Important work awaits

With autumn arrives the ASWB Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly, the meeting where ASWB members gather to discuss the business activities of ASWB. Attendees will receive reports on the operations of the association, our financial status, the governance activities of the ASWB Board of Directors, and examination administration and development activities. Member board delegates will elect new leaders and vote on the recommendations put forward by various committees.

By the close of registration, 53 jurisdictional delegates had registered to attend, representing 82 percent of member boards. (A total of 117 member board members and staff will be attending the meeting.) That level of participation is outstanding! The Board of Directors and ASWB staff look forward with me to welcoming all participants, especially those who are attending for the first time.

While this will be a new experience and an unfamiliar process to new delegates and attendees, I encourage you to have no intimidation! ASWB staff, other jurisdictional members, and members of the ASWB Board of Directors will be present to support and assist you in your new role. You will find that the ASWB family is welcoming and easily engaged.

Important work awaits delegates at this annual meeting. Delegates will vote on bylaws amendments and amendments to the Model Social Work Practice Act and elect new leadership for six open positions on the ASWB Board of Directors and three open seats on the Nomination Committee. It is vital that all members review information on ASWB’s delegate assembly web page prior to the Delegate Assembly and that jurisdictional boards support their delegate by discussing how the board wishes the delegate to vote as its representative.

This year, service as a delegate is particularly meaningful because of the important task of voting to adopt the 2019–2021 Strategic Framework, a new name for our strategic plan that the Board believes reflects structure and flexibility at the same time. Adoption will be the final step of a yearlong process of working with Paul Meyer, a strategic planning expert, to gather and synthesize input from member boards, stakeholder groups, ASWB staff, and focus groups held during the 2018 ASWB Education Conference to develop the association’s strategic direction for the next three years.

I am proud of the work done by the Board in collaboration with executive staff during the August ASWB
Board of Directors retreat to come to consensus on three strategic focus areas that advance ASWB’s mission, vision, and values. The goals and objectives supporting these focus areas were developed by staff and approved by the Board in October. (See related story.)

I have to share with you, it was an honor to labor alongside such dedicated staff and members of the Board of Directors on this critical endeavor. In my 30+ years of board work, I’ve never beheld such commitment to an association by staff and a board of directors. I believe each person involved during the process focused on the mission, the jurisdictional members, the profession and regulation of social work, and the best interests of the association during the process.

I am excited to welcome you to the Great State of Texas for this year’s annual meeting. In addition to it being the first that I will preside over, it is taking place in my home state and during the tricentennial of the founding of San Antonio. I look forward to seeing you as we gather to conduct business for ASWB during the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly in San Antonio, Texas, November 15–17, 2018. Safe travels to all.
The final piece of the puzzle

“Heather Foley ... is picking up on things quickly. We will gain a lot from her presence here.”

Dwight Hymans, ASWB Chief Operating Officer

When Heather B. Foley, CPA, the first person to hold the title of director of finance and administration at ASWB, joined the association’s staff in early September, it may have seemed to her like a new beginning. But for ASWB CEO Mary Jo Monahan and COO Dwight Hymans, Foley’s arrival represented the end of a significant period of transition across the organization.

The process of adding new positions to the staff structure began about four years ago. “We have built in a new layer of organization,” Hymans said. “Member Services, Exam Development, and Exam Administration now have directors.” Adding a director of finance and administration, Hymans explained, “is the final piece of the puzzle we’ve been building. About three years ago, we started talking about how much staff time was needed for accounting and finance. Up until then, we kept it basic.”

“As ASWB has become more complicated and more complex,” Monahan said, “we needed a director with a CPA background who has a long view of the organization’s future.” She adds that the Finance and Administration Department is doubling in size, adding both a director and a full-time human resources manager to what was previously a staff of two.

