

**Vermont Bar Association**  
**Friday, April 17, 2026, 1PM**  
**VBA Conference Room Montpelier and via Zoom**

Present: Jessica Bullock, Zachary Dayno, Josh Diamond, Kate Lamson, Jordana Levine, Liz Miller, Keith Roberts, Colette Schmidt, Matt Valerio, Alfonso Villegas. Lost Liz Miller at 1:45PM, so lost quorum, but Alfonso joined at 2PM to make up quorum again.

Guests: Alex Cyr of the YLD and Mike Servidio of TCI.

VBA Staff: Lisa Maxfield, Mary Ashcroft, Kim Velk

**1. Call to Order:** President Jordana Levine called the meeting to order at 1:12 PM.

**2. Minutes:** Upon motion made by Josh Diamond, seconded by Keith Roberts, and unanimously agreed to, the minutes of the March 26, 2026 VBA Board meeting were approved as printed. There were no abstentions.

**3. Treasurer's Report:** Lisa Maxfield reported that they just received an invoice from Hotel Champlain for the mid-year meeting. She will give an income and expense update at next board meeting. The only other note is the variance on contract services from last year to this year is due to this year's invoices for 2 large subscription software payments being made a month later than last year. There are no other variances. VBA connect is being upgraded to the Thrive

community. Lisa is also talking with database provider Interlink about upgrading the Lawyer Referral Service system to allow better on-line intakes. We hope this will be in place by August 1 for the upcoming dues payment cycle.

**4. Emerging Issues:** None.

**5. Reports:**

A. Board Committee Reports:

- i. Member Services: Did not meet.
- ii. Operations: Did not meet.
- iii. Workforce Development: Lisa said that the committee met to discuss the VBA mentor advice program. In short, we need more mentors. There are a lot of mentee applications coming in, and some mentors have retired. We need to reinvigorate this program and get more lawyers signed up a mentors. Our mentor program is separate from the first year mentor requirement.
- iv. A2J Committee: Did not meet.
- v. Executive Committee: Did not meet.

B. President's Report: Jordana Levine –no report.

C. Executive Director's Report: Kim Velk reported on the following:

--Chief Reiber had asked the VBA to coordinate lawyer retaking their oaths county by county on May 1. There isn't enough time between now and May 1 to make this happen,

so instead there will be oath taking as part of the 250<sup>th</sup> celebrations in July.

--Kiim noted that the legislature is still in session and she is shadowing Bob over there.

--The mid-year meeting at the end of March went well, according to the 35 responses received to the survey. President awards were given to Bob Paolini, Ted Tyler and Justice Bill Cohen. Pro bono awards were given to Lila Shapero and Glennis Gold.

--Kim and Laura met with representatives of the States Attorneys' organization. They will be rejoining VBA as a group. The hope is to do some joint training and also possibly participate in the collective care initiative.

--The Collective Care initiative is social worker run talk session aimed at reducing stress among solo and small firm practitioners . There has been positive feedback and as a result the program may be expanded.

--At the Statehouse, Bob Paolini continues to cover bills of interest to the VBA. The fix for the family law section on renewing judgments is moving forward. Also, the real estate fix re: joint tenancies/tenants in common is also moving forward. Both are in the miscellaneous judiciary bill. The uniform disclaimer of estate bill is also headed for approval. Bob is also helping Vermont Legal Aid in their quest to get increased funding so they can continue to run their rent escrow clinics.

--Kim also reported that procrastinators' month planning is underway for CLE programs. Laura is working on these. Kim asked that lawyers watch the calendar for new programs coming in.

--The spring Bar Journal is out on the website. We are awaiting the print edition, for which we are using a new printer.

