

STATE OF NEW YORK : COUNTY OF ROCKLAND

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IN THE MATTER OF
HISTORIC 130th ANNIVERSARY OF THE
FIRST MEETING OF THE ROCKLAND COUNTY
BAR ASSOCIATION, DECEMBER 14, 2023

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Held at Hotel St. George
December 14, 2023
48 Burd Street
Nyack, New York
6:05 p.m.

B E F O R E:

HON. THOMAS ZUGIBE

HON. KEVIN F. RUSSO

A P P E A R A N C E S:

ROBERT L. FELLOWS, President of the Rockland
County Bar Association
Members of The Rockland County Bar Association

ROCKLAND & ORANGE REPORTING

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New City, New York 10956

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1 Proceedings

2 MS. LOW-HOGAN: So, the first thing I
3 would like to do -- Hello, everybody. The
4 first thing that I'd like to do is welcome
5 everyone and introduce the Senior Judge,
6 here, in Rockland, Judge Thomas Zugibe.

7 (Clapping.)

8 MR. FELLOWS: Judge, I have an
9 application to open these proceedings.

10 HON. ZUGIBE: The Supreme Court for
11 the County of Rockland is now in session.

12 Our first order of business will be
13 the Pledge of Allegiance.

14 (Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

15 HON. ZUGIBE: So, as all of you know,
16 this special session of Supreme Court is
17 convened to commemorate the 130th
18 Anniversary of the first meeting of the Bar
19 Association that happened, right here, in
20 this building.

21 I want to commend the Bar Association
22 and Rob, I think it was his brainchild, for,
23 basically, highlighting this event, here.

24 We, all, know the accomplishments of
25 the Bar Association over many many years and

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2 to think that it all started, right here, is
3 pretty impressive.

4 I was looking at the biography of the
5 first President, Alonzo Wheeler. What an
6 impressive guy. He was a three-term D.A.
7 and a County-level Judge. I think that - I
8 think the truth be told if you asked him,
9 he'd probably say that his most important
10 accomplishment was the presidency of a Bar
11 Association.

12 You know, and, with that, I want to
13 introduce to you our President, here, Rob
14 Fellows, who, basically, has carried on that
15 tradition and taken it to a new level.

16 MR. FELLOWS: Oh, thank you.

17 (Clapping.)

18 MR. FELLOWS: Thank you. Thank you
19 for leading us in the Pledge.

20 I want to thank Nicole DiGiacomo and
21 Amy Mara and Laura Catina, they're right
22 over here, for sponsoring this. Thank you
23 so much.

24 (Clapping.)

25 MS. DiGIACOMO: You're welcome.

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2 MR. FELLOWS: And I would like - I
3 would like to thank Or -- Rockland & Orange
4 Reporting, who's taking down these
5 proceedings.

6 You know, as the Judge said, 130
7 years ago, Alonz - Alonzo Wheeler, County
8 Court Judge, Prosecutor, three-term District
9 Attorney, twice as a Republican, once as an
10 Independent, was here with his brother at -
11 at the bar, Abram Demarest, probably having
12 dinner or lunch here and came up with a
13 brainchild in 1893 in December, maybe on
14 this day, to form the Rockland County Bar
15 Association. What a - what a blessing, what
16 a legacy from generation to generation
17 carrying forth our mission of excellence.

18 So, at this time, I'd like to take my
19 glass and, by the way, he was a member of
20 the Nyack Reformed Church, around the
21 corner. He sung in the choir. He was a
22 tenor and he's laid to rest, if anyone wants
23 to visit his tombstone, at the Haverstraw
24 Mount Repose Cemetery.

25 HON. ZUGIBE: I don't know if we

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could toast during a court session.

MR. FELLOWS: So - so, in
rememberment - in remembrance with
gratitude, the chain continues from
generation to generation, more women, more
interesting members, more people of color,
more people of diversity. So, thank you,
Alonzo; thank you, Judge Wheeler and thank
you - thank you, Abram Demarest, for setting
the table for starting this process in
motion and thank you to our staff, our
Executive Director, who has continued our
legacy of excellence, and to the next
130 years.

Thank you, Alonzo.

VOICES: Cheers!

MR. FELLOWS: We have other
representatives, here. We want -- You know,
it's not only the Rockland County Bar
Association, but it's the Rockland Women's
Bar Association, who we're honored to have
the President of that austere organization,
here, Siobhan O'Grady.

You want to come up and say a few

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2 words?

3 (Clapping.)

