



BC's Union for Professionals

## Law Society Lawyers (LSL) Chapter Annual General Meeting

November 25, 2022  
12:00 p.m.  
(Via Zoom)

### DRAFT MINUTES

#### Present

- K. Bradley, Co-Chair
- A. Driessen van der Lieck, Co-Chair
- M. Rajan, Secretary-Treasurer
- J. Abells
- E. Berger
- K. Bradley
- B. Buchanan
- C. Carter
- V. Choi
- M. Down
- A. Hilland
- H. Huzzey
- C. Jekin
- S. MacFarlane
- A. MacDonald
- M. Namazi
- B. Parker
- C. Putney
- I. Teicher
- J. Vodsedalek
- K. Wedel

#### Staff

- B. Harper, Labour Relations Officer
- S. McCannell, Executive Director
- T. Arakawa, Meeting Recorder

#### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. with K. Bradley and A. Driessen van der Lieck and K. in the chair. The co-chairs welcomed the members and introduced the PEA staff members present.

#### **2. Land Acknowledgements**

The members acknowledged with respect the traditional lands of the Indigenous peoples on which the meeting was held.

### **3. Approval of the Minutes of the 2021 LSL AGM**

M/S/C that the minutes of the 2021 LSL Annual General Meeting be approved as presented.

### **4. PEA Executive Report**

S. McCannell, Executive Director, presented an overview of the PEA's structure. The union represents about 3500 members in 10 bargaining units. The PEA represents a diverse membership that includes licensed professionals in the provincial government, administrative staff at the University of Victoria, health science professionals, lawyers, librarians, teaching and support staff at St. Margaret's School, and workers at the Oil and Gas Commission.

Public Sector bargaining in BC is controlled by the Public Sector Employers' Council (PSEC). There are about 400,000 workers in BC, and 182 collective agreements that fall under the PSEC mandate. The PEA has six bargaining units under the PSEC mandate. The Government Licensed Professionals (GLP) Chapter ratified their agreement in October 2022; wage increases are \$0.25 per hour and 3.24% General Wages Increase (GWI) in the first year, increases by the average of BC Consumer Index (CPI) to a minimum of 5.5% and a maximum of 6.75% in the second year, and increases by BC CPI to a minimum of 2.0% and a maximum of 3.0%. The GLP agreement also includes salary grid adjustments. The recently ratified agreements are precedent-setting; increases such as these have not been seen in years.

S. McCannell thanked Executive Members A. Driessen van der Lieck, K. Bradley and M. Rajan, the Bargaining Committee and LSL Chapter members for their work and support.

### **5. LSL Chapter History**

A. Driessen van der Lieck, co-chair, presented the history of the LSL Chapter. The Chapter has been unionized for 16 years. It became clear leading up to 2006 that the Law Society of BC was paying its lawyers more than other lawyers. There were significant salary differences depending on the department or group lawyers were in. Some lawyers, mostly from the professional conduct group had been requesting salary information and had been denied. Eventually, an FOI request was submitted for the salary information.

The unionization drive was the shock firing of five lawyers without cause. The Executive Director attempted to mask these terminations as a restructuring. The Law Society Lawyers certified on April 8, 2006. Forty staff lawyers were represented in the chapter. The certification vote passed by only two votes. After two years of bargaining and a strike vote leading to mediation in 2007, the first collective agreement was signed on May 1, 2008. A pay grid was incorporated into the first collective agreement. The problematic and illogical pay grid has continued to be an issue, was a focus in the last round of bargaining. The chapter is moving towards more equity in salary among the lawyers.

### **6. LSL Chapter Executive Report**

K. Bradley and A. Driessen van der Lieck, co-chairs, presented the LSL Chapter Executive Report. Some highlights from the report are as follows:

- The PEA Chapter Executive convenes about six times per year. K. Bradley is the LSL representative.

- COVID-related labour relations and bargaining are the overarching issues at the PEA.
- The Legal Aid BC (LABC) Chapter's bargaining is underway; it would be useful for the LSL Chapter to communicate with them for future bargaining.
- The PEA Executive is guided by principles for each meeting, which include humour collective well-being, and inclusiveness.
- Policies on conflict of interest and the grievance appeal process were approved at the last PEA Executive meeting.
- It has been two years since the employer announced that the RREx program would be revamped. This has been delayed due to covid-related issues.
- The 2022 PEA member survey showed that LSL members were split in their satisfaction with the union. Most members reported satisfaction with PEA communications.

Members were encouraged to step forward and become active in union activities. The Executive thanked M. Rajan for taking on the Secretary-Treasurer position after D. Kainth's departure from the LSL.

## **7. Labour Relations Officer's Report**

B. Harper acknowledged the LSL Bargaining Committee for their major contributions. The last round of bargaining was lengthy, and members committed significant energy and time to the negotiations.

Some highlights from the Labour Relations Officer's report are as follows:

- The next Bargaining Committee will be elected at the next AGM. Bargaining preparations with the employer will begin in the fall of 2024.
- The RREx program will be addressed by the next bargaining committee. Members can request the RREx data from the PEA.
- Members are encouraged to contact B. Harper with any questions and to discuss labour relations or union issues.
- The issue of the single regulator for paralegals, lawyers and notaries is being monitored.
- Since the last AGM, there have been three grievances: one is settled, and two have been sent to arbitration.

## **8. Executive Elections**

A notice of the LSL Executive Elections was sent prior to the AGM. A call for nominations took place for the chair, vice-chair and secretary-treasurer positions:

The following members were elected by acclamation:

- J. Abells, Co-Chair
- K. Bradley, Co-Chair
- M. Rajan, Secretary-Treasurer

The LSL members and PEA Staff thanked A. Driessen van der Lieck for her service and dedication on the LSL Executive.

## **9. Secretary-Treasurer's Report**

M. Ragan, Secretary-Treasurer reported that just current balance of LSL Chapter funds is under \$6000. In order to be eligible for the 2023 chapter grant of \$1500, the fund in the balance cannot exceed three times the grant amount.

The LSL Chapter can use their chapter grant funds for their discretionary use. At the AGM donations for the following items were approved by consensus:

- Canuck Place: \$300
- Covenant House: \$300
- Greater Vancouver Food Bank: \$500
- Visa Card for Chapter Social: \$500

The Canuck Place and Covenant House donations are currently being triple-matched.

S. Berger proposed that the chapter donate to an organization dedicated to working on addictions and mental health issues. Members will receive an electronic vote to confirm the recommended organizations after the AGM.

## **10. Other Business**

J. Abells reported that there are health and safety concerns with meetings with distressed individuals, and individuals in the reception area. Concerns have been reported to the OHS Committee. J. Abells will bring forward these issues with B. Harper.

## **11. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Meeting Recorders: MR/ta