

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting  
The Association of the Bar of the City of New York  
Tuesday, May 16, 2023**

President Susan J. Kohlmann called the Meeting to order. The minutes of the Annual Meeting of Tuesday, May 17, 2022 were approved.

Ms. Kohlmann called on Devika Kewalramani, Chair of the Board, for her remarks. Ms. Kewalramani's remarks are as follows.

Thank you, President Kohlmann.

Good evening members of the New York City Bar.

I am Devika Kewalramani, a partner at Moses & Singer, and the outgoing chair of the Board of Directors of the City Bar. It has been a real honor to serve as Board chair, and to have had the opportunity to work with members of this distinguished Board. This was one of the most rewarding and memorable experiences of my professional career.

I would like to thank President Susan Kohlmann, officers of the Association, members of the Board, and Bret Parker, Lauren Axelrod, Martha Harris, Tom Halter and Maria Cilenti, for your outstanding leadership, commitment and service to the City Bar this past year. And, thank you to each and every member of the City Bar for your excellent work and contributions.

I am pleased to share with you the work of the Board of Directors during this past year:

- The Board approved the annual budget, which will enable the City Bar to continue providing timely and relevant programming and services to our members and pursuing a robust policy agenda on behalf of the New York City legal community;
- The Board approved significant capital improvements to the City Bar's building, including installation of a new sprinkler system and HVAC equipment, and construction of new, modern office space for the City Bar Justice Center and Vance Center, which features enhanced technology resources and other design elements that will strengthen our ability to serve pro bono clients;
- The Board interviewed and rated the nominees for the position of Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals (twice), to provide the Governor with an informed assessment of each candidate;
- The Board made changes to the Association's committee structure, including the elimination of special committees, and the merger of two committees into the Torts and Product Liability Committee, in response to the changing needs of our members; and
- The Board made an appointment to the board of Legal Services NYC, a nonprofit organization that helps more than 100,000 low-income New Yorkers every year.

I would like to extend my deep gratitude and heartfelt thanks to the outgoing officers of the Association and the outgoing members of the City Bar Board, for your exceptional service and contributions:

Outgoing Officers:

Hon. Jonathan Lippman (Vice President)  
Harlan Levy (Vice President)  
Peter Sherwin (Vice President)  
Tom Slome (Treasurer)

Outgoing Members - Class of 2023:

Mark Shulman  
Judy Whiting

The City Bar is no ordinary place. It is the pulse of our profession. Everyday, the City Bar opens its doors to welcome everyone from everywhere. When you enter this building, you are included. You belong.

The City Bar's vision and voice symbolize its enduring commitment to improving our legal profession and our system of justice. When the City Bar speaks, it has impact. When the City Bar acts, change happens. As Mahatma Gandhi once said, "In a gentle way, you can shake the world."

In closing, it has been a great privilege to serve as chair of the City Bar Board. Thank you.

Ms. Kohlmann thanked Ms. Kewalramani for her remarks. She then called upon the Treasurer, Tom Slome, for his remarks. Mr. Slome's remarks are as follows:

I'm Tom Slome. I'm the Treasurer of the City Bar.

I'm going to report on (1) our financial performance for the fiscal year ended April 30, 2023, and (2) our budget for fiscal year 2024, which began May 1st.

The Bar Association is looking forward to the upcoming fiscal year as a post-Covid year of community building and Association growth. In fiscal 23, we had just under 30,000 attendees at nearly 400 CLE and non-CLE programs. One thing we learned is that the flexibility in CLE programming that we offered, with on-line and on demand programs, remains popular with attorneys and we intend to continue to provide such flexibility. But we also continue to put on more in-person programs as attorneys come back to their offices.

We continue to see more external organizations eager to hold events in our historic building. This past fiscal year, we hosted nearly 140 such events, including 9 film shoots.

Total revenue for fiscal 23 was approximately \$13.5 million against approximately \$14 million in expenses, which means we had a deficit of approximately half a million dollars. Several of our primary drivers for revenue fell behind budget, namely Membership Dues, CLE and Legal Referral Services.

Others, and especially Meeting Services, surpassed their revenue budget.

