

**NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
NEW YORK HILTON MIDTOWN, NEW YORK, NEW YORK
JANUARY 18, 2024**

PRESENT: Ahn, Arenson, Beltran, Burke, D. Cohen, O. Cohen, Gold, Grays, Harper, Jackson, Levin Wallach, Lewis, Marinaccio, Markowitz, Maroney, May, McNamara, Minkoff, Napoletano, Riaño, Samuels, Santiago, Sharkey, Skidelsky, Sweet, Yeung-Ha

NOT PRESENT: Moretti, Murphy, Sciocchetti, Whittingham

GUESTS: Dr. Ramona Hill, Christopher Bopst, Shawndra G. Jones, Patricia J. Shevy, Clotelle L. Drakeford, Michelle H. Wildgrube, Dena Marie DeFazio, Nihla Fathima Sikkander, Mary Beth Morrissey, Albert Feuer, Anna Masilela, Cheryl Lynn Katz, Vincent Chang, Brian S. Cohen, Hon. Barry Kamins

Mr. Lewis presided over the meeting as President of the Association.

1. Approval of minutes. The minutes of the November 3, 2023, meeting were approved as distributed.
2. Consent Calendar:
 - a. Approval of the Bylaws – Local and State Government Section
 - b. Approval of Name Change – LGBTQ Law Section
 - c. Approval of Bylaws – Judicial Section

The consent calendar, consisting of the items above, was approved.

3. Report of Executive Director. Pamela McDevitt, Executive Director, updated the Executive Committee with respect to the administration and operations of the Association, including membership initiatives, staffing changes, and technology upgrades. Tony Kowalick, NYSBA Chief Technology Officer and Bridget Whelan, NYSBA Social Media Strategist updated the Executive Committee about technology and social media efforts. The report was received with thanks.
4. Report of President. Mr. Lewis waived presentation of his report.
5. Report and Recommendations of Committee on the New York State Constitution. Christopher Bopst, Esq., chair of the Committee on the New York State Constitution, presented the Committee’s report entitled “Establishing a Temporary State Commission to Study New York’s Constitution and Make Recommendations.” A missing date on page 3, paragraph 2 was corrected on a friendly amendment. After discussion, a motion was adopted to endorse the report for favorable action by the House.

6. Report of the Committee on Continuing Legal Education. Patricia Shevy, Esq., chair of the Committee on Continuing Legal Education, Shawndra Jones, Esq., vice-chair of the Committee on Continuing Legal Education, and Kathy Suchocki, NYSBA senior director of continuing legal education reviewed the Association’s 2023 CLE programming and the 2024 schedule of CLE programming and Section meetings. The report was received with thanks.
7. Report and Recommendations of the Committee on Membership. Clotelle L. Drakeford, Esq. and Michelle H. Wildgrube, Esq., co-chairs of the Committee on Membership, and Vicki Shaw, NYSBA’s Senior Director of Attorney Engagement and Retention presented the updated membership model. After discussion, a motion was unanimously adopted to endorse the report for favorable action by the House.
8. Report of the Strategic Planning Committee. Taa R. Grays, Esq. and Christopher R. Riaño, Esq., co-chairs of the Strategic Planning Committee, and Dr. Ramona Hill reported to the Executive Committee on the ongoing work of the Strategic Planning Committee. The report was received with thanks.
9. Report of Treasurer. NYSBA Treasurer Susan L. Harper, Esq. reported on the 2023 operating budget. The report was received with thanks.
10. Report and Recommendations of the Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – Ninth Edition of the NYSBA Diversity Report Card. Jocelyn E. Lupetin, Esq., Lillian Moy, Esq., Nihla Fathima Sikkander, Esq., and Dena DeFazio, Esq. presented the Ninth Edition of the NYSBA Diversity Report Card. After discussion, the following friendly amendments were accepted:

General Recommendations (pages 32-33)

B. Each Section and Committee should ensure it provides a formal leadership opportunity for a diverse lawyer. ~~This might include a seat on their Executive Committee, which can also provide a formal mentorship opportunity.~~ The Young Lawyers Section is to be commended for recruiting a variety of diverse attorneys and encouraging them to serve as liaisons to this Committee and to various other Sections.

C. The DEI Committee urges NYSBA to encourage ~~require~~ all persons nominated to serve on the Nominating Committee or as a NYSBA Officer or Section Leader to answer each question in their demographic profile. In addition, NYSBA’s leadership should continue to regularly call upon all members to also provide all the data requested in the data collection tool.

Continue to Implement the NYSBA Diversity Plan (page 33)

2. The DEI Committee appreciates that in supporting continuation of the diverse delegate positions for the House of Delegates and the Executive Committee, the

focus remains on people of color, whether thanks to race or ethnicity. This report card demonstrates the continuing need to encourage that we hear the voices of LGBTQIA+ people and people with disabilities.

After discussion, the motion to amend the report carried. A motion was adopted to endorse the report for favorable action by the House.

11. Report and Recommendations of the Task Force on Medical Aid in Dying. Mary Beth Morrissey, Esq., chair of the Task Force on Medical Aid in Dying presented the report and recommendations of the task force. After discussion, the following friendly amendment was proposed:

Page 6, last paragraph: The Task Force on Medical Aid in Dying recommends the New York State Bar Association adopt a position in support of the pending MAID bill (A995a/S2445); and additional comments and recommendations, and to support similar bills that accomplish this purpose.

After discussion, the motion to amend the report carried. A motion was adopted to endorse the amended report for favorable action by the House.

Sarah Gold abstained.

12. Reports of Vice-Presidents and Executive Committee Liaisons. Taa Grays, Esq., NYSBA Secretary, Michael Markowitz, Esq., Vice President of the Tenth District, and Michael May, Esq., Vice President of the Sixth District presented. The reports were received with thanks.
13. Report and Recommendations of the Trusts and Estates Section – Proposed Legislation – Equity for Surviving Spouses Act (ESSA). Albert Feuer, Esq., Anna Masilela, Esq., and Cheryl Lynn Katz, Esq. presented the Section’s legislative proposal supporting the Equity for Surviving Spouses Act (ESSA). After discussion, a motion was unanimously adopted to endorse the report for favorable action by the House.
14. Report and Recommendations of the Task Force on Combating Antisemitism and Anti-Asian Hate. Vincent Change, Esq. and Brian S. Cohen, Esq., co-chairs of the Task Force on Combating Antisemitism and Anti-Asian Hate presented the task force’s report. After discussion, a motion was adopted to endorse the report for favorable action by the House.
15. Report of the Committee on Communications and Publications. Hon. Barry Kamins, co-chair of the Committee on Communications and Publications, and Susan DeSantis, NYSBA’s Chief Communications Strategist updated the Executive Committee regarding the committee’s goals and activities for 2024. The report was received with thanks.
16. New Business. Immediate Past President Sherry Levin Wallach presented an ABA Resolution regarding adding gender to the UN definition of apartheid. Support and co-sponsorship from NYSBA was requested. The Executive Committee decided to plan an

emergency meeting to allow time for the resolution to be reviewed by members. The follow-up meeting was scheduled for January 24, 2024, at 1:00pm.

17. Date and place of next meeting. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will take place on Friday, April 5, 2024, at the Bar Center in Albany.
18. Adjournment. There being no further business, the meeting of the Executive Committee was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Taa R. Grays".

Taa R. Grays
Secretary