Christine Breeden, office operations manager, has expertly stayed on top of the day-to-day details; but as ASWB grew, the need for more services led to contracting with Warren Whitney, a management consulting firm. Gene Gregory, the accountant who consulted on-site two days a week, helped ASWB leadership figure out the organization’s needs and then stayed on to help with Foley’s transition. Gregory will continue to provide his expertise as needed. “As we’ve grown,” Hymans said, “we’ve wanted more information to track our programs and to get our directors more involved in budgeting and oversight of finances.”
change will help provide even richer data for decision-making.

The creation of the new position is timely, coinciding with the debut of the strategic framework that delegates will vote to adopt at the Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly in November. “As we go into a new strategic framework,” Hymans said, “We will have a strong organization to support the plan. Heather will provide our treasurer with better insights, and that will help overall to develop a budget with pieces that relate to the strategic framework.”

Once the decision to hire a new director was made, a search for the right person to fill the position brought Heather Foley to ASWB. “Heather has a firm grasp of nonprofit finances,” Monahan said. “She has an understanding of budgeting and the ability to help management staff understand their responsibilities related to budget.” Beyond her background, Heather brings other qualities to ASWB. “She embraces our corporate values of integrity and service and has a positive attitude,” Monahan said. “Heather is a problem solver whose expertise will benefit us as we add new systems.”

Foley brings 30 years of experience from the nonprofit and for-profit worlds. “I have sat on all sides,” she said. “I’ve been an auditor, a board member, and a consultant.” Before coming to ASWB, Foley worked as a controller for an equipment repair company; was a partner in an accounting firm; and served as director of finance for a nonprofit. She has served on boards of community nonprofits, including the local domestic violence program Empowerhouse. She is happy to be back at a nonprofit, she said. “I love the idea of working for a nonprofit with a purpose beyond making money for someone else.”

She has already met with the directors of every department, gauging their level of knowledge and talking about budgeting with them. “I wanted to know what information they are missing and what their pain points are,” Foley said. Some of the projects that Foley has already started on include evaluating the current payroll and timekeeping systems, embracing software to make the accounting system accurate in real time and reflective of the department structure, and looking at ways to automate expense reporting. On top of helping the association manage those changes, she ensures ASWB is compliant with tax laws and prepared for the annual audit. “My goal is to be able to provide accurate information quickly and efficiently.”

Only two months in, Heather Foley has already begun helping the association navigate a time of growth and change. She’s finding her place in the increasingly complex puzzle that is ASWB.
Construction begins!

Real progress is finally being made on ASWB’s headquarters despite continual rain. The building permit was issued mid-September, allowing construction to begin. However, waiting for weather to cooperate caused further delays. Footers were finally poured in early October allowing work on the foundation to get under way. To document progress on the site and the building, ASWB has contracted with a company to do drone flyovers of the property. View the October flyover video.

“A lovely evening”

LISE BETTERIDGE of Ontario shared a photo of a dinner at the annual meeting of the Canadian Registrars in Edmonton, Alberta. ASWB Director of Member Services JENNIFER HENKEL and Chief Operating Officer DWIGHT HYMANS were delighted to accept the invitation to attend the meeting for the 11th year.

…and a student to boot

LISA CROCKWELL of Newfoundland and Labrador has an active work life to be sure as executive director and registrar at the NL Association of Social Workers. She also serves as secretary on the ASWB Board of Directors. And now that her daughter is a senior in high school, we hear that LISA, too, is hitting the books on her way to earning a law degree.

ASWB’s “practice analysis whisperer”

LAVINA HARLESs, director of examination development, has become a sought-after speaker in the test-publishing industry. In September LAVINA presented at the Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation (CLEAR) conference in Philadelphia. The presentation focused on the 37-month timeline used by ASWB when updating the exams and exam products from December 2014 through January 2018. She presented alongside KEVIN BRADLEY of HumRRO, ASWB’s psychometric consultant, and LISA INCREMONA of Pearson VUE. “The practice analysis process and subsequent exam development activities take thoughtful and intentional planning, project management, and teamwork,” said Harless. “While ASWB was pleased to be asked to present alongside both our job task analysis vendor as well as our exam vendor as a model for other programs, the real reward comes in knowing that this successful work has resulted in a valid, reliable examination for the social work profession.”