The Association was also the beneficiary of an \$868,000 Employee Retention Credit. It was also able to utilize the City Bar Fund's own ERC of approximately \$350,000 through charging the Fund back for additional overhead expenses that were not included in last year's budget. The additional chargebacks were approved by both the Association and Fund Boards.

I would like to note a couple of items concerning the Association's cash flow. First, the Association recently made its first borrowings in several years under its \$4.5 million line of credit with BNY Mellon. It borrowed \$300,000, leaving a healthy available line of credit of \$4.2 million. And the Association intends to pay down the line to zero when it receives the Employee Retention Credit in the coming months.

The other cash flow item I want to mention is that back in July 2020, the Association borrowed--interest free--\$2 million from the City Bar Fund's 150th Anniversary donations and used that money to completely pay off the outstanding amount owed under the bank line of credit. This saved the Association substantial interest expense while the City Bar Fund was earning next to nothing in interest on the funds. A year later, the Association started paying back this loan. The current balance that the Association owes the Fund is \$167,000 and that will be fully repaid next month.

Our new budget calls for a deficit of \$742,000. The budget is based on approximately \$13.9 million in expected revenue and \$14.7 million in expected expenses. As I believe Bret will discuss, the Association is going to try to mitigate this deficit by obtaining revenue from unused space in the Association's building and its next-door Bar Building Condo.

Every year in doing our budget we make certain assumptions. Finding the right ones is particularly challenging in these uncertain times. But for the coming fiscal year our assumptions included:

- General salary increases between zero and 4%, with an average of 3% along with a fringe benefit increase of 5%. We made a concerted effort to increase lower-level staff salaries, and the Association's top 8 salaried employees are receiving no increase this year.
- We also assume there will be continued growth of our Meeting Services department, especially towards external events including more film shoots.
- Our budget assumes some membership growth from continuing efforts of our Membership and Marketing departments as well as reach-out efforts of the Association and City Bar Fund board members. I want to note that after several years of no increase in membership dues we recently implemented some modest increases, which are projected to increase revenue by approximately by \$440,000.
- We assume Legal Referral Services revenue will increase by approximately half a million dollars as the courts continue to work through a backlog of cases from the pandemic closures.

- The Association has increased the rent it charges the City Bar Fund to keep in pace with building cost inflation.
- Finally, we have increased chargebacks to the City Bar Fund for certain overhead costs. Traditionally, the Fund has paid only a portion of some of the general overhead items. In the coming years, both the Association and Fund Boards will be looking at increasing the portion of overhead that the Fund pays.

Our membership numbers remain strong. Total membership at the end of this past fiscal year was 23,120, a decrease of 515 over the prior year. The decrease is relatively small, and we have seen consistent increased membership numbers over the past several months. Increasing membership will continue to be a major focus for the Association's leadership this coming years.

The Association's investment portfolio consists of managed accounts, and our Investment Committee meets quarterly with our investment managers to discuss both the Association's and the Fund's investment portfolios.

The Association's portfolio decreased \$778,000 compared to the prior year, from approximately \$13.8 million to approximately \$13 million as of April 30, 2023. This \$778,000 decrease includes our annual withdrawal from the portfolio of 4.75% of a three-year rolling average value, which gets used for operations—this is a standard practice in the not-for-profit world. Of the \$778,000 decrease in the portfolio, \$688,000 was used for operations, so our loss due to market forces was less than \$100,000.

The unaudited Association balance sheet as of April 30, 2023 remains strong, reflecting assets of approximately \$24.7 million and total liabilities of \$8.7 million, which are numbers nearly identical to the previous fiscal year.

As I noted, although our investment portfolio and balance sheet remain strong, our budget reflects an expected deficit of \$742,000 for the new fiscal year. Running an organization at a deficit is not sustainable in the long run, and Association leadership will continue to review expenses for additional cost savings and look for new revenue sources, including by increasing membership, which will add dues revenue.

Some other things Association leadership is considering include finding ways to optimize our historic building by revisiting plans for the Library and exploring uses for underutilized spaces like the Bar Building Condo. As mentioned, the boards of both the Association and City Bar Fund will be considering increasing overhead chargebacks to the Fund in the coming years. We will, of course, also need to continue to thoroughly review operational expenses for places to cut costs.

