



**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the
Canadian Superior Courts Judges Association held on
July 26, 2024 in Calgary, Alberta**

APPROVED by vote of members: June 26, 2025

PRESENT:

Executive and staff: President ~ Mona Lynch, NS Vice-President ~ Clayton Conlan, ON Treasurer ~ Janet McMurtry, SK Secretary ~ Lukasz Granosik, QC Past President ~ Michèle Monast, QC Executive Director ~ Stephanie Lockhart Membership Manager ~ Pam Gosewich	Guests: (online) Kevin Hughes, Vaive and Associates (online) Brenda Brown, Prosure Insurance Group (in-person) Errolyn Humphreys, Office of the Commissioner for Federal Judicial Affairs
In-Person participants: Deborah Chappel, ON John Bodurtha, NS John Vertes, AB Neena Sharma, BC Kathleen Quigg, NB Gillian Roberts, ON Jennifer Duncan, BC J.K. Trimble, ON Lee Anne MacLeod-Archer, NS Randall Bocock, TCC William Goodridge, NL Kathleen O'Brien, NL Thomas Heeney, ON Herbert Rempel, MB Joel Groves, BC Michelle Crighton, AB Kent Davidson, AB Lynne Leitch, ON Sharon Matthews, BC Cillian Sheahan, NL Marie-Claude Lalande, QC Thomas Cyr, NB George King, ON Alan Diner, ON Julie Thorburn, ON Thomas Crabtree, BC Simon Ruel, QC Katherine Desfossés, QC Marie-Hélène Montminy, QC	Online participants: Chantal Chatelain, QC Jerome Tholl, SK Allison Kuntz, AB Pierre Muise, NS Janet Michelin, QC Audrey Ramsay, ON Jim Edmond, MB Sandra Wilkinson, BC Ranjan Agarwal, ON Denis Jacques, QC Bernard Tremblay, QC Ted Cook, TCC Ward Branch, BC Nancy Key, PEI Karan Shaner, AB Michel A. Pinsonnault, QC Suzanne Gagné, QC Geneviève Cotnam, QC

3:17 pm MDT Meeting called to order

The President, Justice Mona Lynch, declared the meeting open. She noted that the meeting is a mixed in-person/virtual event and indicated that where votes were required, they would be recorded both in-person and virtually.

I. Report of the Deputy Commissioner for Federal Judicial Affairs

Errollyn Humphreys provided updates on the following:

Salaries - increased 3.4 % on April 1, 2024

QuadComm - being convened again this year; anticipating end of August as kick off.

Dental Plan - Government went out to tender. Canada Life won the contract. Active judges are currently covered by Canada Life, however, the new contract will result in a new plan despite it still being with Canada Life. As such positive enrolment is required. Canada Life will soon begin emailing judges to confirm they are positively enrolled for the new dental plan using their existing accounts with Canada Life. This will, hopefully, mean a smoother transition. It will go into effect November 1, 2024. Members should ensure that they have the correct email address currently on file with Canada Life. If members do not hear from Canada Life by end of October, they should let the FJA know. For those who retire before November 1, 2024, it will be a little complicated as they will automatically go to Sun Life, and will then have to transition to Canada Life after November 1, 2024.

FJA Collaborations with CSCJA – increase to carry-on luggage from \$500-\$700 and slight increase to meal per diems, to align with National Joint Council increases

Challenges with Amex Card and Access to Maple Leaf Lounge – FJA has been trying to resolve problem with Amex, however, it is not mandatory that members use the Amex card; FJA will reimburse the fee if another card is used to provide that access.

Judges Counselling Program – FJA looking at renewing contract with them and looking at new products offered by TELUS Health and how to make them available to members. The JCP website is available.

A question regarding dental enrollment followed.

II. Approval of the Minutes from the 2023 Annual General Meeting of the CSCJA

Justice Joel Groves, seconded by Justice Thomas Heeney, moved that the minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting be approved. Carried

III. President's Report

President, Justice Mona Lynch, welcomed everyone in person and online and provided an overview of her activities as President over the last year.

There has been a significant improvement in the number of judicial vacancies over the last year.

She attended several court meetings across the country, including in New Brunswick, Northern, Atlantic, BC, Alberta and Ontario.

She represented the Association as one of the delegates of International Association of Judges meeting in Taipei

She attended the swearing in of Justice Mary Moreau to Supreme Court of Canada as well as Chief Justice Richard Wagner's dinner.

She attended three meetings with Chief Justice Wagner to discuss collaborations with CJC, i.e., conduct technology, compensation, social media guidelines, mental health survey.

