

MINUTES  
HAWAII STATE BAR ASSOCIATION  
BOARD MEETING

In person & via Zoom  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Wednesday, June 26, 2024

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

President Jesse Souki called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. with a quorum present.

The following persons were present for all or part of the meeting:

Officers Present

Jesse Souki  
Mark M. Murakami  
Mark K. Murakami

Directors Present

Steven Chow  
Jessica Domingo (Via Zoom)  
Geraldine Hasegawa (Via Zoom)  
Amanda Jones  
Erin Kobayashi (Via Zoom)  
Jacob Lowenthal (Via Zoom)  
Simeona Mariano (Via Zoom)  
Robert Miyashita  
Arsima Muller  
Kelcie Nagata (Via Zoom)  
Paul Naso

Officers Absent

Kristin Izumi-Nitao  
Lanson Kupau

Directors Absent

Jocelyn Chong  
Ronette Kawakami  
Carol Kitaoka  
Emiko Meyers  
Zale Okazaki

Others Present (Via Zoom)

Hon. Leslie Hayashi (ret.)

Staff

Cathy Betts  
Iris Ito  
Sean Perez  
Brian Simon  
Sara Taira (Via Zoom)

- B. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - The minutes of the May 22, 2024, board meeting were approved by consensus.
- C. **TREASURER'S REPORT** - Director of Operations Sean Perez noted that the 2023 audit has been completed and that no issues were found with the current internal procedures or financial statements. The next step is for the auditors to draft the 2023 audit report that will be presented at the September Board meeting. Mr. Perez also mentioned that the penalties have been removed from the IRS filing. President-elect Mark M. Murakami raised the possibility of changing CPA firms and moving up the audit schedule. Mr. Perez explained the difficulty of moving up the audit schedule due to late member registrations in January and February. He will work with the treasurer on a narrative to explain the reasons for keeping the same audit schedule. Total revenue received as of May is 1.6M. Total expenses as of May are \$911K.
- D. **PRESIDENT'S REPORT** - President Jesse Souki reported on the following items:
1. **Judicial Selection Process** - Senate Judiciary Committee met with the four nominees that were deemed qualified at the previous Special Board meeting. All nominees advanced to the full Senate for vote on 6/27/2024. President Souki started a discussion on the HSBA's judicial retention and nomination process. He proposed the creation of an ad hoc committee to review HSBA's role in both processes with hopes of adding more value to the procedure (get more judicial applicants; more input from members). Steve Chow, Jessica Domingo, Erin Kobayashi, Mark K. Murakami, Mark M. Murakami, Paul Naso, and Kelcie Nagata volunteered to serve on the committee.
  2. **HSTJA-HSBA Joint Committee** - This committee has been dormant for several years, but Judge Kirstin Hamman and Judge Jeanette Castagnetti are looking to revitalize the committee. It typically consists of four attorney members and the current and immediate past president, as well as six judges. It is an early outreach committee to resolve concerns regarding both judges and attorneys. President Souki is looking for attorneys who are interested in serving.
  3. **Annual Pau Hana Event** - Will be on August 28<sup>th</sup>. Sponsorships are coming in and staff is working on letters to send to other potential sponsors.
- E. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT** - Executive Director Cathy Betts reported that she and Assistant Executive Director Iris Ito met with Buck Rhyme and George Brown from RR Consultants as a follow-through for strategic planning. They reviewed the long and short-term goals of the strategic plan and discussed next steps. Ms. Betts mentioned the possibility of an ad hoc committee for disaster response to research what other organizations have in place for disasters. This committee would also explore how HSBA works with other organizations in the State to not duplicate efforts if a disaster were to occur.
- F. **YLD PRESIDENT'S REPORT** - YLD President Kelcie Nagata reported on the success of Law Week that occurred last month. The YLD will next work on Junior Judges.

G. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS** - None.

H. **NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Budget for Annual Meeting**

**Action taken:** A motion was made (Mark K. Murakami), seconded, and carried without opposition to approve \$5,000 to cover the expenses of the in-person Annual Meeting on December 6, 2024.

2a. **Strategic Planning: Disaster Response Committee** - Mark K. Murakami stated that this committee will be a piece in the puzzle to disaster response.

**Action taken:** After discussion, a motion was made (Mark K. Murakami), seconded, and carried without opposition to appoint members to an ad hoc Disaster Response Committee.

2b. **Strategic Planning: Member Benefits Committee** - Mark K. Murakami also noted that the members of the HSBA wanted to gain more benefits for the membership dues that they pay annually.

**Action taken:** After discussion, a motion was made (Paul Naso), seconded, and carried without opposition to re-establish the Member Benefits Committee and appoint Directors Erin Kobayashi and Simeona Mariano as Co-chairs of the committee.

3. **ABA House of Delegates Resolutions** - Judge Leslie Hayashi joined the meeting via zoom to discuss the ABA resolutions that will be voted upon at the House of Delegates meeting this August. She explained the process of how resolutions are created within the ABA and the reasons the ABA Hawaii delegates chose to take these stances on each resolution. This opened a discussion of whether the HSBA should take a stance on issues that are outside the boundaries of Keller.

**Action taken:** After discussion, a motion was made (Paul Naso), seconded, and carried without opposition to adopt the recommendations in part, of the HSBA-sponsored ABA delegates on the resolutions to be voted upon at the ABA House of Delegates' meeting in August 2024, with the exception of the following resolutions: 503, 524, 606, and 700.

**#503 - Action taken:** A motion was made (Mark K. Murakami), seconded, and carried by a majority to change from "Approve" to "Abstain" the vote of the HSBA-sponsored ABA delegates.

**#513 - Action taken:** A motion was made (Mark K. Murakami) to change from "Approve" to "Abstain" the vote of the HSBA-sponsored ABA delegates. The motion died for lack of a second.

**#524 - Action taken:** A was made (Erin Kobayashi), seconded, and carried by a majority to change from “Abstain” to “Approve” the vote of the HSBA-sponsored ABA delegates.

**#606 - Action taken:** A motion was made (Arsima Muller), seconded, and carried by a majority to change from “Approve” to “Abstain” the vote of the HSBA-sponsored ABA delegates.

**#700 - Action taken:** A motion was made (Mark K. Murakami), seconded, and carried by a majority to change from “Approve” to “Abstain” the vote of the HSBA-sponsored ABA delegates.

Mark K. Murakami suggested forming a committee to research how other bar associations deal with ABA resolutions that do not pertain to the practice of law. Directors Paul Naso and Jake Lowenthal offered to serve on the committee. Mr. Murakami stated that he would follow up with Executive Director Betts.

#### 4 **Access to Justice Commission Appointment**

**Action taken:** A motion was made (Steven Chow), seconded, and carried without opposition to adopt the Nominating Committee’s recommendation on the Hawaii Access to Justice Commission to appoint Jeremy Butterfield as HSBA’s neighbor island representative for the unexpired term that will end on December 31, 2025.

## J. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 1:44 p.m.

Submitted by:



Catherine Betts  
HSBA Executive Director

Approved by:



Mark M. Murakami  
HSBA President-elect