In wrapping up, let me mention that all members of the Association are entitled to a copy of the financial statements once they are audited, and those audited financials should be available on the Association's website later this summer.

Thank you.

Ms. Kohlmann thanked Mr. Slome for his remarks. She then called upon the Executive Director, Bret Parker, for his remarks. Mr. Parker's remarks are as follows:

Good evening. I'm Bret Parker, Executive Director of the New York City Bar Association and I'm so happy to be with you and the many more of you who will likely be viewing this online. My message to you tonight is that the City Bar is strong and thriving, in the virtual world and in the physical world. Despite so many challenges, including a global pandemic, attacks on the rule of law, threats by cyber criminals and the shift to a hybrid workplace, we continue to serve the public and the profession.

And apparently, we're serving a lot of you. I think I heard Tom Slome say we had nearly 30,000 attendees at approximately 400 CLE and non-CLE programs this past fiscal year. One online program had over 900 registrants. We've added CLE institutes on blockchain and compliance and we're working on one related to intellectual property. And while we had a modest dip in City Bar membership during the pandemic, we have over 23,000 members and the numbers over the past few months have been higher than the year before.

Perhaps this is partly because we are a bar association for all lawyers, regardless of whether you are in solo practice, big law or in-house, in government or non-profit, or a law student preparing to join the best legal community in the country. We want to ensure that we are continuing to assist all of you in your practice and providing meaningful engagement and networking opportunities.

With technology enhancements made here at the City Bar since the Pandemic, committee member engagement is at an all-time high and we have increased committee participation by nearly 1,000 lawyers since 2019. About half of this increase is from lawyers with 6 or fewer years of practice. We also have increased law student participation by about 50% since 2019 with over 200 law student members on committees. Committees are really making use of the affiliate committee member option – the Sports Law Committee has nearly 200 members. In other words, we are a vital community that is providing fellowship, training and professional service opportunities to the next generation of bar leaders.

And for those of you who think the pandemic summoned the end of in-person meetings – I'm here to tell you that is not the case. In the fall, we hosted over 300 first-to-third-year associates for an in-person reception here and we couldn't get them to leave the building. If you have colleagues who are not yet members, encourage them to join. This is the place to be.

Much of what I've described is thanks to the work of our committees, the head and the heart of this bar association. City Bar President Susan Kohlmann will talk about some of the task forces and working groups that have jumped into action to tackle various policy issues and address the existential threats our democracy is facing. In the past year, our committees have generated approximately 140 reports. And the CLEs and programs are also driven mostly by our committees, including next week when the White Collar Crime Committee will be holding its annual institute with an amazing lineup of speakers.

We are very aware of how difficult the pandemic has been on the solo and small law firm community – some have given up their office leases in the city and shifted their practices. We have pulled together a team that is developing ways to help these lawyers, including providing them with a community and additional resources to serve their clients, such as by providing part-time office and conference room space. We'll have more to say about this in the coming months.

One of the reasons we are able to provide the space for these improvements to solo and small firm lawyers is that the City Bar Justice Center and Vance Center for International Justice, two of our City Bar Fund projects, have new consolidated and upgraded offices in our building, providing them with better technology and space to service their clients and the public at large.

Both centers have been busting at the seams with lots of exciting activity.

The Justice Center continues to leverage the pro bono assistance of the legal community to provide tens of thousands of people with pro bono legal services and operates the legal hotline. Among other work, this past year the Neighborhood Entrepreneur Law Project successfully launched an initiative to advise micro-entrepreneurs on New York's new cannabis licensing regulations and to counsel on incentives to participate in this new industry that are directed at individuals disproportionately impacted by cannabis prohibition laws.

The Vance Center, founded over 20 years ago, held its first in-person celebration of the Keep Families Together initiative, which has provided pro bono co-counsel from the home countries of children and families seeking to immigrate in the United States but separated by some of the U.S. government's policies. It also participated in the launch of Reporters Shield, which will assist media and other independent reporting organizations worldwide with legal defense against defamation lawsuits and related claims.

The third City Bar Fund project is our Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, headed by Tanya Martinez Gallinucci, who joined this past year as Executive Director for that office.

