

**Vermont Bar Association**  
**Board of Managers Meeting**  
**Friday, October 24, 2025, at 1:00PM**  
**VBA Conference Room, Montpelier, and via Zoom**

Present: Jessica Bullock, Lisa Campion, Kate Lamson, Jordana Levine, Ryan Long, Liz Miller, Amy Palmer-Ellis, Keith Roberts, Collette Schmidt, Tim Tomasi, Matt Valerio, Alfonso Villegas, Kathy Zhou; Breanna Weaver joined just before 2PM

VBA Staff: Lisa Maxfield, Bob Paolini, Kim Velk, Mary Ashcroft

**1. Call to Order:** President Josh Diamond called the meeting to order at 1:03PM. He welcomed Collette Schmidt, the newest board member.

**2. Minutes:** Upon motion made by Matt Valerio, seconded by Judge Tomasi, and unanimously approved, the minutes of the September 2025 Board meeting were accepted as printed. Abstaining: Jordana Levine.

**3. Treasurer's Report:** Lisa Maxfield reported that this is the first month of the new fiscal year. We are \$31,000 behind in dues revenues, in part because staff started the campaign a bit later this year. Reminders are going out to non-paying members. Lisa estimates that we have just under 600 members yet to renew. Our CLE income is down by \$60,000 compared to last year, which reflects the notary training which was held last fiscal year but not offered this year.

We netted just under \$20,000 for the annual meeting. We had a good showing and tried to reduce some of the costs. On the expense side, expenses are tracking close to last year's. Matt thanked Lisa for a good job reducing costs. Lisa and Laura are looking at other facilities. We are going back to the Hilton in the spring of 2026, and we will also be going back to Lake Morey, too. There is a low inventory of suitable meeting spaces throughout the state.

**4. Emerging Issues:** None.

**5. Reports:**

**A. Board Committee Reports:**

i. Member Services: Did not meet.

ii. Operations: Did not meet.

iii. Workforce Development: Alfonso reported that the Committee met, and he gave a brief report.

iv. Access to Justice: Judge Tomasi said the committee reviewed the proposed survey about paralegals representing litigants in family court litigants. See action item below.

v. Executive Committee: Did not meet.

B. President's Report: Josh reported that Bob had circulated an assignment list for working committees of the Board. NEBA is coming up; Matt, Judith and Andrew will be at that meeting. Applications for the VBA Executive Director position will close at the end of the month, and the committee will meet to decide whom to interview. Steve Ellis has told Josh that the Burlington Boys & Girls Club wants to do programming similar to what they did last year. The Judiciary also wants to participate. Liz Miller will continue to help. The Supreme Court is also planning a career day.

C. Executive Director's Report: Bob Paolini reported that the schedule for future meetings with the Supreme Court is being planned. It looks like there will be meetings in December, February, and April. Bob has begun preparing for the legislative session which begins in January. Jim Knapp is working on proposed legislation on the renewal of family judgments concerning real estate. Bob will meet with the House judiciary committee chair about this issue. The Vermont Bar Foundation's Justice Gala will be held in early November; Bob will be honored at this event. Lisa will be asking search committee members their availability for candidate interviews for the ED position. There will likely be physical interviews at the VBA office. There are 19 applicants so far.

D. Division & Section Reports:

i. YLD: Ryan Long reported that the YLD is busy getting ready for the Thaw, particularly planning for CLEs. There is room for a few more presenters. Race Judicata will be run tomorrow in Montpelier. There will be a Bankruptcy CLE on Dec 5 at the Delta in Burlington from 8:30 to 4, with 7 CLE credits offered. In attendance will be judges from the First Circuit, which will be a big draw.

ii. Women's Division: No report.

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

E. Staff Reports:

Kim Velk reported that she and Laura are working on zoom CLE programs, with quite a few on AI. They are also catching up on newly passed laws from the past legislative session. Also on the calendar is the Law of War CLE. The fall VBA Journal is out. The VBA is hosting a collective care group for small firm and solo lawyers; 9 folks have signed up for the first session. This is being led by a social worker. Kim and Laura are beginning work on the annual Martin Luther King, Jr, poster and essay contest. Kim may attend the conference of social studies teachers to strengthen VBA ties with that group. Staff reviewed feedback on questionnaires critiquing the annual meeting. Most comments were positive. Lisa also visited with the vendors who were there who were quite pleased with the event.

