



*Serving the Public. Serving the Profession.*

## **BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**Sunday, April 6, 2025**

**New Orleans**

### **\* M I N U T E S \***

President Patrick A. Talley, Jr. called the meeting to order at 4 p.m., Sunday, April 6, 2025, at the InterContinental New Orleans Hotel. Business was conducted in accordance with the agenda below.

#### **Agenda Item 1. Roll Call**

Ms. Larsen called roll and advised that the following members, who constituted a quorum, participated:

President, Patrick A. Talley, Jr.  
President-Elect, Edward J. Walters, Jr.  
Secretary, Valerie T. Schexnayder  
Treasurer, C.A. "Hap" Martin III  
Immediate Past President, Shayna L. Sonnier  
Chair, Young Lawyers Division, Kristen D. Amond  
First Board District Representative, J. Christopher Zainey, Jr.  
First Board District Representative, Graham H. Ryan  
Second Board District Representative, Jeffrey G. Lagarde  
Fourth Board District Representative, Adam P. Johnson  
Fifth Board District Representative, Carrie LeBlanc Jones  
Fifth Board District Representative, Kelly M. Rabalais  
Sixth Board District Representative, Barry M. Barnett (by phone)  
Seventh Board District Representative, Amy J. Miller  
At-Large Member, Jeffrey A. Riggs  
At-Large Member, Tina L. Suggs  
From the Faculty of Loyola University College of Law, Monica Hof Wallace  
From the Faculty of Southern University Law Center, Donald W. North (by phone)  
From the Louisiana State Law Institute, André Doguet  
House of Delegates Committee on Liaison Chair, Shannon Seiler Dartez  
House of Delegates Committee on Liaison Member, Sandra K. Cosby

Also present were:

President-Elect Designee, Curtis R. Joseph, Jr.  
Secretary-Elect, Bradley J. Tate  
Executive Director, Loretta Larsen, CAE  
Associate Executive Director, Cheri Cotogno Grodsky

**Louisiana State Bar Association  
Board of Governors  
April 6, 2025 Minutes  
Page 2**

Access to Justice Director, Monte T. Mollere  
Communications Director, Kelly W. Ponder  
Director of Member Outreach and Diversity, Tricia R. Pierre  
IT Director, Ashley J. Cambre  
Access to Justice Training and Project Counsel, Amy Duncan  
Governance Coordinator, Jen France

Absent were:

Third Board District Representative, Melanie W. Chatagnier  
Eighth Board District Representative, Senae D. Hall  
At-Large Member, L. Bradley Hancock  
House of Delegates Committee on Liaison Member, Aaron R. Wilson

**Agenda Item 2. Consent Calendar**

**a. Approval of Minutes** – Consideration of approval of minutes of January 17, 2025 and January 18, 2025 meetings.

**b. Louisiana Center for Law and Civic Education** – Periodic report from the LCLCE, as required by the April 2010 agreement.

Upon motion by Mr. Martin and second by Ms. Sonnier, the Board unanimously approved the Consent Calendar without discussion or debate.

**Agenda Item 3. Ratification of Pro Bono Awards and Children’s Law Awards Vote – Patrick A. Talley, Jr.**

Mr. Talley asked for ratification of the March 2025 email vote regarding award recipients. Upon motion by Ms. Sonnier and second by Mr. Johnson, the Board voted unanimously to ratify the email vote.

Ms. Larsen added that Access to Justice Director Monte Mollere would retire at the end of the LSBA fiscal year and that ATJ Training and Project Counsel Amy Duncan would be promoted to the ATJ Director position effective July 1, 2025. The Board congratulated both Mr. Mollere and Ms. Duncan.

**Agenda Item 4. Diversity Awards – Tricia R. Pierre**

Consideration of the following award recipients, as recommended by the Diversity Committee:

- Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson Trailblazer Award – Associate Justice John M. Guidry, Louisiana Supreme Court
- Guardian of Diversity Award – Louis A. Martinet Legal Society, Inc., Greater Baton Rouge Chapter

Upon motion by Mr. Ryan and second by Ms. Wallace, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Committee on Diversity’s recommendations.

**Agenda Item 5. Budget Committee Recommendations – C.A. “Hap” Martin III**

- a. **Amendments to FY 2024/2025 Budget** – Consideration of amendments as recommended by Budget Committee.

Mr. Martin reviewed the amendments to the FY 2024/2025 budget as recommended by the Budget Committee. After a brief discussion and upon motion by Mr. Doguet and second by Mr. Johnson, the Board unanimously approved the amendments as recommended by the Budget Committee.

