

President Rombach called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m. on October 7, 2015 in the Opal Room at the Suburban Collection Showplace in Novi, Michigan.

Commissioners present:

Danielle Mason Anderson
Dennis M. Barnes
Danielle M. Brown
Lori A. Buiteweg, President-Elect
Timothy J. Burns
Shauna L. Dunning
Robert C. Gardella
Stephen J. Gobbo
Jennifer M. Grieco, Treasurer
James W. Heath
Fred K. Herrmann
Andrea Irons
Mark W. Jane
C. Thomas Ludden
Thomas E. McCarthy Jr.

Hon. Maureen M. McGinnis
Lawrence P. Nolan, Vice President
Jules B. Olsman
Colleen A. Pero
Daniel D. Quick
Victoria A. Radke
Hon. Michael J. Riordan
Donald G. Rockwell, Secretary
Thomas C. Rombach, President
Hope V. Shovein
Richard J. Siriani
Gregory L. Ulrich
Vanessa Peterson Williams

Commissioners absent and excused: Commissioners Robert J. Buchanan, E. Christopher Johnson Jr., C. Thomas Ludden, and Hon. Michael J. Riordan.

State Bar Staff present:

Janet Welch, Executive Director
Marge Bossenbery, Executive Coordinator
Candace Crowley, Director, External Development
Peter Cunningham, Director, Governmental Relations
Cliff Flood, General Counsel
Danon Goodrum-Garland, Director, Professional Services Division
James Horsch, Director, Finance and Administration Division
Robert Mathis, Pro Bono Attorney
Samantha Meinke, Communication Manager
Aleisha Ruswincel, Assistant Counsel
Jeanette Socia, Human Resources Manager
Laurin Roberts Thomas, Assistant Counsel
Nkrrumah Wynn-Johnson, Assistant General Counsel
Anne Vrooman, Director, Research and Development

Guests

Hon. Clinton Canady III
Lynn Chard, Executive Director, ICLE
Bonnie George
Elizabeth Johnson

Hon. David A. Perkins
Reginald Turner
Dana M. Warnez
Erane C. Washington

Consent Agenda

Mr. Rombach asked the Board if there were any items that needed to be removed from the consent agenda. There were none.

The Board received the minutes from the July 24, 2105 Board of Commissioners meeting.

The Board received the recent activities of the Executive Director.

The Board received FY 2015 Financial Reports through August 2015.

The Board received Client Protection Fund Claims and the Unauthorized Practice of Law Claims.

The Board received Intellectual Property Law Section bylaw amendment.

The Board received summaries of the Michigan State Bar Foundation Lease Renewal and the Xerox High Speed Copier contract.

A motion was offered and supported to approve the consent agenda. The motion was approved.

Mr. Rombach recognized three of the incoming board members, Ms. Erane Washington, Judge Clinton Canady, and Ms. Dana Warnez.

COMMISSIONER COMMITTEES

Finance, Jennifer M. Grieco, Chairperson

Ms. Grieco provided the Board with the FY 2015 Financial and Investment report through August 31, 2015.

Ms. Grieco informed the Board that Mr. Horsch is looking into the cost benefit analysis of having the SBM funds managed by an outside investment manager. The Finance Committee will continue to explore this option during the upcoming year.

Ms. Grieco reported that Mr. Horsch and Mr. Flood interviewed four insurance agents to replace the current SBM insurance agent in an effort to improve risk management options. They have selected Dan Hale of the Marsh & McLennan agency and Mr. Hale will review the SBM insurance coverage and risks.

Ms. Grieco informed the Board that a new policy is being considered to increase the use of e-commerce transactions for non-dues payments, and that the proposed policy will be presented at a future meeting.

Ms. Grieco informed the Board that Ms. Roshunda Price is no longer able to be on the SBM Finance Committee. The Finance Committee recognized her service at their meeting this morning.

Ms. Grieco thanked the members of the FY 2015 Finance Committee for their work during the past year.

Audit, Jennifer M. Grieco, Chairperson

Ms. Grieco informed the Board that the Audit Committee met by conference call to review year-end staff bonuses in accordance with BOC policy.

Ms. Grieco informed the Board that the auditors will be in the SBM building conducting the audit beginning October 27, 2015.

Professional Standards, Donald G. Rockwell, Chairperson

Nominations for Michigan Indian Legal Services Board of Trustees (MILS)

A motion was offered and supported to appoint Hon. Tanya S. Wagageshik and Karrie S. Wichtman to the MILS Board of Trustees to serve one year terms commencing October 1, 2015. The motion was approved.

Mr. Rockwell thanked the members of the Professional Standard Committee for their work during the past year.

Programs and Services, Lawrence P. Nolan, Chairperson

There was none.

Mr. Nolan thanked the members of the Programs and Services Committee for their work during the past year.

