

Hub Hires: Nixon Peabody, Prince Lobel, Manatt

By *Brian Dowling and Chris Villani*

Law360 (October 2, 2023, 6:04 PM EDT) -- The start of fall brought a flurry of moves in Boston's legal scene, with Nixon Peabody making a pair of additions, Prince Lobel boosting its employment practice and Manatt adding a former unit chief from the state attorney general's office.

Here are the latest hires in the Hub.

Nixon Peabody

Nixon Peabody LLP hired in-house veteran William Connolly as the law firm's new general counsel and chief legal officer following Connolly's more than a decade as head of litigation at State Street Bank and Trust Co.

In a statement, the firm said that Connolly's background will help the firm's clients navigate complex legal and business risks.

"Bill's proactive approach to risk management will help ensure we provide clients with the highest quality service to achieve their goals," said Stephen Zubiago, Nixon Peabody CEO and managing partner, in a statement. "As we evolve our Office of General Counsel to support current and future needs of the firm, Bill's diverse range of experience is a significant asset."

Nixon also brought in Kristen Fallon, an attorney known for representing real estate investment trusts and financial institutions.

Fallon was most recently a partner at Riemer & Braunstein LLP, and the firm said she will continue her work on sophisticated real estate finance transactions for developments, portfolio lending, construction loans and restructurings.

Fallon told Law360 that the move to Nixon Peabody would let her continue growing her national practice.

"I look forward to serving existing clients and expanding my practice by advising lenders on a wide range of transactions in the REIT and fund finance space," Fallon said in an email to Law360.

Prince Lobel

Prince Lobel Tye LLP announced Justin Engel, most recently an attorney with Armstrong Teasdale LLP, has joined the firm as a partner in the employment law and business litigation practice groups in the Boston office.

"I chose to join Prince Lobel because of the firm's rich history and strong presence in Boston along with its reputation for excellence both locally and nationally," Engel said in a statement. "I am very excited to work with Prince Lobel's outstanding business litigation and employment teams, and I am confident that the firm will provide a great platform to grow my practice and serve clients and the community in Massachusetts and beyond."

In his practice, which spans over 15 years, Engel has experience representing businesses in industries including pharmaceutical, biomedical, health care, management consulting, manufacturing, finance, and real estate in commercial litigation matters, his new firm said.

Manatt

Manatt Phelps & Phillips LLP added Eric Gold, the former health care chief in the Massachusetts attorney general's office, as a partner in Boston.

Gold joined Manatt's health care group after spending nearly 11 years at the Massachusetts attorney general's office, which included five and a half years as health care division chief and another year and a half as deputy chief.

Gold said in the firm's announcement Thursday that he was drawn to Manatt because of the firm's strength in the legal and consulting fields, something he said is particularly important for the health care work he does. He also told Law360 Pulse that he decided to go back into private practice after more than a decade in government because he felt it was time for a new challenge, adding that he looked at options in a variety of spaces such as consulting and health care organizations before determining Manatt to be the best fit.

Nutter

Nutter McClennen & Fish LLP welcomed Danilo Santucci, a former Ropes & Gray LLP associate, to join its private client department in its Boston office.

Santucci advises high-net-worth individuals and families on international and domestic estate and tax planning needs, Nutter said in a statement. Among his areas of expertise are insurance planning, sophisticated gifting techniques and family investment planning. He also specializes in cross-border issues such as preimmigration planning and tax and trust law issues, Nutter said.

"Dani is particularly adept at handling complex domestic and international estate planning matters," said Jeffrey Roberts, chair of Nutter's private client department, in the statement. "He brings a unique mix of tax and estate planning expertise that will complement our team's already significant experience in navigating multi-jurisdictional issues."

Finnegan

Finnegan Henderson Farabow Garrett & Dunner LLP rehired Nishla Keiser, an intellectual property lawyer, to join its Boston office. It's Keiser's second stint with Finnegan, according to LinkedIn, and she rejoins the firm as a partner.

Keiser holds a doctorate in bioengineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, focusing her practice on biotechnology, pharmaceutical and chemical-related intellectual property matters, the firm noted. Some of Keiser's work in that space has included providing analysis on patentability opinions related to biologic and small molecule therapeutics, gene editing and other therapies.

She returned to Finnegan from Orna Therapeutics, where she was the chief legal and strategy officer for the biotechnology research company, Finnegan stated. She helped lead in-house legal preparations for Orna and assisted the company in preparing for licensing deals and intellectual property legal strategies, according to the law firm's statement.

Crowell & Moring

Crowell & Moring LLP said that the firm hired Joe Urwitz, a veteran executive compensation and employee benefits attorney in its Washington, D.C., tax group.

Urwitz joins the firm as a partner after spending the last two years with Orrick Herrington & Suffolk LLP, working out of its Boston location.

With a practice that largely focuses on compensation and benefits issues during private equity transactions and mergers and acquisitions, the firm said, the addition of Urwitz is expected to bolster the D.C. tax group after it brought on longtime Hogan Lovells partner Christine K. Lane in May to co-lead the practice.

"We are focused on expanding our transactional tax practice and Joe's experience is key in taking our benefits practice to the next level," Lane said in a statement. "Joe deepens our bench strength to handle our increasing flow of complex corporate transactional work."

--Additional reporting by Jack Rodgers, Aaron West, Chart Riggall, Adrian Cruz, Brent Godwin and David Hansen. Editing by Andrew Cohen.