



MINUTES

Benchers

Date: Thursday, June 26, 2025

Time: 1:00 pm

Location: Law Society Offices and via Videoconference

Present:

Kyle Dear, President	Sharyne Hamm
Ken Mandzuik, KC, Vice-President	Simon Jack
Gerri Wiebe, KC, Past President	Teresa Jaenen
Carmen Nedohin, Officer-at-Large	Tehani Jainarine
Kassy Baker	Mathieu Lafrenière
Kathrine Basarab	Rhea Majewski
Gordon Daman	Penny Piper
Serena Ehrmantraut	Trent Sholdice
Patrick Fortier	

Regrets:

Kalanit Faingold	Leah Unruh
Dr. Richard Jochelson	Joshua Weinstein
Timothy Kurbis	Deanna Wilson

Guests:

Louis-Martin Beaumont	Anne Gregory
Jacqueline Boily	Jonathan Herman
Markus Buchart	David Krowiak
Cody Buhay	Lynda Troup

Staff:

Leah Kosokowsky	Christopher Donaldson
Rennie Stonyk	Linda Fontaine
Sandra Alleyne	Joan Holmstrom
Noelia Bernardo	Deirdre O'Reilly
Pat Bourbonnais	Sean Rivera

Tana Christianson
Eileen Derksen

Alissa Schacter
Simon Young

1.0 PRESIDENT'S WELCOME AND TREATY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Ms Dear, President, called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm. Benchers, guests and staff were welcomed to the meeting, including newly appointed bencher Rhea Majewski, Louis-Martin Beaumont and Jonathan Herman, Vice-President and Chief Executive Officer, respectively, of the Federation of Law Societies of Canada. Treaty 1 lands were acknowledged with gratitude.

2.0 IN MEMORIAM

Benchers observed a moment of silence for Frank Albert Gustav Johnson and John David Anderson.

3.0 CONSENT AGENDA

3.1 Minutes of May 15, 2025 Meeting

Benchers considered the minutes of the May 15, 2025 bencher meeting.

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

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

4.0 PRESENTATION TO STUDENT PRIZE WINNERS

4.1 Presentation to Students with the Four Highest Standings in Third Year Law

Congratulations were extended to the following University of Manitoba, Faculty of Law students for having attained the four highest standings in third year law:

Margaret Hypatia Crawford Award for the highest standing in third year law	Lisa Haydey
Second highest standing in third year law	Laraib Khaliqdina
Third highest standing in third year law	Cody Buhay
Fourth highest standing in third year law	David Krowiak

Benchers were advised that each award recipient had received the prize money associated with their award.

Mr. Buhay and Mr. Krowiak were excused from the meeting at 1:15 pm.

5.0 GUEST PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Beaumont brought greetings on behalf of Teresa Donnelly, President of the Federation of Law Societies of Canada. He provided a detailed report on the role of the Federation and also provided updates on key Federation initiatives which support the legal profession and protect the public interest, including: licensing internationally trained lawyers through the NCA process; anti-money laundering and terrorist financing; the challenge to federal tax laws within the *Income Tax Act* which threaten lawyer-client confidentiality and regulatory independence; CanLII's development of new AI tools to improve access to legal information; national discipline standards; supporting lawyer well-being; and reconciliation with Canada's Indigenous peoples. Mr. Beaumont advised that the Federation was pleased to provide funding to support the Rule of Law public education campaign.

Mr. Herman, Chief Executive Officer of the FLSC, advised that the Federation's new five-year strategic plan will focus on: transitioning the NCA to a competency-based assessment process; engagement with the Financial Action Task Force on the evaluation of anti-money

laundering practices adopted by law societies; and developing strategies which support the independence of the legal profession and the Rule of Law.

Ms Dear thanked Mr. Beaumont and Mr. Herman for their remarks.

Motion: That Mr. Beaumont be appointed an Honourary Member of the Law Society of Manitoba.

MOVED: Mr. Mandzuik
Seconded: Ms Basarab
Carried unanimously.

6.0 EXECUTIVE REPORTS

6.1 President's Report

Benchers received for information Ms Dear's report dated June 17, 2025.

6.2 Chief Executive Officer's Report

Benchers received for information Ms Kosokowsky's report dated June 17, 2025. Ms Kosokowsky advised that the appeal of a court action commenced by a member against the Law Society and several staff members which had been struck by the Court of King's Bench, was denied by the Manitoba Court of Appeal and he was subsequently declared a vexatious litigant by the Court. Benchers were advised that the member has now sought leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada. An agent in Ottawa has been retained to represent the Law Society and staff.

6.3 2022-2025 Strategic Plan – Final Report

Ms Kosokowsky reviewed with benchers the final report on the goals and objectives which had been set within the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. Benchers were advised that there are some objectives within the report which remain "in progress" or are "not yet started". Many of these objectives have been incorporated within the new 2025-2028 Activity Plan.

6.4 Activity Plan – 2025-2028 Strategic Plan

Ms Kosokowsky reviewed the new Activity Plan which has been drafted by staff flowing from the priorities set by benchers within the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan. Timelines have been set within this plan for the completion of activities and staff responsibilities have been adjusted to ensure that there are sufficient resources available to meet proposed timelines. Benchers were advised that this report will be updated regularly and presented for their review at each bencher meeting.

