



# LAW SOCIETY

Newfoundland & Labrador

## 27 SEPTEMBER 2024 IN-PUBLIC BENCHERS' CONVOCATION

MINUTES OF THE FALL TERM CONVOCATION OF THE BENCHERS OF THE LAW SOCIETY OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR HELD AT THE OFFICES OF THE LAW SOCIETY AND VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE ON FRIDAY, THE 27<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2024, COMMENCING AT 9:30 A.M.

The following Benchers were present:

Elective Benchers: Gladys Dunne, KC, President  
Scott Worsfold, Past President  
Johnathan Earle  
Derek Ford  
Greg French  
Valerie Hynes, KC  
Carey Majid, KC  
Mark Mills  
Jonathan Regan  
Steve Scruton  
Doug Wright

Appointed Benchers: Ross Elliott  
Linda Harnett  
Allan Skanes

Regrets: Lauren Chafe  
Sheilagh Murphy, KC  
Dean Porter  
Glenda Reid  
Alex Templeton  
John Whelan  
David Williams

Rod Zdebiak, KC, Vice-President

Law Society Staff: Brenda B. Grimes, KC  
Aimee N. Rowe

The President stated that a notice of the Benchers' Convocation was provided to all Benchers in accordance with the Rules of the Law Society. A quorum of Elective Benchers and Lay Benchers being present, the President declared the Convocation regularly constituted.

\*Unless otherwise specified in the minutes, all motions were carried by a unanimous vote of Benchers.

## INTRODUCTORY MATTERS

### 1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

The President welcomed everyone to the meeting and formally acknowledged that the Island of Newfoundland is the ancestral homeland of the Beothuk and Mi'kmaq.

### 2. Excusal of Benchers unable to attend Convocation

*On Motion by Ross Elliott and seconded by Greg French: that Benchers unable to attend Convocation be excused. CARRIED.*

### 3. Motion to move any Agenda Item to the In-Camera Agenda

There was no motion.

### 4. Adoption of Agenda

*On Motion by Allan Skanes and seconded by Steve Scruton: that the Agenda be adopted. CARRIED.*

## ITEMS FOR DECISION/DISCUSSION

### 5. Committee Annual Work Plans

The President noted that the Annual Work Plans were presented for Benchers' approval.

The Executive Director added that this agenda item was moved from the consent agenda to "items for decision/discussion" to highlight the fact that they require Benchers' approval.

Doug Wright, Chair of the Accounts and Finance Committee, noted that the Annual Work Plan for the Accounts and Finance Committee would be presented to Benchers after the Committee's upcoming meeting.

*On Motion by Valerie Hynes, KC and seconded by Allan Skanes: that Benchers adopt the Committee Annual Work Plans. CARRIED.*

### 6. Education Committee Report:

#### *Minutes, 21 June 2024 Call to Bar*

*On Motion by Steve Scruton and seconded by Valerie Hynes, KC: that the minutes from the 21 June 2024 Call to Bar be approved. CARRIED.*

### 7. Strategic Planning Work Plan

#### *Composition of the Executive Committee*

Benchers were provided with a memo from the Executive Director noting that in September 2022, Benchers decided that it would be appropriate to consider whether a Lay Bencher should be a member of the Executive Committee. This was considered as part of the Strategic Work Plan's priority to "outline options for the composition of Benchers". Since that time, Lay Benchers have been auditing the Executive Committee meetings to determine whether they would have

sufficient time to commit to the work of the Committee. Lay Benchers generally agreed that they would be able to contribute to the work of the Committee.

As outlined in the memo, Law Society Rule 2.16 would require an amendment to allow for the appointment of a Lay Bencher to the Committee. In addition, the Committee's Terms of Reference would require an update to provide for the appointment of a Lay Bencher (for a term of one year).

*On Motion by Valerie Hynes, KC and seconded by Greg French: that Benchers shall appoint 1 Lay Bencher to the Executive Committee with necessary amendments to the Law Society Rules and the Terms of Reference for the Executive Committee. CARRIED.*

### ***General Discussion***

The Executive Director noted that the work outlined in the Strategic Work Plan is substantially complete with the exception of a few access to justice initiatives that the Access to Justice Committee is continuing to work on. She also noted that the initiatives relating to the Trust Audit Program are on hold while a new Trust Compliance Auditor is being recruited.

Ms. Grimes, KC, noted that staff is considering a new format for the next Strategic Work Plan. Benchers suggested that they might prefer that completed items be moved to the bottom of the plan rather than removed from the plan.

## **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

### **8. President's Report**

A report was provided.

The President noted that she was looking forward to the Federation of Law Societies of Canada's conference in the Fall as well as her upcoming meetings with the chief justices/judges in the province.

### **9. Education Committee Report – Notice of Resumption of Practicing Status and Transfers under NMA**

A report was provided. There were no questions arising.

## CONCLUDING MATTERS

### 12. Other Business

There was no other business.

### 13. Adjournment

The President noted that Benchers would move to the *in-camera* portion of the meeting and that the public portion of the Benchers' Meeting was adjourned.

*On Motion by Greg French and seconded by Valerie Hynes, KC: that the in-public portion of the Benchers' meeting be adjourned. CARRIED.*

---

GLADYS DUNNE, KC