She met with Commissioner for Federal Judicial Affairs to discuss allowances, expenses, Canada Life, legal fees, credit cards.

She met with the President of the CBA about resources and security for judges.

She presented to delegation of judges from Mongolia.

She acted as a voice for members re: Canada Life challenges

CSCJA Hired Admin support for the Executive Director.

CSCJA entered into an arrangement with Corporate Traveller as a new member benefit.

CSCJA is currently looking at insurance for the Board of Directors.

Questions none.

CSCJA Committee Highlights:

Compensation Committee - gearing up for QuadComm, has been gathering info and vetting and choosing nominee for the Board. President Lynch thanked Ward Branch for his work as Chair of the committee.

Independence Committee – survey of members last fall re: level of support and resources from government, survey results were informative, and committee is discussing next steps and follow up. Committee about to review social media guidelines from CJC. President congratulated Kent Davidson on being appointed Chief Justice of the Court of King’s Bench of Alberta.

International Relations Committee – sent delegates to the IAJ and CMJA. Had a discussion with North American affiliate to get January 11th named International Day of Judicial Independence. President thanked Denis Jacques for his work as Chair of the committee.

Technology Committee – President praise them for the work that went into the organization of the JBJS conference; thanked Justice Simon Ruel as Chair.

Member Services and Wellness – created new sub-committees: Retired Judges, Insurance, Member News, Wellness. Working on multiple initiatives and looking at new credit cards, benefits for retired judges, improving claims process for insurance, strategies for member news. Thanked Chair, Justice Michael McKelvey, who has reached his term limit, for his leadership and dedication and welcomed new Co-Chairs, Pierre Muise and Julie Thorburn.

Public Education and Access to Justice Committee – Law Day had 19 guest speakers at high schools, working with CIAJ on a program for judicial independence, about to release an access to justice newsletter about Alberta. President thanked Chair, Kathleen Quigg.

Governance Committee – keeping track of decisions, reviewing and updating policies, Board Manual, Terms of Reference. President thanked Chair, Kate O’Brien.

Judicial Conduct Committee – monitoring the roster of judges, new procedures, complaints process. President thanked Chair, Jennifer Duncan.

IV. Treasurer’s Report | 2023 Audited Statements

Janet McMurtry introduced Kevin Hughes, Lead Auditor and Partner from Vaive and Associates, to present 2023 audited statements.

Kevin advised that they thoroughly examined the Association’s financial statements and found them to be accurate and compliant with all relevant accounting standards. He also confirmed that the financial statements present a true and fair view of the Association’s financial health and provided the following highlights:

- Year over year revenue is up 55%, including investment income. If investment income is removed, revenue is down 2% – mainly driven by a reduced insurance fund rebate, due to premiums being on par with fees being charged to members
- Year over year expenses are up 17 1/2% (due to 2022 anomaly - refund received of almost \$50,000 of legal fees). Without the refund, expenses are up 5%, which is in line with other organizations and associations grappling with inflation and going back to in-person meetings, with travel etc. following COVID.
- Cash and investment position is growing; gone up \$380,000 year over year, showing strong fiscal management. Association has enough cash on hand to pay all current liabilities and fund nearly all of next year's operations. Suggested moving some of the cash to investments to take advantage of current high interest rates on GICs.

Justice Janet McMurty, seconded by Justice Thomas Cyr, moved to approve the 2023 audited financial statements. Carried.

V. Appointment of Auditors for 2024

Justice McMurty, seconded by Justice Kathleen Quigg, moved to approve Vaive and Associates Professional Corporation as auditors for the year 2024. Carried.

VI. Report of the Governance Committee

Kate O'Brien, Chair of the Governance Committee, provided a report on the work the committee has undertaken.

The Board Manual has been completed and is available to all members on the member portal. All of the standing committees of the Association now have Terms of Reference. The committee did an assessment of Council and its regional representation, resulting in seven seats being added to Council, distributed as follows:

1 to Quebec

5 to Ontario

1 to Federal Court

The committee reviewed the Board's best practices and procedures and prepared a self evaluation tool that they will ask the Board to do it at their next meeting in the fall. The committee is also conducting a bylaw review to ensure that the Association is compliant with the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act and to ensure that the procedures are aligning with the bylaws.

A question regarding the number of Ontario members followed.

a) Executive Nomination

Justice Michèle Monast presented the nominations report for the Executive Committee and Board of Directors for approval. The Executive Committee consists of five people: the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and Past President. All remain on the committee for 4 years. Each year, at the end of the Past President's term, someone from the Board of Directors is appointed Secretary on the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee has appointed Kate O'Brien as Secretary for 2024-2025. Justice Monast provided a brief bio of Kate O'Brien.