Send all news and pictures to Jayne Wood, newsletter editor, at jwood@aswb.org or call Jayne at 800.225.6880, ext. 3075.
Green Team challenges staff

ASWB’s Green Team was formed in 2016 to help implement ASWB’s Environmental Responsibilities policy. The team’s mission is to foster an ethic of sustainability within ASWB, to minimize the environmental impact of day-to-day operations, meetings, and special events. An ongoing project is helping to plan green initiatives for the new headquarters.

This year, the Green Team held its second annual Challenge Week to engage staff in living more sustainably at home and at work. Activities included a scavenger hunt; self and department audits to reduce environmental impact; contributing anonymous confessions related to recycling, reducing, reusing, or repurposing; as well as a community beautification project and a donation of a tree to a local park.

Begging for confessions

Confession boxes engagingly decorated by WENDY OIEN, a member of the Green Team, were placed in each of ASWB’s eight office buildings. The Green Team encouraged staff to confess “lapses” related to going green “just for fun.” Do any of these resonate? “I don’t recycle at home anymore because it became inconvenient”; “Sometimes I take super-hot showers and sing longer than I know I should”; “Sometimes I am too lazy to empty the dishwasher so I add the dirty dishes to the clean ones and run it again”; “Despite knowing better, having cloth napkins, and plenty of rags, I use paper towels with abandon.”

Community beautification

A number of ASWB staff members helped the Town of Culpeper Department of Planning and Economic Development and members of the Old Rag [Mountain] Master Naturalists do weeding and transplanting in the pollination garden at Yowell Meadow Park after heavy rains took their toll. The Culpeper park is close to ASWB offices.

As part of ASWB’s Green Challenge Week, the association made a donation to the Town of Culpeper Department of Planning and Economic Development to purchase a Fringe tree for Rockwater Park. MARY JO MONAHAN and DWIGHT HYMANS presented the donation to Salem Bush, principal planner, and Emma Buchanan, planner, at ASWB’s offices.
The new language that has been proposed for the ASWB Model Social Work Practice Act, which would allow “licensure by endorsement” of a licensed applicant from another U.S. jurisdiction, aligns well with Canada’s labour mobility provisions.

The proposed language reads as follows:

Section 308. Qualifications for Licensure by Endorsement.

(a) To obtain a license by endorsement at the equivalent designation and subject to Article IV of this Act, an applicant currently licensed as a social worker in another jurisdiction must provide evidence satisfactory to the Board, subject to Article III, Section 311, that the applicant:

(1) Has submitted a written application and paid the fee as specified by the Board; and

(2) Has presented to the Board proof of an active social work license in good standing.

This new provision is designed to reduce barriers in occupational licensing for social workers in the U.S. who wish to practise in other U.S. jurisdictions. Establishing labour mobility for social work practice has in the past few years been identified primarily as a U.S. issue because the Canada Free Trade Agreement (“CFTA”, previously the Agreement on Internal Trade) established labour mobility for regulated workers in Canada in 2009. (While the CFTA was signed in 1995, the amendments to Chapter 7 were endorsed in 2009 in order to help resolve labour mobility challenges in Canada within regulated occupations.)

It seems that by adopting the concept of “licensure by endorsement,” U.S. jurisdictions will be positioned to make substantial progress toward practice mobility. Licensure by endorsement allows the jurisdictions evaluating the applications of social workers licensed in another U.S. jurisdiction to play a more active role than simply accepting the transfer of the license. Instead, the accepting jurisdiction will “endorse” the requesting applicant’s license status if the applicant has submitted a written application, has paid the fee, and has presented proof of an active social work license in good standing (subject to Article IV of the Model Social Work Practice Act, i.e., if the applicant has been previously disciplined by the home jurisdiction, or has been convicted of a felony, etc., that fact can be
relied upon by the endorsing jurisdiction as a reason to not endorse the license).

