

ENRLS Council Q2 Meeting Minutes – May 3, 2023 – 12:00 p.m.
In-Person at Allen Boone Humphries Robinson LLP Houston Office and via MS Teams

I. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, & RECOGNITIONS – Pete Wahl

Wahl opened the meeting at 12:00 p.m. and proceeded with introductions and roll call:

A. ENRLS Council and Committee Co-Chairs Present In-Person:

Pete Wahl, Amber Ahmed, Paul Sarahan, Erin Chancellor, Ashleigh Myers, Marcella Burke, Alia Vinson, Adam Friedman, Adrian Shelley, and Lisa Dyar

B. ENRLS Council and Committee Co-Chairs Present via MS Teams:

Mike Dillinger, Kristen Fancher, Mary Mendoza, Anne Austin, James McGuire, and Catarina Gonzales

C. ENRLS Council and Committee Co-Chairs Absent:

Nathan Block, Steve McMillen, Ty’Meka Reeves-Sobers, Walt Shelton, and Kimberly Kelley

II. SECRETARY’S REPORT – Lisa Dyar

A. Consider Minutes from the Q1 2022 (Feb. 22, 2023) Council Meeting

Wahl circulated draft minutes for the ENRLS Council Q1 meeting, held at the Hyatt Hill Country in San Antonio and via MS Teams on February 22, 2023, prior to the meeting. Edits received prior to the meeting were incorporated. No further corrections or edits were offered at the meeting. Friedman moved to approve the minutes and Sarahan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

III. TREASURER’S REPORT – Kristen Fancher

A. Financial Reports

Fancher reported that as of March 31, 2023, ENRLS had \$469,868 in assets, \$2,776 in liabilities, and a fund balance of \$467,091. As of March 31, 2022, ENRLS had \$385,480 in assets, \$16,417 in liabilities, and a fund balance of \$370,203. As a result, the Section is in better financial health by \$93,888 compared to the same timeframe last year. This status appears to be largely attributable to the Section’s sustained commitment to maintain financial discipline and sponsorships supporting the Superconference and Climate Change Symposium.



ENRLS Council Q2 Meeting Minutes – May 3, 2023 – 12:00 p.m.
In-Person at Allen Boone Humphries Robinson LLP Houston Office and via MS Teams

B. FY 2022-2023 Budget

Chancellor moved to amend the FY 22-23 budget by increasing the \$2,500 line item for pro bono donations to \$10,000 for donations to one or more gardening educational nonprofit organizations selected by the Pro Bono Committee. and Ahmed seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

C. FY 2023-2024 Budget

Fancher laid out action items and additional information related to next year's budget prior to the meeting via email. Fancher reported that she will review the Bar's financial information, incorporate recommended adjustments, and circulate an updated FY23-24 proposed budget to the Council for review and approval via email.

IV. COMMITTEE UPDATES & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Nominating Committee – Nathan Block, Chair

Wahl reported his and Block's recommendation to reconvene the members of last year's Nominating Committee over the next few months to develop the slate of new council members and officers to recommend at the Q3 meeting. The Nominating Committee will work with the Social Media Committee and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to publicize a call for nominations and questionnaire for interested nominee candidates. Ahmed moved to adopt Wahl and Block's recommendation and Sarahan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Education Committee – Alia Vinson & Amber Ahmed, Co-Chairs

1. *2023 Changing Face of Water Law Conference* – Alia Vinson

Vinson reported an update regarding the 2023 conference and attendance trends.

2. *2023 Superconference* – Amber Ahmed

Ahmed reported on a pending civil lawsuit against a co-founder of a Superconference sponsor. The planning committee will monitor case activity and keep the Council apprised.

Ahmed reported on a rate adjustment for governmental and public sector registration fees. In the Q1 meeting, the Council voted to increase the regular registration rate from \$575 to \$650. Ahmed recommended: (1) no change to the governmental rate for 2023 and increasing the rate from \$250



ENRLS Council Q2 Meeting Minutes – May 3, 2023 – 12:00 p.m.
In-Person at Allen Boone Humphries Robinson LLP Houston Office and via MS Teams

to \$275 beginning in 2024; (2) increasing messaging and budgeting awareness to governmental entities of the future governmental rate change; and (3) where sponsorships allow, continuing to offer and publicize on the Section website up to 10 scholarships to nonprofit organizations to attend at the government rate. Ahmed moved to adopt the recommendations and Vinson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Vinson moved to approve a planning committee member rate half price of the standard rate (\$325 for 2023) and a waived fee for any planning committee members who are full time governmental employees, and Ahmed seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. *2023 Climate Change Symposium Planning* – Nathan Block

The Symposium was held at the Bullock Museum on April 28, 2023. The Council discussed conference attendance and continued scrutiny of balancing scheduling variables (e.g., spring EarthX events, feasibility of publishing a special edition of TELJ during the spring semester).

