

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS (“AGM”),  
OF THE LORD READING LAW SOCIETY (“LRLS” or the “Society”), HELD BY  
VIDEOCONFERENCE, ON JUNE 22, 2020 AT 5:45 P.M.**

**AT WHICH WERE PRESENT:**

Mtre. David Assor	Mtre. Marissa Lydynia
Mtre. Gregory Azancot	Mtre. Eric Maldoff
Mtre. Michael Bergman	Mtre. Lara Malewski
Mtre. Anna Bronshteyn	Mtre. Larry Markowitz
Mtre. Nancy Cleman	Mtre. Allen Mendelsohn
Mtre. Evara David	Mtre. Heather Michelin
Mtre. Sharon Druker	Hon. Morton Minc
Mtre. David Ettedgui	Mtre. Inna Nekhim
Mtre. Jonathan Foldiak	Mtre. Frank Schlesinger
Mtre. Hershie Frankel	Mtre. Manuel Shacter, Q.C.
Mtre. Jonathan Gordon	Mtre. Matthew S. Shadley
Mtre. Neil Hazan	Mtre. Steven Slimovitch
Mtre. Tibor Holländer	Mtre. Ian Solloway
Mtre. Marie Christine Kirouack Ad. E.	Mtre. Alan Stein
Mtre. Andrew Kliger	Mtre. Robert Steinman
Mtre. Emma Lambert	Mtre. Reisa Teitelbaum
Mtre. Erin Lesser	Mtre. Laurence Vaillancourt
Mtre. Doree Levine	Mtre. Alyssa Yufe
Mtre. Elliot Lifson	

**1. Approval of Agenda:**

The President asked for approval of the Agenda.

On a Motion by Mtre. Ettedgui which was seconded by Mtre. Markowitz, the Agenda was unanimously approved.

**2. Approval of the Minutes of the Last Meeting:**

The President asked for approval of the Minutes of the previous Board meeting.

On a motion by Mtre. Hazan, which was seconded by Mtre. Holländer, the Minutes were unanimously approved.

**3. Business Arising from the Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The President asked if there was any business arising from the Minutes of the last Meeting. There was none.

#### **4. Report of the Treasurer**

Mtre. Gordon reported that there is no significant change the Society's financial standing. The Society is doing well financially.

#### **5. Other reports and Communications from other committees and/or Officers of the Society**

*Nil.*

#### **6. Address from the President**

The President proceeded with the following address:

I had several choice titles for my Presidential Report. Some titles could have contained some unparliamentary language. And so, I believe it's fitting that in our 72<sup>nd</sup> year that my address to you be titled "A Year of Firsts". The words "for the first time in the Society's history" will come up repeatedly.

Generally, the President and the Executive have the summer to plan the year's schedule and slowly get into the groove of governing this wonderful association. Prior to taking office, I already had two of our speakers booked, however, my first duty was disciplinary in nature and wholly disconcerting. For the first time in the Society's history, we had to deal with complaints of harassment against one of our members by three female guests who attended the June 11, 2019, event. Two complainants formulated their complaints in writing. These complaints were forwarded to the Executive by Past President Nancy Cleman who received these from Professor Rosalie Jukier. I want to personally thank Professor Jukier for acting as the intermediary between the Society and the complainants. I want to also thank all those involved in this matter who acted diligently and responsibly to satisfactorily resolve this matter. It is important to underline that the Lord Reading Law Society is one that is fully inclusive and just as importantly that it is a safe environment for all those that attend our functions.

During the summer of 2019, I was able to complete our speaker schedule, in order for the sponsorship committee, now headed by the two Vice Presidents, to be able to go out and propose the structured sponsorship packages which were put in place last year to the various entities that support our dinner conferences. The speakers scheduled at that time were, Robert Leckey, Dean of McGill law school; Ken Dryden, politician, author, and Hall of Fame goaltender; Justice Russell Brown of the Supreme Court of Canada; Marie Henein, renowned criminal defense lawyer; and Justice Hanan Melzer of the Israeli Supreme Court was to have been introduced by his friend Justice Suzanne Côté.

I want to thank Andrew and Doree for doing a wonderful job and I also want to thank our sponsors for their contributions. It is important to remember that in order to remain financially viable as a non-profit organization we depend on the generosity of our sponsors so as to offset the dinner conference expenses.