The slate of candidates for the next Executive Committee was presented.

Moved by Justice Michèle Monast, seconded by Justice Thomas Cyr that the 2024-2025 Executive Committee of the Canadian Superior Courts Judges Association be composed as follows. Carried.

Past President - Mona Lynch (NS)

President - Clayton Conlan (ON)
Vice-President - Janet McMurtry (SK)
Treasurer - Lukasz Granosik (QC)
Secretary - Kate O'Brien (NL)

b) Board of Directors – 2024/2025 Slate

Justice Michèle Monast reported that since the last meeting in 2023, there were several changes to the Board. The term for James Edmond (MB) had come to an end, Suzanne Gagné (QC) stepped down, Michèle Monast's term was coming to an end, and another director had been appointed Chief Justice in Alberta. A special meeting of Council will take place to replace Manitoba and Alberta vacancies.

New members nominated to join the 2024-2025 Board of Directors were presented as:

Geneviève Cotnam (QC)
Alexander Pless (QC)
Karan Shaner (NT) *Interim*
Cillian Sheahan (NL)

Moved by Justice Michèle Monast, seconded by Justice William Goodridge that the 2024-2025 Board of Directors be composed as follows. Carried.

1. Hon. Justice Deborah Chappel (ON)
2. Hon. Justice Clayton Conlan (ON)
3. **Hon. Justice Geneviève Cotnam (QC)**
4. Vacant (AB)
5. Hon. Justice Jennifer Duncan (BC)
6. Vacant (MB)
7. Hon. Justice David Farrar (NS)
8. Hon. Justice Lukasz Granosik (QC)
9. Hon. Justice Nancy Key (PE)
10. Hon. Justice Dominique Lafleur (TCC)
11. Hon. Justice Mona Lynch (NS)
12. Hon. Justice Michael McKelvey (ON)
13. Hon. Justice Janet McMurtry (SK)
14. Hon. Justice Katherine O'Brien (NL)
15. **Hon. Justice Alexander Pless (QC)**
16. Hon. Justice Kathleen Quigg (NB)
17. **Hon. Justice Karan Shaner (NT) *Interim***
18. **Hon. Justice Cillian Sheahan (NL)**
19. Hon. Justice Jerome Tholl (SK)

Clayton Conlan thanked the Executive Committee and the Association.

VII. Report of the Compensation Committee / QuadComm

Justice Ward Branch (online) gave a report of the Compensation Committee/QuadComm, and addressed the following four topics:

Schedule – They have officially kicked off the QuadComm. Each side appointed their commissioners. The Association appointed Douglas Hodson (SK) and the Federal Government appointed Graham Flack, former Treasury Board Secretary. It is expected that the appointment of the Chair will occur following the Cabinet

meeting in August 2024. Briefs are in the process of being drafted and are expected to be exchanged with the Federal Government's in late September or early October 2024. There will then be an oral hearing by the end of the year, followed by the release of a report from the QuadComm by March 1, 2025 and a Government response by July 1, 2025.

Legal Counsel Developments – New legal counsel, Audrey Boctor from Quebec and also from IMK LLP, was retained for this round, along with Pierre Bienvenu. Audrey was then appointed a Superior Court Judge but will be added to the Compensation Committee. She recommended the addition of IMK Managing Partner, Jean-Michel Boudreau, as part of the legal counsel team (still to be approved by the CJC). This will be Pierre Bienvenu's last QuadComm and there will be a need to find a successor.

Data Developments – Highlights about the analysis so far: Percentage of the appointees from private firms has fallen from 73% two rounds ago to 63% last round to 53% this round signaling that the gap between private firm salaries and judicial compensation has become too large. It is expected that the first round of data on how much profit lawyers are stashing in their law corps will be received soon.

Report on the Status of IAI – The early reviews are in and so far it is running over 4%.

Questions and discussion followed.

VIII. Report of the Independence of the Judiciary Committee

Justice Kent Davidson delivered a report of the Committee. He thanked the Executive Committee and the Independence of the Judiciary Committee for their terrific work.