The “licensure by endorsement” concept of labour mobility closely mirrors what has been in place in Canada since 1995. Pursuant to the CFTA (the principles of which have been codified in the applicable legislation of the Canadian provinces and territories), regulatory bodies in Canada have an obligation to recognize workers who are licensed or registered in another Canadian jurisdiction. This “certificate-to-certificate” principle means that a regulated worker who is currently registered or licensed in one Canadian jurisdiction is entitled to work anywhere in Canada without having to undergo significant additional training, experience, examinations or assessments (subject to some exceptions described below).

The “accepting” jurisdiction is still permitted to require the applicant to: pay application fees; obtain insurance; post bonds; provide evidence of good character; provide evidence of good standing; provide a criminal record check; demonstrate language proficiency in English or French (if not previously assessed by the originating jurisdiction); and demonstrate knowledge of the relevant laws in the accepting jurisdiction (jurisprudence test).

It cannot be a requirement that the worker must actually reside in the accepting jurisdiction.

For those regulated occupations where there are significant differences from one jurisdiction to another in occupational standards, provincial or territorial governments are legally authorized to approve an exception to the “certificate-to-certificate” principle, provided the exception is justified by a “legitimate objective”. A legitimate objective must be justified on the basis of such things as public security and safety, protection of human health, or consumer protection, etc. Such exceptions can only be applied if there is strong supporting evidence of an actual material deficiency in skills, knowledge, or ability required to perform the scope of practice of an occupation and any additional material requirements imposed must not be more restrictive to labour mobility than necessary and must not create a disguised barrier to labour mobility.

It should be noted that while this mechanism to establish exceptions based on legitimate objectives technically exists, most provincial governments have not granted any new exceptions since 2008 and 2009. Ontario, for example, only has five exceptions to full labour mobility and all were granted in 2009. The most common exception relates to lawyers certified in Quebec—because Quebec has a civil law regime which differs from the common law regime in the rest of Canada. The second most common exception relates to social workers certified in Alberta and Saskatchewan, both of which jurisdictions allow for a two-year education program (as compared to a four-year degree in other Canadian jurisdictions).

When the labour mobility provisions first came into force in Canada there was great fear and trepidation amongst regulators that this would amount to a “race to the bottom”, and that regulated workers would shop around to become licensed or registered in the “easiest” jurisdiction and then rely on the labour mobility provisions to become regulated in the province or territory where they really wanted to work. While there has been some evidence of that happening, it has been in relatively small numbers.

The labour mobility requirements also apply to those holding a certificate/license in Canada who were originally grand-parented (e.g., were working in their profession at the time that the profession became regulated and did not have to meet the new, usually more stringent, registration/licensure criteria) and those who were originally internationally educated and then became registered in a Canadian jurisdiction. The CFTA requires that those workers be treated like any other Canadian worker in respect of labour mobility. (This is because it is assumed that no Canadian jurisdiction has significantly lower standards than another [or there would be a formal “legitimate objective” exception in place] and in most cases any real deficiencies in that worker’s credentials would have likely revealed themselves to the first Canadian licensing authority.)

While each jurisdiction in Canada has the authority to set occupational standards as they see fit, the labour mobility provisions in the CFTA do encourage regulatory bodies to reconcile differences in occupational standards and to adopt as much as possible common occupational standards. Those provisions, as well as the concerns about consumer/client safety created by the movement of differently credentialed workers from one province to another, has led to a
concerted effort by Canadian regulators to implement consistency in their certification requirements. While Canada still has a way to go until there is consistency across professions and trades in respect of entry-to-practise qualifications, the will to achieve that consistency has certainly increased since the introduction of the CFTA in 1995 and the Chapter 7 amendments in 2009.

1. Good character is generally interpreted as referring to the applicant’s past history and is not confined to matters that have gone to a full discipline hearing.