It was recommended that consideration be given to amending the Activity Plan at Page 26 to reference “racialized/equity deserving students” rather than “racialized/equity seeking students”. It was also suggested that the Strategic Plan be made available to benchers at each meeting to ensure that decisions are consistent with strategic objectives.

Benchers took a health break at 2:00 pm, at which time Mr. Buchart left the meeting. The meeting was reconvened at 2:05 pm.

7.0 DISCUSSION/DECISION

7.1 Bencher By-Election Results

Benchers considered a memorandum prepared by Ms Kosokowsky, dated June 12, 2025, which reported on the results of the bencher by-election which was held on June 10, 2025 to fill two vacancies in the Winnipeg Electoral District. Benchers were asked to affirm the appointment of the two leading candidates in the by-election to fill these vacancies, namely, Jason Gisser and Nicole Hamilton.

Motion: That Mr. Gisser and Ms Hamilton be appointed to fill the two existing vacancies in the Winnipeg Electoral District.

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

Benchers were reminded that when approving the membership of all Law Society standing and special committees at their May 2025 meeting, placeholders had been set for the successful by-election candidates. It was confirmed that Mr. Gisser would serve on the Admissions and Education Committee, the Admissions and Educations Appeals and Trust

Safety Appeals Sub-Committee and the Discipline Committee, and that Ms Hamilton would serve on the Discipline Committee and the Practice and Ethics Committee.

7.2 Rule of Law Campaign

Benchers considered a memorandum prepared by Ms Kosokowsky, dated June 18, 2025, which provided an update on the status of the Rule of Law Campaign. Benchers were advised that 12 jurisdictions have confirmed their participation and funding for Phase I of the campaign, and that the Federation of Law Societies of Canada will also provide a monetary contribution to the campaign. The cost of Phase I is expected to be approximately \$22,000 per participating jurisdiction, with the exception of New Brunswick which has capped its contribution at \$15,000.

Benchers were advised that it is anticipated that the cost of Phase II of the Campaign will be \$2 million and while the contributions from each law society have not been confirmed, it is expected that the Law Society's share could range from \$40,000 to \$400,000. Benchers were asked to approve funding of up to \$400,000 for Phase II of the Campaign.

Motion: That funding for Phase II of the Rule of Law Campaign be capped at \$400,000 and that the proceeds be drawn from the annual statutory grant received from the Manitoba Law Foundation earmarked for education.

MOVED: Ms Nedohin
Seconded: Ms Wiebe
Carried unanimously.

8.0 MONITORING REPORTS

8.1 Reimbursement Fund

Benchers considered a monitoring report prepared by Ms Christianson, dated June 12, 2025, which provided a detailed report on the purpose and operation of the Reimbursement Fund.

8.2 National Discipline Standards

Benchers considered a monitoring report prepared by Ms Kosokowsky, dated June 16, 2025, which provided a detailed report on the Law Society's performance in the area of complaints

investigation and discipline as against national standards. Benchers were reminded that the standards are aspirational and instances where a standard has not been met, it is primarily due to practice efficiencies and procedural fairness which the Society would not be inclined to compromise in order to meet that standard.

9.0 MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

9.1 FLSC Council Report – June 2025

Benchers received for information Ms Troup's report, dated June 10, 2025, which provided a detailed report on the Federation Council meeting which was held in Ottawa on June 9, 2025.

9.2 Insurance Levy 2025-2026

Benchers received for information a memorandum prepared by Ms Kosokowsky, dated June 11, 2025, which reported on the setting of the insurance levy for the period July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 at \$1,839 per practising member as recommended by the Society's actuaries.

9.3 The Path - Compliance and Feedback Summary

Benchers considered a memorandum prepared by Ms Kosokowsky and Ms Derksen, dated June 17, 2025, which provided a detailed report on member participation in The Path. Benchers were advised that an analysis of the feedback received from participants will aid the Indigenous Advisory Committee in its consideration of future educational opportunities. Once it is clear that members have consistently satisfied the educational component required under Call to Action 28 through other providers at their time of call, a decision will need to be made on whether participation in The Path should remain mandatory.

Mr. Fortier was excused from the meeting at 2:30 pm.

9.4 Removal of Trade Barriers Legislation – The Fair Trade in Canada (Internal Trade Mutual Recognition) Act

Benchers received for information Ms Kosokowsky's memorandum, dated June 13, 2025, which confirmed that *The Fair Trade in Canada (Internal Trade Mutual Recognition) Act* does not

apply to professions, such as the legal profession, which are subject to oversight under *The Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act*.

9.5 CPLED – June 2025 Update

Benchers received for information a memorandum prepared by Ms Worthington, CEO of the Canadian Centre for Professional Legal Education, dated June 16, 2025, which reported on the cross-jurisdictional and local March 2025 Capstone Evaluations by students participating in the PREP program. The statistics reflect a noticeable improvement in the pass rates of NCA students which is largely attributable to their participation in the legal research and writing course delivered by CPLED.

10.0 FOR INFORMATION

Benchers considered the materials provided for information.

There being no further business, Ms Dear adjourned the meeting at 2:35 pm.