Mary Ashcroft reported that the VBA's share of the VOCA grant has been approved for another year, and our reimbursement request for the first quarter has been approved. This is a federally funded grant through the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, so we are watching this closely. The Incubator Project attorneys are digging into many low bono cases, including family law, protective orders, adult involuntary guardianships and small business cases, and are doing them with enthusiasm and for grateful clients. Also, the Incubator Attorneys are asked to take the occasional odd case—for example, a discharge of mortgage by court order, and a civil action to quash a subpoena for medical records. These will be for paying clients. We don't give out names of Incubator or Low Bono Attorneys, except with their permission.

F. VBF Report: Lisa Campion reported that the Justice Gala, which will be on November 6, has raised \$38,000 so far. Proceeds will be split between Vermont Bar Foundation, Legal Services Vermont and Vermont Legal Aid. The VBF is also kicking off a One Hour for Justice campaign, where attorneys will be asked to donate to the VBA an amount equal to one billable hour of their time. The VBF still needs 2 board members for VBA seats.

## **6. Action Items**

A. Enrollments: Upon motion made by Jordana Levine, seconded by Matt Valerio and unanimously approved, with no abstentions, the following were enrolled as VBA members: Legal Members: Francis DiMora, Margaret Garvey-Caruso, Melissa Holtzer-Jonas, Kelsey Koenig, and Tracy West; Licensed in another state: Mikala Bolmer and Bria Yazic; Government--Attorney General: Peter Sterling; Law Office Study Associate Member: Mackay Breton.

B. Update June 2026 Retreat Date: The proposed retreat date of 6-19-26 must be moved because it falls on a holiday—Juneteenth. We should avoid the last Friday in June as VLGS is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and during the prior week the Defender General is holding is training. After further discussion, the Board agreed to set the annual retreat for Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup>.

C. VBA Appointment to VT Judiciary Commission on the Delivery of Legal Services. The VBA has been asked to participate in this commission by sending a former bar president as the VBA representative. Josh expressed interest in servicing. With Matt Valerio presiding, upon motion made, seconded and unanimously approved, the Board voted to name Joshua Diamond as the VBA representative to the Commission

D. VBA Representative on the State Ethics Commission: Chris Davis is the VBA delegate to this commission and has served 2 terms. He would like to leave by the end of the year. The VBA needs to name a replacement. Josh asked that this opening be advertised in the Bar News, and the Board will decide at the next VBA Board meeting in December. Kevin Lumpkin was suggested as the VBA and Bob was asked to reach out to him.

E. A2J Survey: Kate Lamson presented a draft questionnaire from her committee concerning limited licensing for paralegals in family court. This will gauge VBA members' interest/opposition to the idea. Upon motion made by Ryan Long, seconded by Matt

Valerio, the VBA Board unanimously approved the publication of the questionnaire among the membership. There was no opposition.

**7. New business:** Nominating Committee needs to meet on the morning of December 4, 2025, to create a slate of candidates for Board positions to present to the VBA Board that afternoon. Josh asked if anyone is interested in serving on the Nominating Committee to let him know. Ten members are needed. Josh will spread the word at the next section chairs and county bar presidents First Wednesday meeting.

**8. Old Business:** Matt advised that Vermont was wrongly labeled as a sanctuary state by the Trump administration. That will affect the federal student loan forgiveness programs. The revisions to this program aren't known at present. Matt is watching this and may request Board action at a later time. Alfonso explained what he knew of the loan forgiveness program changes. The big change is that the forgiven amounts will be taxed as income beginning in 2026. Lisa Campion also found inaccuracies—she did not get credited with payments she had made, so she urged all involved to hang on to their information on payments made.

Judge Tomasi reported that he and Lisa Campion met with the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee. There are good ideas being considered to celebrate the national event in 2026 and the state event in 2027.

**9. Executive Session:** None.

**9. Adjourn:** There being no further business to discuss, on motion made, seconded and unanimously approved; the meeting was adjourned at 2:21PM.

Respectfully submitted:

VBA Staff