



MINUTES

Executive Committee Meeting
Law Society of the Northwest Territories
Law Society Training Room
January 9, 2025

Attendance:

Christopher Buchanan, President (virtual)
Sandra MacKenzie, Vice-President
Alex Godfrey, Treasurer
Sukhmanpreet Dhindsa, Secretary (virtual)
Keelen Simpson, Member-at-Large
Ramona Pearson, Layperson (virtual)

Call To Order:

Christopher called the meeting to order at 12:05

Approval of the Agenda:

MOVED BY: Sandra MACKENZIE
SECONDED BY: Keelen SIMPSON

THAT the Agenda be approved with the addition of the Proposed *Legislation Act*.

CARRIED

Approval of the Consent Agenda:

MOVED BY: Keelen SIMPSON
SECONDED BY: Sandra MACKENZIE

THAT the Consent Agenda be approved with the following changes:

- Correct spelling mistake in December 12 minutes.
- Details removed from RAC in electronic minutes.

CARRIED

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

Membership Management Software

Update from Executive Director: The contract renewal date of the current software is May 31, 2025. Thentia has confirmed that they will renew in 3-month increments if needed, however, the cost of services would increase. They recommended renewing the contract for 1 year if the extension exceeded 6 months. Alinity has reported that they are unable to start work in spring 2025 as there have not been any decisions by the LSNT since we contacted them initially. The earliest they could start work would be fall 2025 or winter 2026. The committee discussed options and agreed to move services to Alinity in 2026, with a preference to go live in April, 2026.

Motion to renew the current agreement with Thentia in 2025, ending May 31, 2026, and for the LSNT to engage Alinity in contract negotiations. Subject to final approval, the LSNT will enter into an agreement with Alinity.

MOVED BY: Alex GODFREY
SECONDED BY: Sandra MACKENZIE

CARRIED

Action Item: ED to contact Alinity with next steps.

Guidelines for the Use of AI:

The committee discussed the draft Guidelines.

Motion to approve the draft Guidelines as written to be issued as a Practice Directive.

MOVED BY: Sukhmanpreet DHINDSA
SECONDED BY: Keelen SIMPSON

Contributions to External Events:

The committee discussed letters that had been drafted to the Courts regarding the LSNT's historical contributions to events for judges. The committee reviewed the decision made in a previous Executive Meeting as well as the 2023 Annual General Meeting. Committee members debated whether the LSNT should contribute financially to these events. With no consensus, it was agreed that:

- President Christopher Buchanan would amend the draft letter(s) and send to Committee Members for a decision by February 13, 2025 meeting.
- Jessica to send minutes from previous meeting with decision to Christopher following the meeting.

Trust Account / Responsible Lawyer Initiative:

Executive Director updated the Committee on current work, updating procedures for lawyers opening trust accounts or being designated as the Responsible Lawyer of a firm. Other Law Societies have something in place to address competency, such as a module or test. The LSNT will be overseeing a jurisdictional review of trust account requirements. Members in private practice will be engaged to determine if it will be valuable to have annual Accountant's Reports completed by one accounting firm. The LSPEI uses this approach and has reduced the cost and administrative work for lawyers.

Action Item: Engagement with Active Members in Private Practice via a survey – ED
Consultation with local accounting firms to determine cost and capacity - ED

Rules of the Law Society RFP:

Action Item: President Christopher Buchanan will circulate the Request for Proposals following the meeting.

FEDERATION OF LAW SOCIETIES OF CANADA:

Executive Director updated the Committee on the proposed IRCC regulations published in the Gazette on December 20, 2024. The proposed regulations include an incorrect reference to the FLSC's response to consultation. The President of the FLSC wrote to the Minister and Deputy Minister of Immigration requesting a retraction. The formal content period ends February 4, 2025. The ED will advise the Executive Committee regarding a submission following discussions with other Law Societies in the coming weeks.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director reported on the upcoming 2025 renewal season, noting that it is due to open on January 14 or 15. Current work with Thentia is taking place. The committee discussed whether it would be appropriate to offer incentives to members who renew early. It was decided that the LSNT office would identify members who frequently renew at the last minute and address it the following year.

FINANCE REPORT:

Executive Director presented financial statements as of October 31, 2024. It was reported that the increase in membership fees in 2024 has resulted in a significant increase in revenue.

DISCIPLINE:

Executive Director reported that there is currently a call out for new Lay Members for the Discipline Committee. There have been no new complaints since the last Executive meeting. The committee discussed the draft Request

for Proposals for external counsel following a request from the Discipline Chairperson, Billi Wun. No changes were requested to the draft RFP.

Action Item: Jessica to send RFP to Membership

NEW BUSINESS:

Proposed Legislation Act

The committee discussed the proposed *Legislation Act*. In Nunavut, they have something similar. Replaces statutory act. How things get through the house etc. There are conflict provisions different to the code provisions. Drafters are in direct conflict when they do that work. Nunavut codified the conflict, nobody else has. The clients are individual MLAs, not internal in the government. Draft motions on behalf of the MLA that are contradictory to your internal department. It is in place and agreed to at that level. It was noted that other jurisdictions do not do this, except Ontario, who have far more resources. Most places have agreements in place. The practice is not uncommon. The drafter does everything to maintain that firewall though they are on both sides of it. Limit the risk. MLAs get independent legal advice. The government gets advice from legal counsel. The firm will give instructions to the drafter. The drafter is not advocating. It is unusual legal work. They have privileged information, risk is that they breach confidentiality. Discussion about insurance and whether coverage would apply to work for the MLAs. It was decided that it would go to members for feedback, due by the following week.

Action Items: Jessica to send to membership for feedback. Send to LEAP for feedback

President Christopher Buchanan will draft a letter and circulate to the committee. Additional concerns can be addressed via email.

LSNT Priorities:

President Christopher Buchanan requested that priorities are included as a standing item on the Agenda in subsequent meetings. The committee discussed priorities and identified drafting the new Rules, Membership Management Software replacement, Recruitment Effort. The committee reviewed the current state of affairs and proposed timeline for the Rules Project. The ED reported that the proposed timeline was based on the RFP going out in the month of January. It was decided that further consultation would be added to the end of the timeline and to reduce the consultation period. Alex Godfrey suggested that there should be a committee dedicated to recruitment efforts and that it should not be an Executive Committee initiative.

LSNT Committees:

The committee discussed the need to rejuvenate current committees, addressing leadership roles that have been unchanged for a number of years. It was decided that new chairs are needed for committees: Admissions, CPD and Rules. Alex will take the lead on the CPD Committee. Current Rules chairperson had reported he will not be returning. Sandra will take the lead on the Rules Committee. Wellness committee is not likely needed, the CPD Committee could focus on Wellness.

Action Items: Jessica to draft letter to Admission Committee Chairs

Alex Godfrey will engage with potential Chairs for the CPD Committee.

Sandra MacKenzie will engage with potential Chairs for the Rules Committee.

Meeting Adjourned: quorum was lost before motion to adjourn

Next Meeting: February 13, 2025

Christopher Buchanan

Christopher Buchanan (Dec 19, 2025 10:26:49 MST)

Christopher Buchanan, President

Sukhmanpreet Dhindsa

Sukhmanpreet Dhindsa (Dec 19, 2025 11:14:46 MST)

Sukhmanpreet Dhindsa, Secretary











2025-01-09 2024 Executive Minutes Draft

Final Audit Report

2025-12-19

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