

**STATE BAR OF GEORGIA
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES**

**April 17, 2026, 9 a.m.
The Inn at Serenbe
Chattahoochee Hills, GA**

Members Participating

Christopher P. Twyman, President; William “Bill” Gentry, President-Elect; Shiriki Jones, Secretary; Veronica Cox, YLD President; Virginia Josey, YLD President-Elect; Thua Barlay; Bert Hummel; Joyce Gist Lewis; David Lipscomb; and Gary Spencer.

Members Absent

Javoyne Hicks, Treasurer; Ivy Cadle, Immediate Past President; Kenneth Mitchell Jr., YLD Immediate Past President; and Martin Valbuena.

Staff Participating

Sarah Coole, Chief Operating Officer; Damon Elmore, Executive Director; Jennifer McNeely, Director of Governmental Affairs; Bill NeSmith, Deputy General Counsel; Ron Turner, Chief Financial Officer; and Russ Willard, General Counsel.

Call to Order

President Chris Twyman called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. The members of the Executive Committee in attendance are indicated above.

Future Meetings Schedule

President Chris Twyman reviewed the Future Meetings Schedule, including the upcoming meetings of the Executive Committee and Board of Governors. President-Elect Bill Gentry also reported on his upcoming meetings for the 2026-2027 Bar year.

Executive Committee Minutes

Secretary Shiriki Jones presented for approval the minutes of the February 6, 2026, Executive Committee meeting, which passed by unanimous vote.

Members Requesting Resignation

Pursuant to State Bar Rule 1-208, the Executive Committee approved the following resignation requests by unanimous vote: Jason Kent Greene-297461, Gary Alan Hansz-534669, Arvo Howard Henifin-346780, John Thomas Kirtley, III-511082, Spalding McArthur Nix-545534, Frank J. Perch, III-142225, Ann Tompkins Schramm-629824, Laura M. Sillins-557560, Shawn D. Stafford-673989.

Members Requesting Disability

Pursuant to State Bar Rule 1-202, the Executive Committee approved one request for disabled status by unanimous vote.

Approval of the 2026-2027 Election Schedule

The Executive Committee unanimously approved the 2026-2027 election schedule as proposed.

Legislative Consultant Agreements

Director of Governmental Affairs Jenn McNeely presented the 2026-2027 legislative consultant agreements of Rusty Sewell and Mark Middleton. The Executive Committee approved the Capitol Partners contract by majority vote (9-1). The Executive Committee approved the Middleton Public Affairs contract by unanimous vote (10-0). The discussion focused on whether any changes were warranted at this time. It was noted that the current approach provides stability, particularly given uncertainty around upcoming elections

and potential changes in legislative leadership. There was acknowledgment that questions have been raised about long-term effectiveness and changing political dynamics, but consensus emerged that no immediate changes should be made. The Executive Committee agreed on the need for a detailed contract analysis and a succession plan to address changing legislative relationships and priorities.

President's Report

President Chris Twyman began by expressing his appreciation for the Executive Committee and Bar staff. He reported on the Bar's ongoing efforts to strengthen member services, improve committee accountability, and advance initiatives related to the Rule of Law and the Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technology Committee. He noted enhancements to committee reporting and announced plans to include committee summaries in the Annual Meeting Board Book. President Twyman highlighted Law Day outreach efforts, including educational videos produced with Chief Justice Nels Peterson and YLD President Veronica Cox for students across Georgia. He also provided an update on Bar Center leasing activity, including the execution of a lease with the Georgia Innocence Project and continued discussions with prospective tenants. Finally, he addressed the increasing impact of artificial intelligence on the legal profession, emphasizing the need for lawyer education, ethical guidance, and ongoing collaboration with the Supreme Court regarding potential rule changes and educational initiatives.

Treasurer's Report

Secretary Shiriki Jones reported that the Bar was operating according to plan and had encountered no financial surprises, presenting the financial report through February 28, 2026. Financial statements reflected that operations were proceeding as budgeted. Losses in Bar Center operations were consistent with projections, and ongoing investments in building improvements were noted.

YLD Report

YLD President Veronica Cox reported that the YLD has several programs and service initiatives planned for the remainder of the Bar year. She noted that YLD leadership would be traveling to Asheville for the Spring Meeting, which will include a hands-on service project. YLD President Cox also reminded members that the Legal Food Frenzy begins the following week and encouraged participation through donations and team involvement. Looking ahead to the Annual Meeting, she highlighted several YLD events, including the Leadership Academy mixer, the Fun Run, and yoga activities. She also reported that personal care items would be collected as a service project. She closed by thanking the Executive Committee and Bar leadership for their continued support of the Young Lawyers Division and its programs throughout the year.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Damon Elmore reported that senior staff is engaged in strategic planning for the upcoming Bar year, including evaluating priorities, staffing needs, and budget challenges. He noted that staff continues to identify creative solutions to address financial pressures while maintaining member services and operations. He also discussed the growing impact of artificial intelligence on both the legal profession and Bar operations. He noted that various legal and judicial organizations are actively examining AI-related issues and that the Bar is continuing to evaluate how AI can be used responsibly while educating members about its risks and opportunities. Finally, Executive Director Elmore provided an update on efforts to improve the Bar's financial position by increasing utilization of Bar Center space and thanked staff for their ongoing work to pursue creative revenue-generating opportunities and operational efficiencies. He closed by expressing gratitude to President Chris Twyman and YLD President Veronica Cox for their intentional leadership of the Bar this year.