2. Good standing is generally interpreted as referring to the applicant’s current license status, such as whether they are suspended for non-payment of fees, etc.
U.S. COUNSEL'S COMMENTS

Streamlined Licensure

Background

As occupations and professions evolve through practitioner development, influential trade associations, litigation, and, eventually, duly enacted state-by-state legislation, the likelihood of uniformity in licensure lessens. These difficulties in achieving uniformity are, in large part, grounded in the United States Constitution. The 10th Amendment vests those powers not specifically reserved to the federal government to the states. The concept of federalism via the 10th Amendment is a founding principle in the governance structure of the United States. The regulation of the occupations and professions has been left to the states through what is often referred to as the state’s police powers.

Under this authority, a state enacts legislation creating and delegating authority to the regulatory board. The practice act (or enabling legislation) sets forth the parameters of licensure eligibility, scope of practice, enforcement authority, and other powers necessary to allow the board to adequately fulfill the intent of the legislation. Once a state exercises its authority to enact legislation, persons operating within the scope and place of practice must comply with the relevant statutes.

One can imagine how nuanced political interests and differing circumstances of each state can result in different scopes of practice, licensure eligibility criteria, renewal requirements, continued competence, board authority and governance structures. The concept of federalism and states’ rights allows for such a patchwork of regulation. As a result, states have different requirements that do not easily lend themselves to mobility of practitioners and portability of licensure.

Layer technological advancements on top of the states’ right to regulate the occupations and professions, and the results are ripe for challenge and criticism. Of late, economists and others are challenging the need for and rights of the states to regulate the professions. These economic arguments portray regulation as an unnecessary barrier to entry into practice and limiting consumer/client access to practitioners. In short, these libertarian approaches seek to shift the burden onto the state to justify its reasoning for regulation and, at the same time, promote a “buyer beware” system of enforcement and consumer protection.

The Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) was created to develop social work licensure
examinations that could be used by all U.S. members to assess entry-level competence as part of licensure eligibility criteria. Over time, with the membership of the Canadian provinces, the exams have been validated as applicable to the United States and Canada. This uniformity in the exam program is built on the job task analysis that determined that the practice of social work carries sufficient commonalities across state and international borders allowing for the use of one exam for each scope for assessing competence. ASWB has also developed and is developing additional programs to promote uniformity among and between member boards to assist them in fulfilling their respective public protection mandates.

One of these resources is the Model Social Work Practice Act (Model Act), which has served since the 1990s as a means of promoting uniformity of legislation. The Model Act was developed by a diverse task force with input from a wide variety of stakeholders. Since then, the ASWB Regulation and Standards Committee has been charged with, among other duties, reviewing the Model Act and, where appropriate, proposing changes. Suggested statutory language in the Model Act is approved by the ASWB delegate assembly when modifications are proposed.

Voting: Licensure by endorsement

At the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly, delegates will be asked to review and approve modifications to the Model Act addressing the principles of endorsement of licensure. Before embarking on a description of the amendments, it is prudent to define key terms.

“Reciprocity” refers to an agreement among or between states that allows licensees in one jurisdiction to obtain licensure in the other reciprocating jurisdiction. Somewhat of a no-questions-asked approach, reciprocity agreements are built on an agreed upon recognition of licensure. If a license is in good standing (subject to definition), the state into which the licensee is seeking licensure will accept the application and issue a license. Reciprocating candidates still file an application, pay applicable fees, and agree to comply with and be bound by the second state’s laws. There is no discretion in the board under a reciprocal agreement.

“Endorsement” refers to a process whereby the state into which a licensee is seeking to endorse performs an analysis of whether the individual was licensed elsewhere under similar circumstances. Under an endorsement process, the receiving state has the discretion to grant or refuse a license to the applicant based on that analysis.

Along with politicians and judges, new regulators and veterans often confuse the terms and use them interchangeably. However, for purposes of clarity in language of statutes and the Model Act, criteria are painstakingly considered and words chosen carefully.

