

**STATE BAR OF GEORGIA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
MEETING MINUTES
Saturday, June 13, 2026, 9:00 a.m.
Omni Amelia Island Resort & Spa
Fernandina Beach, Florida**

The 313th meeting of the Board of Governors of the State Bar of Georgia was held on the date and location shown above. President William C. “Bill” Gentry presided.

Pledge of Allegiance

Board of Governors Member Alan J. Levine, Cobb Circuit, Post 5, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Invocation

YLD Past President Ronald E. “Ron” Daniels gave the invocation.

Security Update

Sergeant First Class Dexter Harden gave a security update to the Board of Governors.

Special Recognition

President Bill Gentry recognized the members of the judiciary, the past presidents of the State Bar, and other special guests in attendance.

Welcome to New Officers and Board Members

President Bill Gentry recognized the new officers and Board of Governors members.

Roll Call

Secretary Bert Hummel circulated the roll for signature. (Exhibit A)

Future Meetings Schedule

President Bill Gentry reviewed the Future Meetings Schedule.

President’s Address

President Bill Gentry delivered the President’s Address (Exhibit B).

Approval of President’s Appointments to the State Disciplinary Board

The Board of Governors approved the following presidential appointments to the State Disciplinary Board by majority vote:

State Disciplinary Board

Mariel E. Smith (2029)

Christopher S. Fairchild (2029)

Lamar Barnett (2029)

Noemi de Miguel Mota (2029)

Approval of President’s Appointments to the Formal Advisory Opinion Board

The Board of Governors approved the following presidential appointments to the Formal Advisory Opinion Board by majority vote:

Formal Advisory Opinion Board

Member-at-Large: Mary A. Prebula (2028)

Member-at-Large: Jeffrey H. Schneider (2028)

Member-at-Large: Letitia A. McDonald (2028)

Ga. Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers: Amanda R. Clark Palmer (2028)

District Attorneys' Association of Georgia: Jaeson R. Smith (2028)

Emory University School of Law: Prof. Jennifer M. Romig (2028)

Georgia State University College of Law: Prof. Tia L. Gibbs (2028)

Atlanta's John Marshall Law School: Prof. M. Scott Boone (2027)

State Disciplinary Review Board: Brandon A. Bullard (2027)

Sunsetting of Standing Committees

The Board of Governors approved sunsetting the Attorney Wellness Committee and the Communications Committee by majority vote.

Approval of 2026-2027 Standing, Special & Program Committees and Boards

The Board of Governors approved the proposed 2026-2027 Standing, Special & Program Committees and Boards by majority vote.

Election Schedule 2026-2027

The Board of Governors approved the proposed 2026-2027 Election Schedule (Exhibit C) by majority vote.

Executive Committee Election

The Executive Committee election was held with the following results:

Two-Year Term 2026-2028

Results:

Candidate: John R.B. "Jack" Long

Nominator: Hon. Amanda Nicole Heath

Seconded: Katie Leonard

Elected by majority vote for two-year term

Candidate: Lindsey Macon

Nominator: Rebecca Grist

Seconded: Dax Lopez

Was not elected

Candidate: Gary Spencer

Nominator: Amanda Clark Palmer

Seconded: Lester Johnson III

Elected by majority vote for two-year term

Candidate: Martin Valbuena

Nominator: Ivy Cadle

Seconded: Will Davis

Elected by majority vote for two-year term

Georgia Legal Services Program Appointments

By majority vote, the Board of Governors approved the appointments of Kevin M. Pitre (2028), Tera L. Reese-Beisbier (2028), and Kelli J. Spencer (2028) to the GLSP Board of Directors.

Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism Appointments

By majority vote, the Board of Governors approved the appointment of Hon. Charity Bridgewater and Jeff W. Smith for three-year terms to the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism.

Executive Director Election

The Board of Governors elected Damon Elmore as executive director for the 2026-2027 Bar year by majority vote.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Damon Elmore delivered remarks expressing appreciation to the Court, Board, and leadership, and thanked the Board for its continued confidence in extending his term. He emphasized that the work of the Bar is a collective effort and reaffirmed the organization's enduring mission to support the profession, improve the administration of justice, and serve the public. He noted optimism as the Bar concludes the current year and prepares for the next.

He reported that the Bar remains operationally strong, with continued focus on financial stewardship, asset management, and staff support amid recent transitions. He highlighted appreciation for departing staff, recognized internal advancements and new hires, and affirmed readiness to support incoming leadership in the 2026–2027 Bar year. He concluded by expressing gratitude to President Twyman, the Executive Committee, and Supreme Court liaisons for their leadership and partnership, and extended confidence in the incoming President.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Shiriki C. Jones reported on the Bar's finances and investments. She referred to the financials through March 31, 2026, presented in the Board Book along with the combined audit, which contained no audit adjustments.

