



Washington State Bar Association

COUNCIL ON PUBLIC DEFENSE
SEPTEMBER 20, 2024 - 9:30AM – 12:00PM
MINUTES

CPD Voting Members: Maia Vanyo (Vice-Chair), Jason Schwarz (Chair), Larry Jefferson, Paul Holland, Molly Gilbert, Rachel Cortez, Abraham Ritter, Kathy Kyle, Christie Hedman, Anita Khandelwal, Maya Titova, Judge Dee Sontag, Jonathan Nomamiukor, Chris Swaby, Justice Sheryl Gordon McCloud

CPD Emeritus members (non-voting members): Ann Christian, Travis Stearns, Bob Boruchowitz

WSBA Staff: Cate Shur, Bonnie Sterken

Guests: Laura Hughes, Sharea Moberly, Kate Benward, Molly Campera, Grace O’Conner, Sophia Byrd McSherry, Flint Stebbins, Katrin Johnson, Shelly Brown, Amanda Ulrich, Anya Perret, Tara, Gregory Link, Geoff Hulse, Shoshana Kehoe-Ehlers, Cameron Buhl, Jonathan Patnode, McKay Campbell, Taila AyAy, Katherine Kameron, George Yeannakis, Chris Graves, Melinda, Grainne Griffiths, Dana Halbert, Molly Fraser, Atharshna Singarajah, Emily Arneson, Anya Perret, Jacob D’Annunzio, Manek Misty, Connor O’Neil, Katie Farden, Byron Gale

Absent: Erica Rutter, Arian Noma, Leandra Craft, Judge Marla Polin, Anthony Powers, Abigail Pence

Membership Changes: Jason Schwarz acknowledged the outgoing members and thanked them for their service. He also acknowledged the incoming members.

July Meeting Minutes: The minutes were approved without edits.

Standards Updates: Jason Schwarz shared that the two items sent to the Board of Governors was passed. He thanked those who worked on those items and presented about them at the meeting.

Jason shared the details about the Court’s listening session on the proposed Standards. Several groups have been invited to testify, including CPD and WSBA representatives. There is also a public comment period. Jason encouraged members to ask their colleagues to comment. The Council discussed the testimonies and ways to frame the conversations.

The Council then had a discussed that there is a lack of unanimity around the state. Larry Jefferson shared his perspective that part of the issue is the decentralization of the state. He plans to ask the Court to pass the Standards but the implementation for different jurisdictions may be different. The Council had a discussion and Larry addressed questions. Others in the meeting shared their perspectives about how to align on the message and concerns about backing away the unified timeline.

For the next CPD meeting, they will discuss OPD's budget request and potentially take action to submit a letter to legislature in response to the request.

Office of Public Defense Budget Packet: Sophia Byrd McSherry shared that OPD has a budget request, and a summary document was shared with the advisory committee. The total request for new funds is more than \$137mil, which is almost double the existing budget. This includes increases for all vendor rates, funding for expert services, litigation costs, internal basic agency functions. One of the big new asks relates to building a pipeline to have attorneys available. They'll be working with the law schools to build a child welfare practicum to move along the training in that area. The legislature passed a bill last year to work with counties and cities to build and internship program that is administered by OPD, and a funding request will sustain that and increase training. They are looking to continue the Blake program. Larry Jefferson and Sophia Byrd McSherry addressed questions.

Race Equity Report: Abraham Ritter gave an overview the forum project from the past year to draft the race equity report, which was shared in April. That report is going to be sent out again to be reviewed again before the October meeting. He highlighted the challenges and key take aways in section five as a place to focus. Abe is also cycling off as the co-chair of the race equity committee and request volunteers to take the role and carry the report forward for next steps.

Standards Committee: Paul Holland gave an update on the committee's work to address implementation. The key themes of their discussions including needing some kind of mechanism for putting responsibility on the trial courts, the data system on public defense is lacking. They are putting out a survey to students to assess interest in a career in public defense.

October Meeting: Jason Schwarz shared about the October 18 meeting that will be held at Seattle University. It will have a morning CPD meeting and afternoon event with students. A Zoom link will be provided as well.

Recruitment: Jason Schwarz shared that we are still recruiting for a current or former prosecutor to fill an open seat. He asked others to share the information.

Charter: Jason Schwarz reported that the Board of Governors approved the Charter amendments.

The new BOG liaison Emily Arneson introduced herself.

The meeting adjourned at 11:13am