The committee has sought to measure the degree that the diminution of resources is having an impact on judicial independence. They commissioned a member survey and there was approximately a 50% response rate. The survey also explored the perception of the members about whether or not they felt their judicial independence has in any way been compromised by the reduction of resources made available to them. The survey was geared toward four main areas:

Facilities and Infrastructure – over 60% indicated that their efficiency and effectiveness was being affected by substandard facilities

Technology – many believe that access to technology is impairing independence

Human Resources – 62% indicated that human resources available to them are inadequate and having a negative impact

Safety and Security – traveling judges had serious concerns about their security

It was also found that deficiencies in resources was having a detrimental affect on engagement and retention. Only 29% of those who responded plan to serve as a judge until their mandatory retirement. 35% indicated that they would not make it to their retirement and 35% were unsure. 67% considered the current level of resourcing to be a significant factor in their decision of whether or not they would retire early.

Survey results indicated that it is critical that CSCJA heighten the awareness of Superior Court funders and the CJC about the impact of underfunding on judicial independence and that the CSCJA develop minimum standards. A legal opinion has been secured about what the constitutional obligation is on the part of funders as it relates to the independence of the judiciary and a report was sent to the CJC.

On behalf of the Association, Justice Davidson thanked members for their participation in the survey. Questions none.

IX. Report of the Judicial Conduct Review Committee

Written report provided, to which Justice Jennifer Duncan added a verbal report. The Committee is in the process of ensuring that all judges on the Conduct Review Roster are members in good standing of the CSCJA. The next task will be to seek more representation from Ontario and the Territories. There are no new conduct reviews to report.

Chief Justice Glenn Joyal of the Manitoba King's Bench has recently assumed the role of chair of the CJC judicial conduct committee, in light of the retirement of Chief Justice Christopher Hinkson of the British Columbia Supreme Court.

X. Report of the International Judicial Relations Committee / CMJA

Written report provided to which Justice Denis Jacques (online) added a verbal report on the Committee's activities with IAJ and CMJA. He praised Justice Lynne Leitch as President of the CMJA. He also thanked the Executive Committee and the other members of the Canadian delegation, Justices Mona Lynch (NS), Michèle Monast (QC), Clayton Conlan (ON), Lukasz Granosik (QC) and William Goodridge (NL), each of whom served within one of the four acting Commissions working on a different theme before and during the IAJ Conference in Taipei in September 2023.

At the end of the meeting, four of the Canadian delegates were elected as vice-presidents on each of the four Commissions. Justice Granosik on the first, Justice Monast on the second, Justice Conlan as president on the third and Justice Jacques on the fourth, for a two-year term.

Justice Lynne Leitch provided a verbal report on behalf of the CMJA . She imparted appreciation from John Vertes and herself, indicating how wonderful it is to see the CSCJA in such capable hands.

The CMJA educational conference in 2023 took place in Cardiff, Wales and its theme was Open Justice Today. 431 delegates, representing 48 commonwealth jurisdictions. There were many Canadian delegates in attendance. Of note, 100 of the delegates at the conference in Wales were from Tanzania and Uganda. These African delegates had saved their money to attend the conference in the UK as they found it an incredible opportunity to access education of that quality.

In terms of the regional programs put on by the CMJA, a significant function of the CMJA is to monitor threats against judicial independence across the commonwealth, and in the past year they have been monitoring the situation in Fiji, Kiribati, Nigeria, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, and, in particular, Kenya, where there has been a lot of civil unrest reported recently. In January 2024, it was noted that the Kenyan judiciary was facing a lot of difficulties with the current government and the Supreme Court of Kenya had had to resolve issues in relation to presidential elections, including election-related violence over the years. Although, the current President of Kenya was a beneficiary of the independence of the judiciary in Kenya and his contested victory in an election was upheld by the court in 2022, since he has become President, he has made a number of significant remarks attacking the judiciary after the judiciary ruled against his government in several cases. The verbal attacks escalated, the courts were being accused of sabotaging government policy, and the President was vowing to disobey court orders and making allegations of corruptions. The CMJA was alerted to these issues and issued a public statement with the Commonwealth Lawyers Association and Commonwealth Legal Education Association. The media reported that the three UK-based commonwealth bodies has condemned the attacks on the judiciary and had urged the government of Kenya to respect the independence and authority of the judiciary.

The next annual meeting of the CMJA will take place in Kigali, Rwanda, September 8-12, 2024.
Questions none.

XI. Report of the Judges Counselling Program

Justice Stanley Kershman, President of the Judges Counselling Program, presented a verbal report.

He provided an overview of the following JCP programs:

Trial Support Program - designed to support judges involved in lengthy or difficult trials; requires prior approval from a Chief Justice

Workplace Support Program – provides professional assessments and counselling to support judges experiencing problems in performance at work; a referral from a Chief is required and it has to be agreed to by the judge taking the program

All services can be accessed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Utilization rates are currently low and the JCP is trying to get the rates up and to expand the program although over 3000 judges (federal and provincial) were counselled.

