

OREGON STATE BAR
Alternative Pathways to Becoming a Lawyer Committee
April 3, 2018, Meeting Minutes

On April 3, 2018, the Alternative Pathways to Becoming a Lawyer Committee of the Oregon State Bar met; the following people were present in person or on the phone:

Vanessa Nordyke, Oregon State Bar President
Helen Hierschbiel, Oregon State Bar Executive Director
Mark Johnson Roberts, Oregon State Bar Liaison
Troy Wood, Oregon State Bar Liaison
Danny Lang, Co-Chair
Judy Parker, Co-Chair
Laurie Cantelon
Ron Cheng
Elizabeth Davis
Dallas DeLuca
John Gear
Roy Koegen
Diane Thompson

I. Meeting

The Meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm.

II. Review Appointment Memo

Mark Johnson Roberts reviewed the Appointment Memo and the charges to the committee.

III. Comments

President Nordyke, Co-Chair Lang, and Co-Chair Parker each addressed the committee, thanking it for its service.

IV. Introductions

The committee members introduced themselves.

V. Discussion of the Options

Co-Chair Parker reviewed the two charges for the committee to ultimately review and formulate a report due in November to the Board.

Topics discussed by the committee members included:

Davis: ABA restrictions on accreditation of law schools, specifically on academic credit – the ABA requires schools to document the students have at least 84 hours of classroom credit, while prohibiting schools from awarding more than 24 hours of credit in a scholastic year.

Davis: practical reason why providing a third year of ‘practical law activity’ is not feasible – it is hard for law schools and career centers to place students in various low-income and legal aid settings because there are not enough supervisors to monitor the student’s work.

Wood: current BBX rules – there are changes to our rules regarding law clerk programs in a third year of law school.

Catelon: nepotism in a law clerk setting – the concern that a mentor might only extend this opportunity to family members and close friends.

Catelon: change our system of law qualification – Oregon might look at other countries to consider solicitor v barrister licenses.

Koegen: statistics questions – how many law clerks are in Washington law clerk program?
[Wood to find out]

DeLuca: statistics question – what is the current debt to law school ratio? What is debt to income ratio. Where do they go after internship and who hires them?

Gear: system of law qualification – difference between a barrister solicitor license structure is beyond our charge; let’s stick to the two points in the original charge.

Nordyke: change in paradigms – the House of Delegates and the Oregon State Bar are aware of the changes afoot; let’s move the needle and by doing so encourage others to do the same.

Johnson Roberts: communications with ABA is encouraged!

Thompson: paralegal feedback – her experience in with other paralegals is excitement and support given the high cost of law school.

Davis: law school pushback -- naturally, there might be pushback from law schools, given that there is a business in educating people to become lawyers, but the people who might go through this alternative pathway are not likely to be in the same circle of people who would be applying to law school at a young age anyway.

Nordyke: Will talk to the Bar about availability of space in the publication to broadcast ideas to mitigate concerns early. May also be able to put information on the bar’s website. Regarding finances – she suggests inviting the Bar CFO and budget and finance committee to come in and review the budgetary concerns.

Gear: finances – agree; smart idea to put a cost to our proposal without treating the status quo is free.

VI. Next Meeting

The committee scheduled the next meeting for May 1, 2018, at 3:00.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.