Proposed amendments in 2018 include modifications to Article III, Section 308. Licensure Transfer. In the current Model Act, “licensure transfer,” was a phrase used to attempt to encompass both reciprocity and endorsement statutes and to avoid perpetuating confusion between the two. The first modification proposed by the 2018 RAS Committee is to rename the section and use only the term “endorsement.”

Additional wholesale changes to section 308 would streamline eligibility criteria for licensed social workers who seek to obtain licensure in additional states. The RAS Committee sought to simplify this section of the Model Act as part of social work mobility implementation to encourage jurisdictions considering additional licensing of a licensed applicant to recognize the due diligence of the jurisdiction(s) that originally licensed the social worker. Proposed section 308 requires that “an applicant currently licensed as a social worker in another jurisdiction must provide evidence satisfactory to the Board,” including an application at the equivalent designation/scope, payment of the applicable fee, and proof that the applicant has an active license in good standing. (It remains up to the jurisdiction where the applicant is currently licensed to determine what constitutes a license that is “active” and “in good standing.”) Discretion remains with the endorsing board to assess the licensee’s eligibility under Article IV, Discipline/Enforcement, that can form the basis for denial of application.

Supporting Mobility implementation

The bases behind the proposed modifications are twofold in support of Mobility implementation. The first is to simplify endorsement procedures and provide effective and efficient means of determining licensure.
eligibility in a timely manner. Such an approach will remedy what is driving some of the critics of state-based licensure systems to argue that the process is time consuming and expensive. The second is to promote a licensure system that facilitates mobility of practitioners and practice (via technological means) and portability of credentials while respecting the rights of the state boards.

Mobility and portability are important topics, and state boards are encouraged to embrace the needs of the social work communities that are inclusive of clients, potential clients, licensees, academia, and the public in general. It is believed that the proposed amendments to the Model Act will facilitate the needs of society while respecting states’ rights to determine who can and cannot practice social work. With that said, the profession has evolved over the years and uniformity should be promoted. Effective and efficient licensure processes, both initial licensure and endorsement, are based on a system of trust—trust that the state that granted the original license appropriately reviewed licensure eligibility criteria. The evolution of social work regulation now allows for recognition of uniformity and the benefits of collective action.

ASWB has concluded through its job analyses over the years that social work practice is consistent across state and Canadian borders allowing for the validation of one examination per designated scope to assess entry-level competence. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE) have evolved educational accreditation systems that recognize education components across respective state and provincial lines. Thus, the education and examination components of the statutes addressing licensure criteria have generally achieved uniformity.

With education and examination decisions based upon uniform criteria, the remaining issues address experience (practice/supervision requirements), personal history, and moral character. These criteria have led to legal and political scrutiny based upon what may be perceived as arbitrary decisions. Once a licensee is engaged in practice, it is difficult to justify denial of endorsement applications (or for that matter, delayed reviews of such applications) when similar criteria have already been vetted by another board and the applicant has been practicing for a period of time.

As part of the Mobility implementation, ASWB is enhancing the connections among its member boards through a centralized databank of licensee “profiles” that will include primary source and other information about the licensee. A profile will be made accessible to licensing decision makers in the jurisdiction where the licensee is seeking licensure at the request of the licensee. The benefits to the jurisdiction include decision making remains with the board; accessibility to timely information to assess for eligibility; and freedom from storing the data, which could become subject to open records laws otherwise. The benefits to licensees include peace of mind that all their important records are electronically stored; streamlined application processing for additional licensure; and efficiency of having the data in one place.