The Board of Governors received copies of the Consolidated Revenues and Expenditures, Operations and Bar Center Combined, for the year-to-date period ending March 31, 2026; Total Bar Center Operations Revenues and Expenditures Executive Summary for the year-to-date period ending March 31, 2026; Operations Income Statement for the year-to-date period ending March 31, 2026; Supporting Schedule of Other Expenses for the year-to-date period ending March 31, 2026; Status and Use of Cash Investments as of March 31, 2026; SBG Unallocated Cash chart; Board-Designated and Donor Temporarily Restricted Net Assets as of March 31, 2026; Summary of Members and Voluntary Legislative Contributions paid through March 31, 2026; Summary of Members and Voluntary Contributions to GLSP paid through March 31, 2026; Legislative Activity Report through March 31, 2026; and Summary of Clients' Security Fund Activity for the year-to-date period ending March 31, 2026.

Young Lawyers Division President's Report

YLD President Virginia Josey addressed the Board for the first time in her capacity as president of the YLD. She expressed gratitude to those who have supported and mentored her as she prepared for this new role. She acknowledged the importance of the YLD's work as both a service arm of the Bar and a place where the next generation of legal leaders can begin and develop their leadership journeys.

YLD President Josey reported on the year ahead, including plans to start a book club, a podcast highlighting the services the Bar offers, and a guidebook for young lawyers. She highlighted this year's YLD Signature Fundraiser, which will support Stepping Stone Advocacy Services and will feature an '80s-themed celebration honoring the YLD's 80th anniversary. The event is scheduled for Jan. 30 at the Georgia Theatre in Athens.

Senior Lawyers Division Report

SLD President Elizabeth "Betsy" Hodges expressed her enthusiasm and gratitude for the opportunity to serve as the first president of the Senior Lawyers Division. She introduced the Division's officers and

Executive Committee members: President-Elect Howard Delashmit, Treasurer James Hyder, Secretary Kendall Butterworth, Andy Davis, Jeff Helms, William Jenkins, EC Liaison Joyce Gist Lewis, and YLD Liaison Kindall Browning-Rickle. The Committee will soon hold its first meeting at the Bar Center on August 14.

SLD President Hodges emphasized the five pillars of the SLD: social engagement, mentorship, succession planning, pro bono opportunities, and cognitive health initiatives. She reported that the recently held Welcome Reception was well attended and provided a great opportunity for members to connect and build momentum for the Division's future work. She also highlighted the SLD's first joint service project with the YLD, a collection drive for basic hygiene products benefiting the Rethreaded initiative, supporting survivors of human trafficking. The drive was taking place during the Annual Meeting, and she encouraged Board members and attendees to donate to the effort. Upcoming activities of the SLD include a Braves game, a succession planning seminar, and an event in conjunction with the Fall Board of Governors meeting.

Center for Lawyer Wellbeing Report

Center Chair Javoyne Hicks reported on the recent and future activities of the Center for Lawyer Wellbeing. She clarified that the Attorney Wellness Committee was sunsetted because the work of the committee has been consolidated into the Center and will continue under that umbrella. She thanked the 1,212 inaugural members of the Center and encouraged both current and prospective members to join as they submit their Bar dues for the upcoming year or separately via the Bar website. Chair Hicks reported that the Center held its annual institute in September and participated in the Out of the Darkness Walk last year in partnership with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. She noted that this year's walk is scheduled for November 1 and encouraged support for the event and the broader cause of suicide prevention and awareness. Chair Hicks emphasized the vital role of the Center as the hub for the Bar's lawyer wellness initiatives and programs. She announced that Paul Knowlton will succeed her as Chair of the Center, noting his significant contributions to its development and ongoing success. Hon. Shondeana Morris will continue to serve as vice chair, Mark Alexander will remain treasurer, and Hon. Sonja Brown will assume the role of secretary.

Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism Report

Executive Director Karlise Grier reported on the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism (CJCP), expressing her gratitude to Chief Justice Nels S.D. Peterson for his leadership, and congratulating newly appointed Commission members Hon. Charity Bridgewater and Jeff Smith. Executive Director Grier, along with Professionalism Committee members Kevin Patrick, Samantha Mullis, and Hon. Stephanie Burton, provided updates on recent and upcoming initiatives, including a CLE program on professionalism and the legislature, the Connect with a Colleague Contest, Law Day events for students, and other professionalism-focused programs. Executive Director Grier also highlighted the recipients of the Chief Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community Service and recognized the volunteers whose efforts contributed to the program's success. She encouraged Board members to review the materials included in the Board Book for additional information regarding the Commission's events, initiatives, and ongoing activities.