4 MS. O'GRADY: I'll keep it, brief,
5 because it's cold.

6 Thank you, Rob --

7 MR. FELLOWS: You're welcome.

8 MS. O'GRADY: -- and excellent job,
9 this is such a great idea.

10 I, actually, e-mailed Nancy for some
11 stats for today cause I thought it would be
12 nice for the day considering the theme of
13 the evening and that it's the 130th
14 Anniversary of the first meeting.

15 It was 1937 that the Bar Association
16 had its first female President, Natalie
17 Couch, as you probably all know that name,
18 and she was not only the first female
19 President of the Rockland County Bar, she
20 was, also, the first female President of any
21 New York State Bar Association, which is
22 very impressive.

23 I believe -- Nancy gave me this
24 number. So, if it's wrong, it's on her, but
25 she said that the Bar Association has had

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2 eight female Presidents in its term --

3 MR. FELLOWS: Wow.

4 MS. O'GRADY: -- and, currently, you
5 have about 40 percent of the Bar membership
6 is female.

7 So, you have come a very long way in
8 your 130 years and I look forward to seeing
9 more female leadership in the many
10 committees that do wonderful work.

11 MR. FELLOWS: Maybe, next year, we'll
12 have a female President.

13 MS. O'GRADY: And, maybe, next year,
14 there will be a female President, not me.

15 So, I don't have my glass, I gave it
16 away, but here's to 130 years of the
17 Rockland County Bar and, hopefully, to many
18 more and Happy --

19 A VOICE: Here, here.

20 MS. O'GRADY: -- Healthy Holiday --

21 A VOICE: Yes.

22 MS. O'GRADY: --- Season to all of
23 you.

24 A VOICE: Yes.

25 MS. LOW-HOGAN: Thank you. Cheers.

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2 A VOICE: Yes.

3 MR. FELLOWS: I'd like to introduce
4 our esteemed County Court Judge, track
5 star --

6 HON. RUSSO: Wait. Don't say that
7 anymore.

8 MR. FELLOWS: Don't say that?

9 HON. RUSSO: I'm tired of hearing
10 that. That's it. That's the end of that.

11 MR. FELLOWS: Okay.

12 HON. RUSSO: All right.

13 MR. FELLOWS: So, as a representative
14 of the Columbian Bar Association, the
15 Honorable Kevin Russo wants to say a few
16 words.

17 HON. RUSSO: I -- Lawrence Codispoti
18 is the President. He was unable to make it,
19 tonight. So, he wants -- wanted to extend
20 congratulations to the Rockland County Bar
21 Association, the most vibrant, successful,
22 best membership. I'm very proud and happy
23 to have been a member of this organization
24 for the last 30 years. So, that's 100 -- it
25 was the 100 Year Anniversary.

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MR. FELLOWS: Wow. Wow.

HON. RUSSO: So, timing was good.

So, congratulations. You always have our support and thank you for putting this, all, together.

MR. FELLOWS: My pleasure.

MS. LOW-HOGAN: Thank you very much.

MR. FELLOWS: Do I have, from one of our esteemed members, an application to conclude these proceedings? Who wants to make an app --

MR. GLICKEL: So moved.

MR. FELLOWS: Application by Rick Glickel.

Seconded --

MR. RILEY: Point of order?

MR. FELLOWS: Yes.

MR. RILEY: I think we should have a Bar Association flag for more events such as this one. I ask that you set up a committee, establish a committee to explore that design of the Rockland County Bar Association flag for the next Bar Association members.

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MS. SCHOEPS: Volunteer. A Chairman,
right there.

MR. FELLOWS: All those in favor?
(Response of aye given.)

MR. FELLOWS: Anyone opposed?

MR. GLICKEL: This is like the Big
Bang, you know, proper flag.

MR. FELLOWS: So, do we have a - do
we have a motion? A second?

The motion, perhaps, Laurie
Dorsainvil would want to second the motion
to --

MS. DORSAINVIL: So seconded.

MR. FELLOWS: -- close the
proceedings?

Thank you, Laurie Ann.

I defer to you, Judge.

HON. ZUGIBE: There being no further
business, we're in recess.

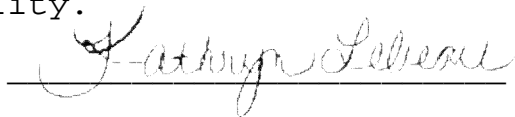
A VOICE: Yay.

(Clapping.)

(Time Noted: 6:13 p.m.)

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THE FOREGOING IS CERTIFIED to be a true and correct transcription of the original stenographic minutes to the best of my ability.


Kathryn Lebeau