As of our first board meeting, governance/corporate structure and directors' and officers' insurance was discussed. A Governance Committee composed of Past Presidents and the First Vice-President was struck. One of the issues was that Past Presidents as board members put us over the 50-director limit and they could technically overrule decisions of the elected board members. This Committee prepared a written report that was included in the link containing the AGM documentation, which was sent to you with the meeting notice on June 1, 2020. The conclusions of this committee were approved moments ago by the board and these recommendations are the fruit of a review of the Society's by-laws, proper corporate governance and further to the results of a survey sent to our Past Presidents. All Past Presidents except for nine replied. Overwhelmingly, Past Presidents voted to remain board observers with notice of and the right to attend and be heard at board meetings, but with no voting rights, not counted for quorum, no legal liabilities and no public disclosures.

The Society also wishes to encourage diversity, inclusion and youth to board positions, the whole in order to ensure rejuvenation of the board and the perpetuity of the Society. As such, the board accepted the committee's recommendations to modify the by-laws. Summarily, the board would consist of:

- i. Officers (5-6 seats)
- ii. Past presidents (maximum 5 seats)
- iii. Junior members (maximum 5 seats)
- iv. Balance of board open to all (including Past Presidents and Junior Members) (34-35 seats)

The Governance Committee also cleaned up and updated the by-laws and given Covid-19, to permit attendance and participation electronically and to abolish and/or update certain committees.

One of the commitments taken at the outset of the year was to have all of the Society's communications be in both English and French. For the first time in the Society's history, it has a French website. The website has in large part been translated into French and I hope that all will be finalized by the Translation Committee prior to the start of the new season. I also hope that the tradition that we initiated of sending our communications in both official languages will become the norm. This was, at least from an optics point of view, important in the context of our Intervention into the Bill 21 litigation.

For the first time in the Society's history, we have intervened in court proceedings. The Society intervened in the Lauzon -vs- PGQ matter. The firm of Robinson Shephard Shapiro agreed to do the legal work *pro bono*. This file progressed throughout the year whereby (i) all Bill 21 contestations were joined; (ii) the Safeguard Motion in the Hak -vs- PGQ matter was dismissed by the Superior Court of Quebec; (iii) that dismissal was maintained in a majority decision of the Quebec Court of Appeal; (iv) the Supreme Court of Canada refused Leave to Appeal on the Safeguard matter; and (v) that the matter is currently scheduled for a hearing on the merits in November 2020.

As a consequence of our advocacy work and intervention into the Bill 21 court file, for the first time in the Society's history, we had to adjust two Lord Reading conferences.

Chief Justice Nicole Duval Hesler who was to address the Society on December 10, 2019, and Justice Russell Brown of the Supreme Court of Canada who was to speak at the annual student dinner on February 6, 2020 were postponed. While these speakers had been booked ahead of time, given that the Hak -vs- PGQ Safeguard was under advisement by the Court of Appeal and that thereafter Leave to Appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada was sought, the Society in order to avoid the appearance of any impropriety, decided to reschedule the speakers.

Despite these adjustments, the Society throughout the season nonetheless had the pleasure of hearing from a variety of distinguished speakers.

On September 24, 2019, we opened our season with the Allan B. Gold lecture and Robert Leckey the Dean of the McGill law school spoke on a timely topic "Advocacy notwithstanding the notwithstanding clause". Dean Leckey gave an overview of the new ways in which governments in Canada have been evoking Section 33 of the Charter. Governments are using the notwithstanding clause to shield their legislation by including the required language in the initial version of their laws.

This was followed by our November 20, 2019, members only CLE breakfast held at the offices of Stingray Music where Me Frederick Pinto in presenting his topic "Protecting freedom of speech online" asked the question "is free speech online really free?" Discussions were had as to the power that social media platforms wield since they have the right to ban content they find objectionable.

Thereafter on January 15, 2020, hockey Hall of Fame goaltender, politician and author Ken Dryden delivered a provocative talk to the Society entitled "When the decision makers don't decide: brain injuries in sports, and other matters" he made a passionate plea for the NHL to be proactive in the prevention of head injuries.

On February 6, 2020, for our annual student dinner we were honoured to receive Professor Payam Akhavan whose topic "Justice for Genocide" was truly inspirational. He described his victory at the International Court of Justice at The Hague where Myanmar was ordered to cease and desist from all acts that the UN investigators had already determined as constituting genocide against the Rohingya people.