- b. **Consideration of FY 2025/2026 Budget** – Consideration of preliminary approval of budget for FY 2024/2025, as recommended by the Budget Committee.

Mr. Martin reviewed the proposed FY 2025/2026 budget as recommended by the Budget Committee noting a deficit of \$619,000. After a brief discussion and upon motion by Mr. Doguet and second by Ms. Sonnier, the Board unanimously preliminarily approved the proposed budget as recommended by the Budget Committee. The 2025-2026 Board will consider final approval of the budget at its meeting on June 6, 2025.

**Agenda Item 6. MCLE Age-Based Exemption – Patrick A. Talley, Jr. and Loretta Larsen**

Ms. Larsen provided the Board with further information on MCLE exemptions in other states, and Mr. Talley asked the Board whether it wished to reconsider the action it had taken at its January meeting regarding the exemption for lawyers 65 and older from compliance with mandatory continuing legal education requirements, which exemption has been in place since Louisiana Supreme Court Rule XXX went into effect on January 1, 1988.

After a lengthy discussion and upon motion by Ms. Amond and second by Ms. Sonnier, the Board approved the following, with Mr. North voting against:

BE IT RESOLVED that Mr. Talley, on behalf of the Board of Governors, propose to the Supreme Court the removal of the exemption for eligible lawyers age 65 and older, with the specific requirement to be determined by the Supreme Court, provided that it be at least five hours per year, with one hour being ethics and one being professionalism; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all attorneys exempt from compliance at the time of implementation of this change shall be grandfathered in and not subject to compliance with the Rule as amended.

**Agenda Item 7. Consideration of Strategic Plan – Graham H. Ryan**

Mr. Ryan expressed his gratitude to the Board and Staff for all of the work put into the plan and directed members to the strategic plan developed based on the January 18, 2025 Retreat. Upon motion by Ms. Sonnier and second by Ms. Dartez, the Board unanimously approved the plan.

**Louisiana State Bar Association  
Board of Governors  
April 6, 2025 Minutes  
Page 4**

**Agenda Item 8. ABA House of Delegates – Patrick A. Talley, Jr. and Loretta Larsen**

Ms. Larsen directed members to her memo, and Mr. Talley asked the Board to consider if LSBA officers' should continue participation as Delegates to American Bar Association House of Delegates in light of *Boudreaux* and ongoing mandatory bar litigation.

After a lengthy discussion and upon motion Mr. Johnson and second by Ms. Dartez, the Board unanimously approved a resolution to be presented to the House amending Article VII, Section 1 of the LSBA Bylaws to remove the language designating seats for the LSBA President and President-Elect and to include language to allow for the election of two additional delegates from the membership at large.

**Agenda Item 9. ReliaGuide – Patrick A. Talley, Jr. and Loretta Larsen**

Ms. Larsen withdrew the ReliaGuide proposal based on the Rules of Professional Conduct Committee's recommendation.

**Agenda Item 10. Judges and Lawyers Assistance Program – Edward J. Walters, Jr.**

Mr. Walters advised that in accordance with JLAP Bylaws, the LSBA Board of Governors was charged with making appointments to the JLAP Board of Directors. After taking into account the recommendations of the JLAP Board and the LSBA Executive Committee, and upon motion by Ms. Sonnier and second by Mr. Riggs, the Board voted unanimously to make the following appointments:

- Appointment of LSBA Leader Director Member Bradley J. Tate to serve as President for the term to begin July 1, 2025 and end June 30, 2026;
- Appointment of LSBA President-Elect Curtis R. Joseph, Jr. to serve as Treasurer for the term to begin July 1, 2025 and end June 30, 2026;
- Appointment of LSBA Member Director John E. McAuliffe, Jr. to serve as Secretary for the term to begin July 1, 2025 and end June 30, 2026;
- Reappointment of Jonathan C. Pederson as LSBA Member Director for an additional three-year term to begin July 1, 2025 and end June 30, 2028; and
- Appointment of Stephen I. Dwyer to serve a three-year as LSBA Leader Director for a term to begin July 1, 2025 and end June 30, 2028. Mr. Dwyer replaced Robert A. Kutcher who served a three-year term and did not wish to be reappointed due to other commitments.

**Agenda Item 11. Artificial Intelligence Task Force – Adam P. Johnson**

Mr. Johnson directed members to the Final Report of Artificial Intelligence Task Force. Upon motion by Mr. Walters and second by Mr. North, the Board accepted the report.

