

Minutes of Senior Lawyers Section Executive Committee meeting of November 20, 2024

Submitted by Carole Grayson, interim secretary

**Present:** *EC members:* Al Armstrong (interim chair), Joe Gordon (treasurer), Carole Grayson (interim secretary), William Cameron, Jim Riehl, David Sprinkle.

*Non-EC members:* Ruth Apahidean (Young Lawyers liaison), Carolyn MacGregor (WSBA Sections Program Coordinator).

**Not able to be present:** *EC members* Steve DeForest, Jenny Rydberg, Brian Comstock.

[Secretary's note: Later in the day, after our meeting, Al Armstrong informed the EC that he had just learned from Brian's son/law partner John Comstock that Brian died on Nov. 15. Brian was admitted to WSBA in 1959; his WSBA no. was 184.]

*Non-EC member:* L. Parvin Price (BOG liaison), Rachel Matz (WSBA Education Programs Lead)

**Interim chair's report:** This was the second of Al Armstrong's four monthly meetings as interim chair. Al noted that October was the first month of the new FY and the new yearly terms for our EC. [Secretary's note: With the news of Brian's death, our EC now has four openings.]

**Minutes of prior EC meeting:** The EC approved the minutes of our October 16 meeting.

**Financial report:** Treasurer Joe Gordon reported that WSBA has approved our section's budget for the FY that began October 1. WSBA staff is working on finalizing all end of FY matters. He has been told that our next financial reports should be available at the end of January 2025.

**Prior CLE: Evaluations:** Our Section's remote CLE on October 4, "Scams and Fraud: Detection and Strategies", was well-received and well-attended. The EC's review of the attendees' evaluations indicated that they were highly positive. Rachel Matz, WSBA Education Programs Lead, provided the evaluations to the EC. Rachel was not able to attend our meeting.

*On-demand approval for Jenny Rydberg:* As a member of the CLE Committee, Jenny Rydberg was entitled to be comped for the cost of the CLE. A health issue prevented Jenny from being able to attend the CLE. The EC unanimously approved a motion for her to obtain the on-demand version of our CLE at no cost when it becomes available on the CLE Store.

**Next CLE:** The EC envisions holding our next CLE in the spring of 2025. TBD: Date, theme, speakers, length, etc.

**Newsletter: Next issue:** "Life Begins" editor Jim Riehl expects our next issue to be out early in 2025. Al will be writing a summary of our October CLE as well as a column as interim chair. Young Lawyer liaison Ruth Apahidean will be profiled. Jim encourages ethics questions to be sent to Anne Seidel for her column, "Ask Anne about Ethics".

**New editor needed:** Jim and Al will collaborate on a post to the section listserv seeking a new editor for "Life Begins" to start in 2025. Jim is stepping off the EC at the end of 2024 and will cease his editorial duties upon publication of the winter 2025 "Life Begins". Jim praised the professionalism, responsiveness, and great stylistic eye of Britt Sutherland, publisher of "Life Begins". Britt's continued involvement will be a great asset for the next editor.

**Member Status Workgroup:** Carole Grayson said that in early November the WSBA Board of Governors had approved the report and recommendations of the WSBA Member Status Workgroup. The Senior Lawyers Section appreciated the efforts of Workgroup member and Senior Lawyer Steve Crossland in advocating for the Section. Carole noted two of the several changes approved by BOG: “honorary” status will be renamed “emeritus” status, and lawyers will be eligible to seek emeritus status after 40 years of practice (in any state), rather than the current 50 years.

**Section name:** Carole said the New York State Bar’s Section Lawyers Section has changed its name to the 50+ Section and asked if our Section should change its name. EC members overwhelmingly favored retaining our current name. Jim said he wasn’t sure that 50+ “will be meaningful”. He referred to the “tremendous history” of the Senior Lawyers Section and said the 50+ Section “doesn’t quite capture” it. No motion was made on the subject; the name stays as is.

**EC eligibility criteria:** Carole spoke in favor of seeking WSBA permission to amend our bylaw regarding eligibility for our EC to reduce the minimum age from 55 to 50 (while retaining the required years of practice at 25+). Al, Jim, Joe, and David thought it would be a good idea. Jim said that reducing the age from 55 to 50 “would be a step forward in rejuvenating” our EC. A motion was made and passed by consensus. William Cameron voted nay. Carolyn MacGregor, WSBA Sections Program Coordinator, said she would speak with WSBA Regulatory Counsel to see how to proceed.

**Adjourn:** The EC adjourned at 11:20 am.

Our next EC meeting is Wednesday, December 18, 2024, at 10:30 via Zoom.