



Board of Governors Meeting Recap

Sept. 24-25, 2026

A summary prepared by the WSBA of the Board of Governors meeting held Sept. 24-25, 2026, in Tulalip, WA. The agenda, materials, and video recording from this Board meeting are posted [online](#). The next regular meeting is Nov. 6 in Richland, Washington. The Board is the WSBA's governing body charged with determining general policies of the WSBA and approving its annual budget. To subscribe to the Board Meeting Notification list, email barleaders@wsba.org.

TOP TAKEAWAYS

Congratulations to Incoming Officers and Governors! The WSBA's new fiscal year begins Oct. 1, and your bar is in good hands! Our newly sworn-in officers are President Kari Petrasek, President-Elect Nam Nguyen, and Treasurer Alain Villeneuve; governors beginning new terms are Min Kang, District 2; Norma Linda Ureña, District 7N; Qian "Sophie" Ying, District 8; Allison Widney, District 3 (reelected); Todd Bloom, District 6 (reelected); and Tom Ahearne, At-Large (reelected). Look for your October issue of Washington State Bar News for an introduction to President Petrasek (sneak peek: Go, M's!) and biographies of new and continuing governors.

FY27 Budget. The Board approved next year's budget, which includes a planned spenddown of about \$1.4 million in the general fund, in alignment with the Board's reserve-fund safeguards. (Note: The [2027 license](#) fees—including \$475 for an active lawyer—were already set last year using the Board's [license fee policy](#).) ([See page 80](#).)

OTHER BUSINESS

Local Hero. The WSBA recognized [C. "Matt" Anderson as a Local Hero](#), an honor bestowed by the WSBA President in partnership with county bar associations to recognize colleagues who make noteworthy contributions to their communities. Matt was nominated by the Spokane County Bar Association for his decades of commitment to the legal profession and the administration of justice, both in the courtroom and beyond.

Small Town and Rural (STAR) Council Check-In. [STAR Council](#) leaders provided a five-year evaluation of the initiative and reported its recommendation to continue its work with another evaluation slated in five years. The council was established to strengthen and support the practice of law in rural communities throughout Washington. The council's mission is to ensure that rural legal practice is present, growing, and thriving, and to guide policy and program development that improves access to justice and builds a sustainable pipeline of practitioners. Highlights from the first five years of work include annual summits of rural practitioners, judges, and law students;

CLEs regarding rural practice and issues; rural hiring events; and rural internships and grants. ([See page 214.](#))

State of Legal Education. Washington law school deans and the Law Clerk Board Chair joined the Board for an annual discussion about opportunities and challenges in local legal education. The education leaders discussed innovative new initiatives to expand access to legal education and prepare new lawyers to serve people across Washington.

Sections Viability Review. The [WSBA Bylaws trigger a “viability review”](#) whenever a section has fewer than 75 voting members for two consecutive years. Three sections—the Liquor, Cannabis & Psychedelics (LCP) Section, the Animal Law Section, and Legal Assistance to Military Personnel (LAMP) Section—triggered such a review this year. The Member Engagement Council (MEC) oversaw the review in close collaboration with the section leaders, and the process and results were positive: The section leaders identified actions and the WSBA identified supports/resources to help the sections stabilize and thrive. The Board approved the section-specific viability recommendations. ([See page 367.](#))

The Board also:

- Set the 2027 *Keller* deduction for members at \$1.25. [Learn more about the deduction.](#)
- Discussed the possibility of rescinding a decision it made in May to change the definition of “approved law schools” that is used to determine applicant eligibility to sit for the bar exam in Washington. The change in the WSBA Admissions Policies expands the definition beyond “ABA-approved” law schools to include law schools that are approved in any other state for bar-exam eligibility and admissions. ([See page 153.](#)) The Board voted and confirmed its prior policy change.
- Held its annual performance review of the Executive Director in executive session.
- Held its annual meeting of the Washington State Bar Foundation and approved the 2026-27 Board of Trustees roster. The Washington State Bar Foundation is the fundraising arm of the WSBA. ([See page 594.](#))
- Adopted an amendment to the WSBA Admissions Policies to remove the requirement for the WSBA to post a bar-exam pass list, which is consistent with APR 4(b); it is now discretionary, not required, for the WSBA to post a list of names of individuals who pass the bar exam or any other licensing exam. ([See page 597.](#))
- Approved a recommendation for a charter for the Court Rules and Procedures Committee, which has until now operated under the authority of its Court established role of reviewing designated sets of Washington court rules on a regular cycle. In addition to memorializing the committee’s current and ongoing work, the charter lays out a process by which the Board would delegate limited authority to the committee to comment on rules during the initial screening process. ([See page 341.](#))
- Approve the submission—to the Washington Supreme Court—of the Court Rules and Procedures Committee’s suggested rule changes to RAP 16.10, RAP 18.17, and RAP 18.8 to clarify that opening filings in a personal restraint petition are limited to 12,000 words regardless of the form used. ([See page 347.](#))
- Established an application fee for the new admissions pathway (admission by portfolio evaluation), increased the application fee for Rule 9 licensed legal interns, and increased the lawyer application fees for the bar exam and UBE score transfer applications. ([See page 183.](#))
- Approved suggested amendments to APR1(e) changing the definition of active legal experience for people applying for admission by motion (reciprocity). The suggestions will now go to the Washington Supreme Court for consideration. ([See page 191.](#))