The "belonging" addition to the office's name is an important additional point of emphasis and if you want to understand it, please check out the series of "Building Belonging" podcasts – the link is on our website.

Diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging remain a priority for the profession and the City Bar. We've been making progress, but there's so much work to be done. Our leadership continues to be diverse, with over half of our Board membership coming from historically underrepresented groups. 45 of our roughly 150 committee chairs come from historically underrepresented groups -- up from 24 in 2019. And committee membership has had similar increases in diversity.

We remain committed to continuing our work to address a past history of exclusion of some groups to ensure that our profession and the City Bar are welcoming to all.

The 4th City Bar Fund project is our Lawyer Assistance Program, a free confidential service, available to attorneys, judges, law students and their family members, in New York City, who are struggling with alcohol or drug abuse, depression, anxiety and stress, as well as other addictions and mental health issues.

We thank the New York State Office of Court Administration for supporting this critically important work. Mental health and wellness has been a challenge for many – especially since the Pandemic. We are fortunate to be able to assist those in our profession who are struggling.

I already mentioned Tanya's arrival and also want to mention another new member of our senior leadership: Josh Lamangan, our Director of membership and marketing. Tanya and Josh took over positions vacated by James Lewis and Arlene Bein.

And another bittersweet note -- Bob Huber, our director of building operations, is also retiring this summer after over 20 years at the City Bar. My thanks to James, Arlene and Bob for all the work they and their teams do.

We have an incredible staff who work on everything that happens here from the front desk to customer relations, the library, finance and even behind the a/v booth in the back of the room – I want all of our amazing staff to stand now and receive our appreciation for keeping the City Bar running so well and meeting the needs of our members.

Let me say a few words about our Legal Referral Service. Each year around this time I call 311 to ask for a lawyer and get such joy when they connect me with the New York City Bar. We haven't tallied all the figures from this past fiscal year, but it looks like we're on pace to have approximately 80,000 inquiries from various sources and about 2,000 referrals each month to participating, screened and approved panel members. And with that kind of demand, we're looking for panel member applicants in high-need areas that are listed on our web site. This is a great opportunity to grow your practice so please check it out.

You can see how much good work is happening here and what an impact we are having. 23,000 members means we have a loud collective voice on issues of importance to our community. And we've been amplifying that voice with communications efforts, including more activity on social media and a growing library of podcasts, some of which get hundreds of listeners. And our 44th Street eNews arrives every Monday – if you don't receive it please let me know – since it's a one-stop shop for everything happening at the City Bar, whether it's in the building, online or out in the world where we advocate. And keep your eyes out at the end of this summer when we will have a web site refresh with better mobile design.

So, like I said at the start, we are strong and thriving. That's thanks to all of you, so please keep up the good work and let us know how we can assist.

Now let me turn it over to City Bar President Susan Kohlmann.

Ms. Kohlmann thanked Mr. Parker for his remarks. Ms. Kohlmann then presented her remarks as follows:

It is my absolute honor and privilege to serve as President of the New York City Bar Association. These are extraordinary times here at home, and around the world. We are at an inflection point. For many of us, things began to change three years ago with the arrival of the global pandemic, the death of George Floyd and widespread protests demanding racial justice, and a presidential election that brought unprecedented threats to the rule of law and electoral safeguards.

COVID has "officially" been declared over, but of course the aftermath of COVID, and all of these issues persist. COVID has forever affected our workplaces, it has impacted a generation of law students and those starting their professional lives. Thankfully, we

have seen the Bar Association once again become a place to meet starting with hundreds attending a reception last Fall for young lawyers who had not had the opportunity to get together in person for years. But sadly, we continue to face critical issues of racial injustice, after fifty years, the Dobbs decision has taken away a women's fundamental right to choose, transgender rights are under attack like never before, and we are rolling full speed ahead into yet another election cycle that continues to threaten our justice system, the rule of law and electoral safeguards.

Internationally, there is an armed conflict in Europe not seen since the Second World War. And all of this now enhanced, influenced, or effected in some way by the fact that we find ourselves in the midst of a monumental technological revolution – the advent of artificial intelligence. We may well be living through the greatest era of change in history.