And on March 12, 2020, just a day before the official declaration in Quebec of a state of health emergency, the Lord Reading Young Bar Liaison Committee organized the Young Bar cocktail at the offices of Crowe BGK. The members in attendance heard from our very own Me Erin Lesser and her colleague Me Isabelle Nadeau, who spoke about "Tax terms for the non-tax practitioner" where our speakers went back to basics and demystified various fiscal terminology.

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected every person and every organization to some degree or another and Lord Reading was no different. I am pleased to report to the Society that its members, for the first time in its history, heeded a very different type of call to action and stepped up when called upon. In the months of March and April several members volunteered to answer our fellow citizens' telephone calls through the Barreau du Québec's initiative. Given the confinement, volunteers and donation dollars became

scarce and several of you donated time and money to MADA for the Passover food drive and their Seder in a box initiatives. When made aware that front line healthcare personnel were fearing for their safety and that of their family members, such that they were sleeping in unacceptable locations, the Society launched “Hotels for Heroes” by reaching out to a large hotel that accepted these healthcare workers at a very reduced rate which Lord Reading gladly absorbed.

Given that we had to cancel the remainder of our events, the Society donated various amounts to several community organizations. In addition, we believed it was important to say thank you to healthcare workers who to this day continuously risk their lives to save others during this pandemic. As such, on May 14, 2020, the Society rented a food truck and fed 250 paramedics.

Lord Reading continued in its adaptation to this new Covid-19 reality by hosting, for the first time in the Society’s history, on May 21, 2020, its first virtual conference. We welcomed the Honourable Thomas Mulcair whose *à propos* topic “Love in the Time of Corona: laws, directives, guidelines and suggestions in a time of crisis” was very well attended online.

And now tonight, for the first time in the Society’s history, we had our first virtual board meeting and are now having our first virtual Annual General Meeting.

As this address is one of my final tasks as President, I want to thank all of you for the honour of allowing me to be the President of this wonderful organization. I have a ton of people to thank, some for their advice, others for tasks they accomplished given their expertise. I am surely forgetting many, but nonetheless, thank you to Justice Cohen, Larry, Robin, David, Donnie, Hershie, Lara, the Governance Committee, the Human Rights Committee, the Translation Committee, and a special thank-you to the Executive and Allen without whom none of this gets done. A special Mazel Tov to Robin Schiller on being elected to the post of Bâtonnière of Montreal.

And for the first time in the Society’s history, I will soon be virtually passing the torch to Me Andrew Kliger and in a private ceremony I will pin him with the official Lord Reading pin. I am convinced that under his leadership the Society will continue to innovate and grow its presence within the legal community and the Quebec landscape.

I will close my address with this -- throughout this presidency as the twists and turns came, a thought kept repeating itself in my mind that is best summarized by Professor Morrie Schwartz as quoted by Mitch Albom in his now famous book *Tuesdays with Morrie*:

*“Devote yourself to loving others, devote yourself to your community around you, and devote yourself to creating something that gives you purpose and meaning.”* He then continues and says *“you notice, there is nothing in there about salary.”*

I think this is a great concept for our lives. It has been my privilege and honour to have devoted myself this year to Lord Reading and I thank you all.

## **7. Election of Officers and Members of the Board**

Mtre. Schlesinger proposed electing all the members on the list which is annexed hereto these Minutes. Mtre. Foldiak seconded the proposition. It was passed unanimously.

## **8. Modification of the Society's by-laws**

The President asked for a resolution to adopt the recommendations of the Governance committee as contained in their May 27, 2020, report.

The Resolution was proposed by Mtre. Holländer and seconded by Mtre. Slimovitch. The Resolution was passed unanimously.

## **9. New Business**

*Nil.*

## **10. Good/Welfare**

Mtre. Shacter congratulated Mtre. Schiller on her election as Bâtonnière of Montreal.

Mtre. Kliger thanked the President for all the work he did in a most challenging year. Mtre. Kliger reiterated that this was a challenging year before COVID and commended the President for navigating all the challenges.

Mtre. Ettegui congratulated Mtre. Heather Michelin on her nomination to the Council of the Bar of Montreal.

## **11. Adjournment**

On a motion by Mtre. Slimovitch, which was seconded by the Mtre. Ettegui, the meeting was adjourned.

**WESTMOUNT, June 22, 2020.**

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Mtre. Gregory Azancot  
[Chairperson & President]

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Mtre. Matthew S. Shadley  
[Recording Secretary]