Justice Kershman thanked Errollyn Humphries (FJA), Anne Lebel FJA), Jo-Anne Ramos-Williams (TELUS Health), and the CSCJA for their help and assistance.

Questions none.

XII. Report of the Membership Services & Wellness Committee

Written report provided to which the Chair, Justice Michael McKelvey, added a verbal report on the activities of the committee. A number of sub-committees have been set up and are busy working on initiatives. As Justice McKelvey's term as Chair is ending, he welcomed Julie Thorburn and Pierre Muise as Co-Chairs and thanked all the members of the committee over the years for their support and contribution.

Sub-Committee Reports

Retired Judges Sub-Committee

Justice Joel Groves presented a verbal report on the Retired Judges Sub-Committee, recently activated to examine options to enhance benefits and opportunities for retired judges. The sub-committee consists of Justice Groves, Justice John Mitchell, and Retired Justices Kristine Eidsvik and Michael Phelan. They are currently looking to find a replacement to resolve the discontinued access for retired judges on Judicom as a communications forum. In addition, the sub-committee is exploring opportunities for retired judges to share their experience with others on issues such as substantive law or independence of the judiciary and the rule of law, and identifying a number of people who may wish to access the pool of retired judges for possible speaking engagements. A message was sent to retired members about developing a buddy system with Mongolian judges who wish to improve their English language skills. Approximately 12 retired members have volunteered to participate. The sub-committee is also looking at possible partnerships with other services and agencies to enhance the collective experience of retired judges.

Insurance Sub-Committee

Brenda Brown (online), of Prosure Group, presented a verbal report. 1,157 members are currently on the plan; the highest number Brenda has seen in 36 years. There have been challenges with the move to Canada Life, including for Prosure staff who are trying to assist members with many issues and receiving approximately 75-80 emails daily. It is starting to settle down now. Claims are very much being used and there will likely be a 2-5 % increase for next year. Prosure is working on a solution to their delayed responses to members, due to the Canada Life issues, by setting up a special email address just for CSCJA members so that Brenda and staff can get back to members in a timely fashion. They are also working with Sun Life to set up online claim submissions.

XIII. Report of the Public Education & Access to Justice Committee

Written report provided to which, the Chair, Kathleen Quigg, added that the committee had recently lost a member from BC and Neena Sharma has been recruited to join the committee.
Questions none.

XIV. Ontario Superior Courts Judges Association Remarks

Justice George King gave remarks on behalf of the Ontario Superior Courts Judges Association. He thanked the CSCJA for its continued and diligent hard work and recognized some members from Ontario in attendance: Chief Justice of Ontario, Michael Tulloch, Julie Thorburn, Ontario Court of Appeal, Tom Heeney, Lynne Leitch, Jamie Trimble and Stanley Kershman
The focus of the OSCJA board is:

- Judicial wellness
- Degradation of many of the Ontario courthouses

Justice King thanked Stephanie Lockhart for improving the relationship between the OSCJA and CSCJA and congratulated Clayton Conlan on becoming President.

XV. Quebec Association of Superior Court Judges Remarks

Bernard Tremblay (online) gave remarks from the Quebec Association of Superior Court Judges (Conférence des juges des Cours supérieures du Québec) .

He thanked CSCJA for its constant support. This will be his last year as President of the Association. During his term, they underwent a reorganization of their governance, and they are now a not-for-profit corporation with a substantially reduced board of directors (27 to 11). They also increased and formalized the number of board of director meetings and now all director terms are fixed at two years and all are renewable.

Finally, he underlined that the Superior Court of Québec had its first strategic planning in 175 years. The new strategic plan was formally issued and enforced, and included a historical background, structure, mission, values, main purpose, and identified five major goals to serve as guidelines for the courts as well as particular challenges to be addressed.

XVI. Other Business / Varia

Justice Mona Lynch welcomed Clayton Conlan and wished him all the best as incoming President. She thanked Past President, Justice Michèle Monast, for her dedication and hard work, and thanked committee members, Council, board members, outgoing board members, James Edmond, Suzanne Gagné and Kent Davidson, and Stephanie Lockhart for all their hard work.

XVII. Meeting Adjourned

At 5:11 MDT, Justice Thomas Heeney moved to adjourn the meeting.

Signed:

Justice Mona Lynch, 2023/24 President, CSCJA

Justice Lukasz Granosik, 2023/24 Secretary, CSCJA

APPROVED BY THE MEMBERS: June 26, 2025 at Halifax (NS)