And after a year at this job, immersed in the work of the New York City Bar, I have come to realize, and it is what has energized me and yes, continued to amaze me and give me hope, that there are few organizations as well equipped as the New York City Bar to meet this moment.

As you will hear, over the past year, The New York City Bar - - fueled by its incredible staff and our members - - are not sitting on the sidelines on any of the issues that it is our mission to address. All year long, our members have brought to bear their expertise, energy, hard work and enthusiasm, working alongside the incredibly talented and tireless City Bar staff. This is what inspires me and I hope will inspire you tonight. What is the antidote to the sometimes-overwhelming challenges of today's world? Look around this room, and on our website, read our reports and testimony, listen to our amazing podcasts and CLEs - - it is linking arms, harnessing our individual talents, listening to one another and pressing forward on all fronts, together.

Here, at the outset I want to pause for a minute on the notion of listening to one another and highlight the amazing work of our Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, or ODEIB, under the leadership of Tanya Martinez Gallinucci and her terrific team. The City Bar is a place where we can air our differences, celebrate them and hopefully really listen to one and other. Fittingly, Tanya and the ODEIB team made Belonging the word of the year for the City Bar and all in the legal profession. We know we have work to do, as a profession, as an association, as a community. We all must remain laser focused on the issues of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging as we tackle the substantive work we do. Tanya's ODEIB podcasts on Belonging, usually start by Tanya asking her guest what belonging means to them. Tanya asked that question of Lisette Duran, a senior ESG Associate at Paul Weiss and I want you to keep in mind Lisette's answer as we talk about our work this past year and what we face in these extraordinary times ahead. Lisette said "she defines belonging as being comfortable enough to bring the parts of yourself you want to share, into a space, where you feel comfortable because you are not going to be judged, but you will be supported.

With Lisette's definition of belonging in mind, let me briefly review some of the highlights of NYC Bar's work over the last year. Our Committees and Task Forces have created safe spaces to allow a diversity of views and talents to be heard, without judgment, so that real change and constructive ideas can flourish.

I have no doubt you will agree, The New York City Bar can meet this extraordinary moment.



Let me highlight five task Forces and Working Groups that have taken on critical issues this year:

First, we have the Task Force on Digital Technologies which brings together a wide range of stakeholders to engage on issues involving recently developed and emerging technologies across various areas of legal practice and policy. Earlier this year, among many other activities, the task force issued a report in support of enhancing a NY version of Emerging Technology Amendments to the UCC.

Second, so important to New York City, the Task Force on Civil Right to Counsel has also been extremely busy this year. Thousands of tenants are going unrepresented in the New York City Housing Court in contravention of our City's landmark Right to Counsel Law. This is not only an issue of access to justice but, an issue of racial justice in our courts.

Third, of particular importance in these uncertain times, we have also formed The Civic Education Task Force. As we head into another election cycle, and our institutions are under attack, the need for civic education could not be more apparent. It has been reported that only about two-thirds of eligible Americans vote in presidential elections. America's turnout in the 2020 election ranked 31st out of 49 countries with recent national elections. One in four Americans can't name any branch of our government and less than half can name all three branches.

Civic Education is critical to improving civil discourse, combatting disinformation, fostering greater civic engagement and participation in elections, and strengthening belief in the rule of law. The Task Force is off to an impressive start with a Law Day program on the obligations of citizenship and a program planned for September on ways to get involved.

Fourth, we have created a working group to review the way in which New York State selects its chief judge. Earlier this year, controversy erupted over the selection of the Chief Judge for the State of New York. In light of the controversy, threatening the independence of our judiciary. We have created a 37-member working group to evaluate two questions:

1. Whether the current constitutional and statutory scheme for nominating, appointing and confirming judges to the Court of Appeals be modified and, if so, how?
2. Are there beneficial changes that should be considered with respect to the City Bar's own judicial evaluation process for the Court of Appeals?

And finally, fifth, we have the continuing work of our Task Force on the Rule of Law, Chaired by the indefatigable Marci Kahn. This year alone, the Task Force has weighed in on US support for the ICC, the need for Electoral Count reform, and new New Frontiers in Federalism.