C. Diversity, Engagement, and Inclusion Committee – Ty’Meka Reeves-Sobers & Amber Ahmed, Co-Chairs

Ahmed reported that the committee will develop a questionnaire for the Nominating Committee to send to interested nominee candidates.

D. Law School Programs Committee – Walt Shelton & Kristen Fancher, Co-Chairs

1. *Law School Programs*

Fancher reported that the Committee reached most of the Texas law schools in the 2022-2023 academic year and highlighted EPA’s law student program activities in the DFW area that generated interest by students who contacted the Section about internships.

2. *Buck J. Wynne Memorial Scholarships*

At the Q1 meeting, Shelton reported that Baylor decided to restrict the value of third-party scholarships offered to students through the university beginning in 2024 and the Council voted to offer a Buck Wynne scholarship to one Baylor student in the amount of \$2,500 to align with the university’s limited scholarship amount. Since the Q1 meeting, Baylor agreed to allow a higher scholarship amount for the Buck Wynne scholarship. Wahl moved by proxy for Block to revert the Section’s Q1 decision as to the Buck Wynne scholarship for Baylor to keep the value of Section-offered Buck Wynne



ENRLS Council Q2 Meeting Minutes – May 3, 2023 – 12:00 p.m.
In-Person at Allen Boone Humphries Robinson LLP Houston Office and via MS Teams

scholarships consistent across Texas law schools, and Ahmed seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. *Professor Corwin W. Johnson Memorial Summer Internships*

Fancher reported that the Committee's pool of applicants was much more diverse than in previous years.

4. *ENRLS Volunteer Awards*

Fancher proposed and the Council discussed whether the Section should consider presenting one or more volunteer awards on an annual basis. Wahl moved to name Fancher as a nonvoting member of the Nominating Committee for the purpose of further evaluating potential volunteer awards to the extent allowable under the Section bylaws and Sarahan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

E. Publications & Communications Committee – Ashleigh Myers & Anne Austin, Co-Chairs

1. *Texas Environmental Law Journal*

Myers reported continued delays by the publisher and is working on developing a new template for publishing the journal. Three issues are expected to be published over the summer and she is considering issuing a call for articles.

F. Pro Bono & Community Outreach Committee – Marcella Burke & Adrian Shelley, Co-Chairs

Burke reported on information regarding gardening-based nonprofit organizations in different Texas cities the Section could support and recommended a \$10,000 total amount of donations by the Council pursuant to an amendment to the FY 2022-23 budget. Burke recommended \$10,000 be included in the FY 2023-24 budget for pro bono and community outreach nonprofit organizations.

G. Sponsorship & Membership Committee – Paul Sarahan, Chair

Sarahan reported on the status of Superconference sponsorship requests. In the first two weeks of sponsorship solicitation efforts, the Committee obtained \$34,000 in sponsorship commitments. The Committee expects to continue strong participation by firms and consultants.





ENRLS Council Q2 Meeting Minutes – May 3, 2023 – 12:00 p.m.

In-Person at Allen Boone Humphries Robinson LLP Houston Office and via MS Teams

H. Website & Technology Committee – Steve McMillen & Paul Sarahan, Co-Chairs

No update

I. Social Media Committee – Erin Chancellor, Chair

Chancellor reported that the Committee will feature individual scholarship recipients on the Section's social media accounts.

V. OTHER / NEW BUSINESS

A. Q3 and Q4 2023 meetings

The Q3 Council meeting will be in Austin at 12:00 p.m. on August 2, 2023, at the Jackson Walker office and via Teams. The Q4 meeting will be held in Dallas at 1:30 p.m. on October 26, 2023 in conjunction with a Dallas Bar Association meeting.

VI. ADJOURN

Sarahan moved to adjourn the Q2 meeting and Friedman seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:38 p.m.

