

SENIOR LAWYERS SECTION
MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

November 19, 2019

The meeting was called to order by Chair Brian Comstock. Present were Executive Committee members Al Armstrong, Pat Mead of the WSBA, Eleanor Doermann, Scott Osborne, Ron Thompson, Dudley Panchot and Carole Grayson. Attending by phone were Jeanine Lutzenhiser, Steve DeForest, Morrie Shore, BOG Liaison Tom McBride and Devorah Signer-Hill of the WSBA. Not able to be present were Jim Riehl and Joe Gordon.

Refreshments were provided by Scott.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Brian convened our meeting, reminding us of the need to continue to address issues relating to our Section's continued viability and to diligently pursue strategies of growth.

Brian indicated that he will be preparing and circulating our annual report that is due on December 6.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Al reported on some highlights of Section Leadership Conference which took place at the WSBA headquarters on October 31. Both Brian and Al attended the Conference.

Al's minutes of our October 15 meeting, as amended, were approved by Motion.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Ron reported that he had not gotten the latest figures relative to our Section's finances (as September's figures would reflect our net earnings from our mini-CLE) so Ron addressed our situation as of August 31. As of that date, we were \$955.43 ahead of our balance on August 31, 2018. Our fund balance is therefore \$6,917.25.

Pat stated that a new rate for conference calls has been negotiated; the result is a reduction in cost of approximately 20%.

THE QUEST FOR NEW MEMBERS FOR OUR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Our Executive Committee is continuing its search for new E.C. members. Eleanor mentioned Tacoma attorney Dennis La Porte as a possibility. Dudley is focusing on potential members from east of the Cascades.

SECTION NAME CHANGE

Brian mentioned that we will need to formally amend our Bylaws if we desire a Section name change. He indicated that according to our Section Bylaws, we are obliged to give our members a seven-day written notice in the event an amendment is proposed, so Brian indicated he would provide that notice for our January meeting. There was some disagreement relative to whether those attending an E.C. meeting by phone can vote on a given measure; it was pointed out that the Bylaws only prohibit E.C. members from exercising proxy votes; they do not specifically prohibit votes by members attending a given meeting by phone. It was acknowledged that a vote to amend our Bylaws must still be approved, after our vote, by the WSBA General Counsel and by the B.O.G.

OUR MAY 1, 2020 CLE

Carole indicated that she has “two excellent speakers” confirmed: Seattle City Attorney Dan Satterberg and Miriam Korngold, staff attorney for K.I.N.D., which provides legal services to children in immigration matters. Carole mentioned that U.W. professor Bill Covington (director of that school’s Technology Law & Public Policy Clinic is a possibility—he is currently trying to clear his schedule for May 1. Carole is currently awaiting word from another U.W. professor, Karen Boxx. Carole wishes to have a speaker address the well-remembered child-molestation witch-hunt that occurred some years ago in Wenatchee; attorney Bob Van Sicen, who represented several defendants in that affair, will not be available, but Carole is hoping to find another speaker to discuss the Wenatchee scandal.

Ron stated he would contact John Ladenburg, former Pierce County Prosecutor. There was a suggestion that the opioid crisis be addressed by a speaker. Al suggested attorney Salvador Mungia, who has been a speaker at two of our previous CLEs, and Ron said he would try to contact him also.

Devorah, WSBA Education Program Lead, is stepping into the shoes of Kevin Plachy as Lead for our CLE. She indicated that she looks forward to working with Carole relative to the confirmed speakers, their respective presentations and subsequent publicity/marketing tasks. (Kevin has become the Bar’s Interim Director of Advancement Department.) We welcome Devorah on board and thank Kevin for his years of service to our efforts.

Brian inquired as to what the theme of our CLE would be. Steve had suggested, at a prior meeting, the over-all CLE title “Bridging the Gap.” It was mentioned that this theme would work with our general theme of protecting the vulnerable.

Eleanor mentioned inviting a speaker who could address the new guardianship statute, which will take effect in 2021. She also mentioned current arbitrator/mediator Kim Prochnau, the former King County Commissioner. Our own Jim Riehl and Scott Osborne were mentioned as possible speakers. Devorah indicated that an update on recent court decisions and statutes are effective at drawing attendees, as are presentations that count as ethics credits.

Brian emphasized that he felt that two issues should animate our CLE planning: the potential draw of our program, and how should we reach out to prospective attendees.

OUR COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Brian suggested that we put something together electronically that is primarily of interest to senior lawyers. Secondary articles were suggested, some of which might not require getting permission to reprint. Pat mentioned that a way to interest other attorneys would be a series of informal electronic messages to prospective Section members. Scott thought that a series of informal electronic communications could be coupled with additional information that could be accessible with a password that only our Section members would have—to illustrate to the reader advantages of Section membership.

Ron suggested that each month one E.C. member could compose an article that would be sent out each month. Each member would only have to be responsible for one article a year.

Al wondered whether offering prospective Section members previously-negotiated discounts from various vendors or service providers would be practical. Pat responded that some sections have actually done that.

Pat said he would make some inquiries as to the process of putting together some form of electronic communications with our members and potential members, after which the Communications Subcommittee members will set a date for a conference call.

Brian made it clear that our publication/communication is key to increasing our Section membership. He indicated that we need to broaden our communications effort to reach a wider audience of potential Section members, and come up with a publication or publications that will accomplish this. There was general consensus that these aims were necessary to our mission.

ADJOURNMENT

Brian adjourned the meeting.

The next Executive Committee meeting will take place at the Broadmoor Golf Club at 10:30 am on January 21, 2020.