Office of the General Counsel Report

Following a motion, second, and unanimous voice vote, the Executive Committee met in Executive Session to discuss the litigation report. Thereafter, the Executive Committee emerged from Executive Session by unanimous voice vote.

Legislative Report

Director of Governmental Affairs Jenn McNeely reported that the Bar's legislative priority from the Real Property Law Section was successfully incorporated into HB 1344 and passed during the legislative session. She also noted that the Georgia Resource Center's request for additional funding was not approved and discussed efforts to better educate legislators about the Center's work. She advised that a special legislative session may be called beginning June 17 to address election administration issues related to HB 214 and the pending July 1 prohibition on the use of QR codes for ballot tabulation. Director of Governmental Affairs McNeely also reported that the Governor proclaimed April as Professionalism Month in recognition of the Professionalism Committee's efforts. Looking ahead, she discussed plans to enhance promotion of the Bar's legislative program through increased member education and engagement. During the discussion, additional information was provided regarding HB 1344's provisions addressing "runners" and insurance fraud. The establishment of a fraud unit within the Insurance Commissioner's Office was discussed, which will have statewide jurisdiction to investigate and enforce violations involving insurance-related fraud and solicitation activities.

Seeking Equal Justice and Addressing Racism & Racial Bias Committee Proposals

Secretary Shiriki Jones presented three proposals from the Seeking Equal Justice and Addressing Racism & Racial Bias Committee for Executive Committee consideration: (1) a survey of Bar members to identify barriers to entry and advancement for lawyers of color, (2) a survey to assess the impact, if any, of racial bias on access to justice and legal representation, and (3) cultural competency and/or anti-bias training for the Executive Committee and senior staff. Discussion also included the possibility of similar training for individuals involved in the Office of the General Counsel's disciplinary process and the use of outside trainers.

Secretary Jones, as a member of the Seeking Equal Justice Committee, explained that the proposals were intended as a starting point for long-range planning and feedback rather than a request for formal approval. Executive Committee members asked a number of questions regarding the purpose and scope of the proposals, potential costs and resource requirements, how any survey results would be used, the appropriate survey audience, and the practical implications of implementing future recommendations. Members also discussed potential *Keller* considerations and broader concerns regarding the current legal and political environment, while acknowledging the importance of the issues being raised.

Following the discussion, the Executive Committee reached general agreement that the concepts warranted further consideration but required additional development. They recommended that the committee further refine and flesh out the proposals, including identifying objectives, anticipated outcomes, implementation details, and potential costs, and then bring the recommendations back to the Executive Committee for future consideration.

Future Meeting Expenses Discussion

President Chris Twyman led a discussion on rising meeting costs and potential strategies to contain expenses while maintaining meaningful in-person engagement opportunities for Bar leadership. He noted that the Executive Team had discussed whether future Board of Governors meetings could be structured differently, including the possibility of holding them virtually, using the Bar Center more frequently, or identifying other cost-saving measures. He emphasized that the goal was not to adopt a formal policy that would limit future leaders' flexibility, but rather to begin a conversation about developing a long-term approach to managing meeting expenses. Additional discussion focused on registration fees, food and beverage costs, registration pricing, sponsorship opportunities, and ways to better align meeting fees with actual expenses.

Executive Committee members discussed the benefits and drawbacks of potential cost-saving measures. Several members expressed concern about holding the Fall Board of Governors meeting virtually, noting its importance for Board engagement, relationship-building, and orientation of new governors. Members also discussed the need to clearly identify the objective of any expense-reduction efforts before determining

specific changes. No action was taken, and the discussion concluded with a consensus to continue exploring options for reducing meeting expenses while preserving the value and effectiveness of Bar meetings.

Committee Updates

Executive Committee liaisons to State Bar committees gave updates regarding their assigned committees.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

There was no new business.

Announcements

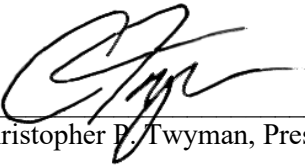
There were no announcements.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:46 p.m.


Shiriki Cavitt Jones, Secretary

Approved:


Christopher P. Twyman, President