With respect to the work of our committees, perhaps there is no better way to sum up the breadth and importance of their work, than to consider the outcome of our agenda in connection with this year's State budget process.

We weighed in through testimony, letters and reports on: the Judiciary; the Profession & the fair Administration of Justice; Good Government; Housing & Homelessness; civil rights and equal protection; and business & consumer affairs. With the help of our incredible Policy staff the committees that weighed in included:

The Council on Judicial Administration,  
The Pro Bono and Legal Services Committee,  
Real Property Law Committee,  
Cooperative and Condominium Law Committee,  
The Immigration and Nationality Law Committee,  
Civil Rights Committee,  
The Council on Children,  
The Election Law Committee,  
Government Ethics and State Affairs Committee,  
The Criminal Courts Committee,  
Corrections and Community Reentry Committee,  
Mass Incarceration Task Force, and  
The Social Welfare Law Committee.

Our work on these issues continue, in addition to this critical advocacy work drawing on the expertise of our members, we should also take a moment to recognize the very important work of the City Bar Justice Center, under the leadership of Kurt Denk and his team to further access to justice by directly addressing unmet civil legal needs of New Yorkers struggling with poverty and other systemic socioeconomic barriers. The Justice Center's work last year benefitted more than 23,700 New Yorkers and matched 1800 pro bono attorneys with cases.

And this annual report would not be complete without recognizing the New York City Bar's global voice for justice. We take great pride in our long-standing commitment to the rule of law and in holding our own government to account whether on the City, State or Federal level. And we do the same internationally, through our 18 committees dedicated to international issues and through the Vance Center for International Justice which this year has celebrated its 20th anniversary and continues its important work around the globe exemplified by its newest project called the Reporter's Shield, to protect journalists around the world.

This past year, just to name a few of the things we have done, we have joined the UN Global Compact and we have made our Business and Human Rights working group a committee. Our UN Committee put on an amazing program for the 4th International Law Conference on the Status of Women. We participated in an event with the World Jurists association at the UN last month and we are co-sponsoring The World Law Congress this summer on July 20th and 21st, where we will gather here and at the UN to discuss the rule of law and human rights, new technologies, gender equality, judicial independence, health law and a host of other topics, so join us for that. And we have spoken out repeatedly over the last year for human rights lawyers and persecuted judges around the world.

Speaking out on threats to democracy within the legal system is the first thing the City Bar did over 150 years ago, and we are not going to stop now.

I am so honored to have been entrusted to be a steward of this amazing organization with my thanks first to the staff of the City Bar - - Bret, Lauren, Maria, Mary, Elizabeth, Martha, Eric, Eli, Tanya, Dionie, Josh, Tom, Kurt, Alex and the rest of the team, you are an absolutely dazzling group who never cease to inspire me. And to the Board and all the committee, task force and working group chairs a huge thanks. Let me end this annual report where I started, What is the antidote to the sometimes-overwhelming challenges of today's world? As Tanya has named it, it is belonging in all senses of the word, to the New York City Bar Association. Again, look around this room, and on our website, read our reports and testimony, listen to our podcasts, work with our amazing staff, it is linking arms and pressing forward on all fronts to meet this extraordinary moment. If not us, who? Thank you all so much!

Ms. Kohlmann then reported that voting for Officers and Members of the Board is now closed. The Association has counted all of the votes cast in person or by proxy, and is pleased to announce the election of the following Directors and Officers:

**PRESIDENT**

Susan J. Kohlmann

**VICE PRESIDENTS**

Juan A. Arteaga  
Devika Kewalramani  
Anna M. Pohl

**TREASURER**

Jyotin Hamid

**SECRETARY**

Paula T. Edgar

**Board of Directors**

Neysa Alsina  
Patrick T. Campbell  
James P. Chou  
Brian D. Farkas  
Sean Hecker  
Gary M. Kaufman  
Jennifer G. Rodgers

Ms. Kohlmann then reported that the following individuals have been elected as Members of the Nominating Committee:

Brenda Correa  
Allegra Glashausser  
Roger Juan Maldonado  
Sandra Park  
Marjorie Peerce

Mr. Parker then called for any old business or new business. Seeing none, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Paula Edgar  
New York City Bar Association Secretary