**Agenda Item 12. U.S. Supreme Court Justice Amy Coney Barrett Lecture – Patrick A. Talley, Jr.**

Mr. Talley reported on the plans and logistics for the Justice Barrett lecture scheduled for Monday,

**Louisiana State Bar Association  
Board of Governors  
April 6, 2025 Minutes  
Page 5**

April 7, as well as related events.

**Agenda Item 13. House of Delegates Task Force – Shannon Seiler Dartez**

Ms. Dartez gave her interim report of House of Delegates Task Force, noting the Task Force was currently in its information gathering stage.

**Agenda Item 14. Judges and Lawyers Assistance Program – J. Christopher Zainey, Jr.**

Mr. Zainey reported on the JLAP Wellness in the Legal Profession Task Force's upcoming free webinar series, the first of which is scheduled for Tuesday, April 22.

**Agenda Item 15. Report of the Young Lawyers Division Chair – Kristen D. Amond**

Ms. Amond reported on the success of the high school mock trial in Lafayette with the winner being Caddo Magnet. She also noted that 98 wills had been completed this year through Wills for Heroes and encouraged members to participate in the May events. She added that the Young Lawyers Division leadership is working diligently on its own Strategic Plan as well as preparing for the upcoming YL conference on April 11.

**Agenda Item 16. Report of the Treasurer – C.A. “Hap” Martin III**

Mr. Martin waived his report advising that all financial matters had been covered elsewhere in the agenda.

**Agenda Item 17. Report of the Secretary – Valerie T. Schexnayder**

Ms. Schexnayder reported that her last issue as editor of the *Louisiana Bar Journal* was complete, and members would receive a copy in the upcoming weeks.

**Agenda Item 18. Report of the Immediate Past President – Shayna L. Sonnier**

Ms. Sonnier reported that this would be her last substantive meeting, and that she had enjoyed her service to the LSBA. Mr. Walters and other Board members thanked her for her myriad contributions and successes.

**Agenda Item 19. Report of the President-Elect – Edward J. Walters, Jr.**

Mr. Walters waived his report advising that all matters had been covered elsewhere in the agenda.

**Agenda Item 20. Report of the President – Patrick A. Talley, Jr.**

Mr. Talley reported that he had recently attended the Lafayette and Baton Rouge Court openings as well as the investiture of Justice John Michael Guidry.

**Agenda Item 21. Report of the Executive Director – Loretta Larsen**

Ms. Larsen waived her report noting that all items had been covered elsewhere on the agenda.

**Louisiana State Bar Association  
Board of Governors  
April 6, 2025 Minutes  
Page 6**

**Agenda Item 22. Report of the Associate Executive Director – Cheri Cotogno Grodsky**  
Ms. Grodsky referred members to her written report.

**Agenda Item 23. Departmental Reports**

- **Access to Justice** – Mr. Mollere and Ms. Duncan referred members to their written report and invited them to the Pro Bono and Children’s Law Awards Ceremony scheduled for May 20 at the Supreme Court.
- **Member Outreach and Diversity** – Ms. Pierre referred members to her written report noting the Annual Conclave on Diversity in the Legal Profession is scheduled for August 8 at the Four Seasons in New Orleans. She also reported that the Leadership Class applications are available online until May 30. The Suit Up program will take place from June 9-27, and she encouraged members to reach out to her for job shadowing opportunities for the high school students.

**Agenda Item 24. Other Matters**

- **Committee on Bar Admissions – Ms. Larsen**  
Ms. Larsen asked the Board to consider the recommendation to the Louisiana Supreme Court the appointment of Reid A. Jones as the Examiner for the Federal Jurisdiction and Procedure Section of the Louisiana Bar Exam, noting that Mr. Jones had agreed to accept the appointment. Upon motion by Mr. Riggs and second by Mr. Johnson, the Board voted unanimously to recommend the appointment of Mr. Jones.

**Executive Session**

At 5:39 p.m., Mr. Johnson moved that the Board go into the Executive Session to discuss the LSBA’s financial support of the Committee on Bar Admissions, which motion was seconded by Mr. Riggs. The Executive Session began at 5:40 p.m. and ended at 5:48 p.m.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:48 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

*Valerie T. Schexnayder*

Valerie T. Schexnayder  
Secretary

**APPROVED BY BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
JUNE 4, 2025  
DESTIN, FL**