Room 028
High Court Building
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THE JOHANNESBURG
ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE JAA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
19 SEPTEMBER 2024 – VIA ZOOM AND AT THE OFFICES OF BAKER McKENZIE

1. WELCOME AND NOTICE CONVENING THE MEETING

The meeting was opened by Co-Chairperson, Hilde Eksteen, who welcomed and thanked everyone for attending and thanked Azhar Aziz-Ismail and Baker McKenzie for the venue and Petro Verster for all the notices.

2. WELCOME TO OUR GUEST SPEAKER

Hilde welcomed and introduced the guest speaker to the meeting and handed over to Leah Molatseli from Law Innovation Tech.

3. ADDRESS BY LEAH MOLATSELI – See full presentation in separate PDF.

Leah Molatseli thanked all for the opportunity to address the JAA about Law and Technology.

Leah discussed the importance of the prompts used in the terminology of legal prompt engineering and the need to coach the system to recognize your prompts to ensure that the AI gives you correct and accurate answers, tailored to your specific needs. Today's clients are savvy and expect the same from their legal advisor, who need to effectively leverage the AI in their work. There is already a noticeable difference between bigger and smaller firms and smaller firms need to get access to the same advantage from AI.

The legal profession needs to develop their own prompt library, using pre-defined terms as well as define the AI's personality to set for example the tone of the AI. Additionally, they need to tailor their prompt persona, so that the AI gives the correct information as an attorney and not a member of the public.

You can also ask for the information to be contextualised in different formats, such as a draft, a formal memo, a report, or a legal opinion. You can then delve deeper, asking the AI to present the legal opinion in say for example as a presentation, as bullet points, as a comparative table or as a terms and conditions agreement.

Leah further stated that one must ensure that the platforms you use are trusted and to ensure that there is still human oversight to ensure that the information is correct.

If anyone wants to start playing around with AI, do so using either ChatGPT or Cloud but caution against entering any of your client's information.

Hilde thanked Leah Molatseli for her presentation and then convened the meeting.

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the 2023 AGM were proposed by Yusuf Wadee and seconded by Petro Verster.

This is the first live AGM since 2020 before Covid-19.

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4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – See full report in separate PDF.

Hilda thanked all that attended and advised that the full report will be circulated to members via our website and a link in a newsletter.

Hilda highlighted that we have lost a very dear member of the legal profession, Mr Tony Pillay of the LSSA and offered condolences to his family.

The JAA still has a very good relationship with the LSSA and the GAA.

Hilde mentioned, in particular, the value of the JAA WhatsApp groups.

The JAA has incorporated the East Rand Attorneys Association and will continue to get all to work together.

The Master Office portal is working very well. Hilde thanked Katherine Gascoigne for all her work with the Master's offices.

We have been assured that a most of the Court Online / Caselines system gltiches have been addressed. The JAA continues, behind the scene, to interact with SITA/OCJ to try and iron out further issues addressed by our members.

The Deeds office in Pretoria moved and the JAA have worked together with the PAA to resolve issues.

Our Personal Injury Committee – we are working closely with the judiciary to get quicker dates and efficiencies in the procedures, and Hilde thanked Yusuf Wadee for all his work in this regard.

Hilde thanked the Executive Committee for all the hard work done and stated that the exco members are an example of great team-work.

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Hilde offered condolences to all in the profession who has passed away in the past year and offered condolences to all their families.

Hilde then handed over to the Treasurer, Katherine Gascoigne

5. TREASURER'S REPORT – See full report in separate PDF.

Katherine indicated that she is very happy to present this year's financials, which were prepared by Helen Hamman. Unfortunately, Helen will not be able to assist us in future due to other work commitments.

There is an increase in our subscription income which is largely due to our WhatsApp groups, proving that members find this communication channel effective.

We are now reflecting a truer number of members due to better procedures and we have asked for an annual small subscription from candidate attorneys.

It is important to note that the JAA get the same court rolls as other associations but the JAA staff check and name the rolls correctly. A special thanks to Viv Joubert for her efforts in this regard.

It appears that there is a lot of cash on our books, but just over R900 000 is ring-fenced for the RAF, and can only be utliized for RAF matters.

We will be focusing on two large capital expenditures this year: updating our website and upgrading of all our hardware and programmes at our High Court office.

The JAA would like to open a branch at the Master's Office, but this is on hold due to lack of budget.

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Katherine thanked the sponsors of this years Judges Function, Sabinet and Investec.

Roxanne Barnard mentioned that the attorneys need a wi-fi system at the High Court, which the JAA are addressing.

Chantelle Gladwin-Wood asked if the reference in the annual financial statement to the Companies Act is correct and it was agreed that this needs to be changed. Katherine will update this in the financials as well as the names of the exco.

Chantelle proposed the financial statements in its amended form and Naledi Makaba seconded.

6. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE THAT HAS BEEN ACCEPTED ARE:

Hilde mentioned that although this is a voting year, there is no election, as such, because the nominees will automatically be accepted as they stand uncontested. All the nominees accepted their nominations, but should any members wish to join the committee, to please contact us.

7. **GENERAL**

Nothing was added.

AGM CLOSED AT 19h04