Public Policy, Image and Identity, Lori A. Buiteweg, Chairperson

The Board members received a written Justice Initiatives Report.

Legislation

HB 4561 (Lucido) Courts; juries; juror compensation; increase. Amends sec. 1344 of 1961 PA 236 (MCL 600.1344).

A motion was offered and supported that this legislation is Keller permissible as its subject matter relates to improving the functioning of the courts. Motion offered and supported that this is Keller permissible. The motion was approved.

A motion was offered and supported to support this legislation with the re-insertion of “not less than” and provide comment on the necessity of funding.

A motion was offered and supported to support this legislation. The motion was approved.

E-Filing System Legislation

SB 0531 (Jones) Courts; other; electronic filing system; authorize the state court administrative office to establish. Amends 1961 PA 236 (MCL 600.101 - 600.9947) by adding sec. 176 & ch. 19A.

SB 0532 (Proos) Courts; other; judicial electronic filing fund; establish. Amends 1961 PA 236 (MCL 600.101 - 600.9947) by adding sec. 176.

SB 0533 (Schuitmaker) Courts; other; electronic access to courts; allow court or court funding unit to charge certain fees. Amends 1961 PA 236 (MCL 600.101 - 600.9947) by adding sec. 1988.

A motion was offered and supported that this legislation is Keller permissible as its subject matter relates to improving the functioning of the courts. Motion offered and supported that this is Keller permissible. The motion was approved.

Ms. Buiteweg informed the Board that action on this legislation needs to be deferred for fourteen days in accordance with SBM policy. She indicated that an electronic vote would be taken on this legislation on October 14, 2015.

Ms. Buiteweg thanked the members of the Public Policy, Image and Identity Committee for their work during the past year.

President's Report, Thomas C. Rombach, President

Mr. Rombach informed the Board that Mr. Siriani received the Inaugural L. Hart Wright Award from the Taxation Section.

Ms. Buiteweg informed the Board that Mr. Rombach is receiving the Outstanding Achievement Award from the Solo and Small Firm Section.

21st Century Practice Task Force Update

Mr. Rombach provided the Board with an update on the efforts of the 21st Century Practice Task Force. He said that the next meeting of the entire Task Force is scheduled for November 12.

Mr. Rombach thanked the staff for their efforts on the work of the Task Force.

A motion was offered and supported to enter into an Executive Session to discuss the SBM short story contest, the Executive Director's contract extension, and the filling of a Board of Commissioners vacancy in District H. The Board entered into an Executive Session at 2:35 p.m. and returned into open session at 3:50 p.m.

A motion was offered and supported to approve a contract extension with Ms. Welch, Executive Director of the State Bar, under the same terms and conditions, for three years. The motion was approved.

A motion was offered and supported to appoint Hon. David A. Perkins to the Board of Commissioners to satisfy remainder of a term of a vacancy caused by the resignation of E. Christopher Johnson in District H. The vacancy is for a two years effective at the first meeting of the 2015-2016 Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Rombach asked if there were any nominations from the floor. A motion was offered and supported to close the nominations. The motion was approved.

The principal motion to appoint Judge Perkins to the Board of Commissioner was approved.

Executive Director's Report, Janet K. Welch, Executive Director

ZeekBeek Update

Ms. Welch reported that several state bar associations have signed memoranda of understanding with ZeekBeek. Ms. Welch will provide a more complete report on the enhanced member directory at the November meeting

Litigation Status Report

No report.

Representative Assembly (RA) Report, Vanessa Peterson Williams, Chairperson

Ms. Williams reported that at its October 8 meeting there will be a presentation on SBM dues, a number of amendments to court rules reviewed, the Unsung Hero and Michael Franck Awards presented, and there will be a discussion about proposed legislation for retirement age limits for judges. Ms. Williams indicated that a new RA clerk will be elected, Chief Justice Young will address the Assembly, and he will swear in the incoming Chair, Mr. Quick.

Ms. Williams thanked her Executive Team and members of the State Bar staff for their assistance during the year.

American Bar Association (ABA) Report

Mr. Turner provided the Board with a preview of the upcoming ABA Bar year.

Young Lawyers Section Report (YLS), Andrea Irons, Chairperson

Ms. Irons provided the Board with an update on the YLS.

Special Presentations

Stephen J. Gobbo, written and presented by Victoria A. Radke
E. Christopher Johnson, written and presented by Gregory L. Ulrich
C. Thomas Ludden, written and presented by Edward L. Haroutunian
Hope V. Shovein, written and presented by Andrea Irons
Vanessa Peterson Williams, written and presented by Daniel D. Quick

Recognition of President Thomas C. Rombach

Ms. Buiteweg presented Mr. Rombach with a plaque and scrapbook in appreciation for his year as President.

Comments from Commissioners

There were none.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.