D. Legislative Report: Kim gave—see above.

E. Division & Section Reports:

i. YLD: Zach Cyr reported that 3 dinners with judges have been planned to occur in the next few months. He explained how young lawyers are invited to join; 6 are selected for each dining event. Judge Cooper in Rutland, Judge Schoonover and Judge Battles will host these sessions which are about 2 hours long. Kim asked to be sure to invite the state's attorneys' group.

ii. Women's Division: No report. A meeting is scheduled for April 23 to fill positions on the Division's executive board. The Women's Division will also be sponsoring a CLE program next week.

iii. Government and Non-Profit Section: No report.

F. Staff Reports:

Mary Ashcroft, Legal Access Coordinator, said that the VBA has been reimbursed for payments made to VOCA low bono attorneys for the past quarter. The VBF has agreed to allow the VBA to spend unused BOA Settlement funds for

bridge funding for the VBA/VLGS small business low bono project, pending receipt of their new grant. There is no word yet on the other two VBF grants for which Mary has applied—county low bono for \$75,000 and legal access coordinator for \$40,000. The steering committee for the Incubator Project interviewed and admitted a new solo practitioner: Deborah Ahern Evans of Jamaica/Windham Co.

G. VBF Report: No report.

## **6. Action Items**

A. Enrollments: Upon motion made by Matt Valerio, seconded by Alfonso Villegas and unanimously approved, the following were enrolled as VBA members: Legal Members Jeffrey Flalky, Travis Needham, Jennifer Phipps and Josie Watson; Law School Graduate member Matthew Ketcham; Law Student Associate member Evelyn Stearns.

B. Retreat Planning: The date for the retreat is Thursday, June 18 from 9 to 3 at Becky Cassidy's home in Burlington. Jordana and Kim will meet again to firm up the topics to be discussed.

C. Mike Servidio from TCI, which is the VBA's Tech support, spoke about recommended computer system upgrades. Mike said that the existing equipment at the VBA office consists of 2 servers, installed in 2015, and out of warranty since 2018, which raises insurance compliance issues. The servers are still running. One server has the out of date Windows operating system which can't be updated the other server handles the VBA database.

Most of the VBA's data base is now in the cloud, so we should consider retiring the database server. The hardware is also out of date. To replace the existing server with a new one would cost \$11,000, with an additional \$2,700 cost to install. If we don't need the data base server, a small single server can be installed.

Mike also suggested that it should be possible to run everything through Microsoft and not need any servers at all as everything will be in the cloud. If both servers are retired that will save us \$11,000. Lisa said we have some data sitting on the server and asked what it would take to transfer that to the cloud.

Mike suggested that the VBA transfer everything to the cloud, shut off both servers as a trial, and see what might have been missed. If only one server is replaced, the cost will be reduced from \$11,000 to \$5,000. Mike suggests we do this to minimize disruptions. The VBA will also be saving about \$360 per month on admin costs with TCI.

A second item Mike spoke about was compliance. His IT services are now supporting the VBA 24-7. He wants to add a new level to cover basic protection as well as protection against malware and viruses. He would link the VBA to a security operations center which would constantly monitor and protect against malware and viruses and filter emails and software alerts. There would also be quarterly training, and periodic penetration tests to check the set up and firewalls. Presently the VBA is paying \$968 per month; this will increase to \$1,088 per month for the increased

protection. If the VBA eliminates both servers as discussed previously, that would save \$300 per month and pay for this compliance upgrade.

Mike also wants to work with Lisa and VBA on a phone service upgrade.

Matt Valerion noted that the amounts of money being discussed were miniscule, and he doesn't feel we need to budget anything to make the changes. He noted that state agencies were being warned of an increase in cyber attacks since the war with Iran started.

Josh Diamond moved to authorize the spending of up to \$10,000 to pay for the recommended upgrades to the VBA computer system. Matt seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of this motion. There were no abstentions.

**7. New business:** None

**8. Old Business:** None. It was noted that Attorney Leslie Black was not available to discuss her request for an amicus brief from the board which she presented last month.

**9. Executive Session:** None

**9. Adjourn:** There being no further business to conduct, on motion made by Keith, seconded by Josh and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15PM.

Respectfully submitted: VBA Staff