2025.

7.4 CPLED Report – October 2025

Benchers received for information a memorandum prepared by Ms Worthington, CEO of the Canadian Centre for Professional Legal Education, dated October 20, 2025, which provided an analysis of the August 2025 Capstone Evaluation results for all participants and also provided a separate data analysis for Manitoba candidates.

Benchers were advised that the Law Society of British Columbia has confirmed that it will be adopting the PREP program as its pre-call education program, effective September 2026. This is expected to result in a significant reduction in tuition fees for students and will ensure uniform training and competency requirements across the western provinces.

8.0 COMMITTEE REPORTS

8.1 Practice and Ethics Committee

Mr. Lafrenière provided a brief report on the meeting of the Practice and Ethics Committee which had been held on October 10, 2025. Benchers were reminded that the committee had been tasked with reviewing and providing feedback on proposed amendments to the duty to report provisions contained within the Federation's Model Code of Professional Conduct. A report with recommendations will be presented to benchers at their December meeting.

Ms Wilcott joined the meeting at 1:40 pm and left the meeting at 1:45 pm.

9.0 IN CAMERA

Benchers were advised that there were three matters on the agenda which would be discussed *in camera*.

Motion: That the meeting proceed *in camera*.

MOVED: Ms Wiebe
Seconded: Mr. Kurbis
Carried unanimously.

9.1 With Staff

Benchers discussed matters relating to the Law Society's intervention in an action commenced by the Law Society of British Columbia which challenges the constitutionality of the new *The Legal Professions Act*.

Mr. Onchulenko joined the meeting at 2:05 pm. Mr. Jack was excused from the meeting at that time.

9.2 With Staff

Benchers considered a memorandum prepared by Ms Kosokowsky, dated October 24, 2025, which provided a detailed report and analysis of matters relating to amendments to the Assessment Policy of the National Committee on Accreditation.

Motion: That the meeting proceed out of camera.

MOVED: Ms Wiebe
Seconded: Mr. Gisser
Carried unanimously.

Motion: That the Law Society indicate its support for the amendments proposed by the National Committee on Accreditation to its Assessment Policy.

MOVED: Mr. Mandzuik
Seconded: Mr. Lafrenière
Carried unanimously.

9.3 Without Staff

With the exception of Mr. Onchulenko, all guests and staff were excused from the meeting at 2:45 pm. Dr. Jochelson was also excused from the meeting at this time.

Motion: That the meeting proceed *in camera*.

MOVED: Ms Wiebe
Seconded: Ms Nedohin
Carried unanimously.

Benchers participated in a confidential *in camera* discussion.

Motion: That the meeting proceed out of camera.

MOVED: Mr. Kurbis
Seconded: Ms Hamm
Carried unanimously.

Motion: That the Motions discussed *in camera* be adopted and approved.

MOVED: Mr. Kurbis
SECONDED: Ms Hamm
Carried unanimously

10.0 FOR INFORMATION

Benchers considered the materials provided for information.

There being no further business, Ms Dear called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:10 pm.

MOVED: Ms Basarab