Legislative Report

Director of Governmental Affairs Jennifer McNeely began her report on the legislative activities of the Bar by thanking outgoing President Chris Twyman for his work and support over the last year. In addition to the items on the Bar's legislative agenda that were passed, one of the most significant initiatives was the Gold Dome Track. The program was launched in partnership with the Young Lawyers Division and the Law Practice Management Program as an effort to educate, prepare, and support lawyers who are interested in public service, particularly in the Georgia General Assembly. Director McNeely emphasized the importance of lawyer-legislators and noted encouraging participation and in the current election cycle. She

shared that additional programming is planned for the coming year, including sessions at the Midyear Board of Governors Meeting and outreach efforts focused on middle and south Georgia. She also announced that, beginning in spring 2027, the Bar will partner with the Georgia State University College of Law to offer a legislative externship program. Director McNeely highlighted opportunities for attorneys who wish to engage in the legislative process without seeking public office, including legislative newsletters, Day at the Capitol experiences featuring committee hearings and meetings with legislators, legislative receptions, and other educational and engagement opportunities. Director McNeely concluded by reporting on the special session of the Georgia General Assembly, which was called to address unresolved matters from the 2026 legislative session.

Suicide Prevention and Awareness Committee Report

Hon. Shondeana Morris, chair of the Suicide Prevention and Awareness Committee, began her report by reminding members of her presentation last year, which featured a video honoring and remembering the members of the Bar and Bench who have been lost to suicide over the years. She then shared the encouraging news that, during the 2025-2026 Bar year, not a single member of the State Bar was lost to suicide. She noted that this achievement reflects the continued importance of awareness, education, outreach, and support efforts aimed at promoting lawyer wellbeing and mental health within the profession.

Pro Bono Resource Center Report

Director Ashley Clark reported on the activities of the Pro Bono Resource Center, highlighting its efforts to help bridge the justice gap by recruiting and supporting attorneys in providing pro bono legal services to Georgians. She discussed the Center's focus on the three Rs: Research, Recruit, and Recognize, through maintaining statewide pro bono resources, engaging attorneys in volunteer service, and honoring those who contribute their time and expertise. She also highlighted resources available to volunteers, including the Paladin Pro Bono Opportunity Portal, emphasized the importance of Rule 6.1, which encourages attorneys to provide pro bono service, and recognized attorneys through the Pro Bono Honor Roll for their commitment to expanding access to justice. Director Clark concluded by honoring the legacy of Mike Monahan, whose dedication to pro bono service and expanding access to justice left a lasting impact on Georgia's legal community, noting that the Law School Excellence in Access to Justice Award has been renamed in his honor.

Committee Activity Report

The Board of Governors received a written report on the activities of the State Bar committees for the 2025-2026 Bar year.

State Bar of Georgia Audit Report

The Board of Governors received a copy of the State Bar of Georgia Audit Report for the year-end 2025 and related auditor's letter regarding governance.

Office of the General Counsel

The Board of Governors received a written report from the Office of the General Counsel.

Fee Arbitration Program

The Board of Governors received a written report from the Fee Arbitration Program.

Law Practice Management Program

The Board of Governors received a written report from the Law Practice Management Program.

Sections' Annual Reports

The Board of Governors received written reports from the following sections: Alternative Dispute Resolution Section, Antitrust Law Section, Aviation Law Section, Bike Law Section, Cannabis & Hemp Law Section, Child Protection & Advocacy Section, Construction Law Section, Creditor's Rights Section, E-Discovery & the Use of Technology Law Section, Eminent Domain Section, Energy Law Section, Entertainment and Sports Law Section, Environmental Law Section, Family Law Section, Franchise and Distribution Law Section, Health Law Section, Nonprofit Law Section, Privacy & Technology Law Section, Real Property Law Section, School & College Law Section.

Institute of Continuing Legal Education

The Board of Governors received a written report from the Institute of Continuing Legal Education.

Unlicensed Practice of Law Program

The Board of Governors received a written report on the investigations undertaken by the Unlicensed Practice of Law Program.

State Bar of Georgia Satellite Office Reports

The Board of Governors received written reports from the Coastal Georgia Office in Savannah and the South Georgia Office in Tifton.

Communications Media Report

The Board of Governors received a written media report from the Communications Department.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

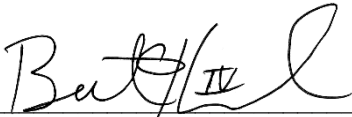
There was no new business.

Remarks/Q&A/Comments/Suggestions

There were none.

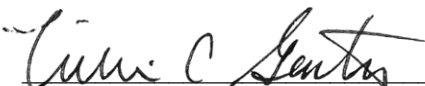
Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.



Norbert D. Hummel IV, Secretary

Approved:



William C. Gentry, President