ASWB member boards adopted the Mobility resolution in 2017, agreeing to examine their statutes, rules/regulations, and policies to identify any barriers to the implementation of such a program. That work has been completed, and the results informed the recommendations of the RAS Committee. Addressing mobility of practitioners and portability of licensure is critical to meeting the needs of the consuming public, protecting clients and licensees, and satisfying the political pressures facing the regulatory boards. The proposed amendments to the Model Act address these issues and will streamline the processes of member boards when assessing licensure eligibility determinations, enhance mobility, and diminish redundancies in licensure. Member boards and delegates are asked to consider the amendments and prepare to engage in dialogue while in San Antonio, Texas.
San Antonio, the site for ASWB’s Annual Meeting in November, is a great place to visit any time, but 2018 is an especially good year to be in San Antonio, as the city marks its tricentennial. While the Annual Meeting agenda will keep attendees busy, if you have time before or after the meeting, here are some options for exploring the seventh largest city in the United States:

- **San Antonio: The Saga** is a video art installation by French artist Xavier De Richemont that transforms the façade of the San Fernando Cathedral on the Main Plaza, telling the story of San Antonio. This 24-minute presentation is free, Tuesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 9 p.m., 9:30 p.m., and 10 p.m.

- **The Alamo** is the most famous mission in San Antonio, but it’s not the only one. San Antonio has a total of five Spanish colonial missions, all part of a UNESCO World Heritage site.

- **San Antonio’s Witte Museum** is featuring a special exhibit on the history of the city. The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. most days, with later evening hours on Tuesdays and noon opening on Sundays. Admission prices vary.
• The Brisco Western Art Museum is currently displaying a massive collection of San Antonio stereographs in its Destino San Antonio exhibit. The exhibit explores the dual meaning of the Spanish word destino, which can be translated as destination, or destiny. The Brisco Western Art Museum is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays; 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Tuesdays; and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sundays.

• ASWB’s conference hotel, the Westin Riverwalk, is situated along the city’s famous shopping and dining district, the River Walk. San Antonio’s historic Market Square is about five blocks away, with shops, galleries, and dining. Getting around on the river is easy with Go Rio, a water taxi and cruise service that runs daily from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. San Antonio’s bike-sharing program, SWell Cycle, allows daily memberships for out-of-towners who want to take advantage of the city’s many cycling trails.
Making it official

Delegates will vote to adopt the 2019–2021 Strategic Framework on Saturday, November 17

ASWB’s new strategic plan has been in development for the last year. Guided by consultant Paul Meyer of Tecker International, ASWB’s Board of Directors and staff have considered ASWB’s current mission, vision, and values and defined new objectives and goals for the next three years. Along the way, many stakeholders were interviewed about opportunities and challenges facing regulation in general and social work regulation in particular. Focus groups provided insight into new areas where ASWB as an organization could venture. All this information was gathered and sifted. Board and staff have completed their tasks of defining goals and objectives. One step remains for delegates: adoption.

The new strategic framework, as the Board of Directors has renamed the strategic plan, will serve ASWB for the next three years. The three goals the Board chose are Embracing Regulation, Mobility, and Regulatory Research. All are key focus areas that Board members agreed reflected ASWB’s mission.

A core strategic planning team of ASWB staff members met to identify objectives that would be pursued over the next three years. By happenstance, each goal includes three objectives. “The objectives are ambitious but achievable,” said ASWB Chief Executive Officer Mary Jo Monahan. “When defining the objectives, we intentionally thought about our stakeholders. Objectives include continuing our collaboration with educators, outreach to legislators, and, always, educating and protecting the public.”

The Board of Directors will meet in late October for a final vote to approve the new strategic framework. Staff will then design a visual representation of the framework that will be presented at the Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly.

On Friday, November 16, the Board of Directors will present the 2019–2021 Strategic Framework to membership, including the rationales for the goals and objectives. The vote for adoption will take place on Saturday. “I am proud of the work of the Board and staff on this important yearlong initiative,” said ASWB President Tim Brown of Texas. “We took the time to ask members for their insights through focus groups and interviews as well as inviting others from the greater regulatory community to provide their thoughts and opinions. The plan that Board and staff will present to our members reflects what our members and other stakeholders believe is important for ASWB to achieve in the next three years. The vote to adopt the plan should be more than a Yes vote—it should be a celebration of a framework for the future that all of us can be proud of.”