



**MEETING MINUTES of the ANNUAL RETREAT**

January 31, 2015

Members Present: Greg McLawsen, Chair; Nancy Pacharzina, Chair-elect; Bruce Gardiner, Treasurer; Jennifer Willner, Secretary; Marijean Moschetto, Immediate Past Chair; Angel Base, Liz Bottman, Susan Fuller, Kari Petrasek, Mark Jordan

Members Absent: Shashi Vijay

Liaisons Present: Jerry Moberg, BOG Liaison, Gil Price, ALA Liaison, Kristina Larry, YLC Liaison

Advisors Present: Ann Guinn, John Redenbaugh, Pete Roberts

The Annual Meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m.

1. **Mission Statement read by Greg:** We help solo and small practice attorneys to ethically conduct a profitable, satisfying business by acting as a clearinghouse for qualified law practice management and technology information.

2. **Theme of the Retreat:** Get Our Collective House in Order

Greg: We have lots of irons in the fire, as an Executive Committee and with our 3 subcommittees: Education, Electronic Communications and Membership & Outreach. We need to all be on the same page. Our resources will thus be used efficiently and we will avoid recurring logistical problems.

Questions posed for the Retreat:

What are our Section's commitments  
What do we do repeatedly  
What are the special projects  
We tend to reinvent the wheel a little  
Distill our collective wisdom

***CORE PROJECT FOR THIS RETREAT:*** How are we adding value to our members? The Section is approaching the 1,000 member mark so we're doing something right. But: **how can we make sure the projects we're investing in translate to value to our members?**

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We need to ask ourselves: what are our members' core challenges? What is it that our members need? We will get the chance to discuss and answer these questions when Jennifer leads our discussion of revising our Mission Statement.

3. **December 2014 Meeting Minutes:** Ann noted there was one typographical error in the Minutes of the December 11, 2014 meeting. Jennifer will correct. Bruce made a Motion to approve the Minutes, as corrected. Kari seconded the Motion. The Motion passed by unanimous vote.

4. **Subcommittee Project Review:**

Each committee will give a summary review of their projects and the rest of the EC will vote yea or nay on continuing with that project. See Exhibit for Google document reflecting the votes on each project edited in real time during the Retreat.

a. **Electronic Communications Committee**

Kari Petrasek, Chair, gave the report.

Ongoing project: continually updating website with content; rotate CLE chapters; articles; discussion threads on listserve  
EC tips area on members-only website  
New project: create 5 minute mentoring "how-to" videos; tutorials; invite from Section members  
New project: Blog posts  
New project: Add YouTube channel for the Section

b. **Education Committee**

Ann Guinn, Chair, gave the report.

11 members at large on the Ed Com  
6 webinars in 2015  
Working with Senior Lawyers for a joint webinar + networking event  
Working with Low Bono Section for a joint webinar  
Annual CLE

Discussion of Solo & Small Firm Conference future  
EC deeply committed to Conference

EC all in favor of continuing webinars

c. **Membership Committee**

Marijean Moschetto, Chair, gave the report.

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Traditionally deal with several events - networking events with law schools all happen in February-ish  
Letter to new admittees - done twice a year  
Thank you for joining letter - thank you for renewing letter  
Table at Conference

Parties: after the Annual CLE; Conference; Open Sections Night  
Annual Membership Meeting

Committee is considering adding one more networking event

Subscriber members: invite vendors to join Section

Tier memberships? Just a listserv membership price?

What other member benefits? Vendor discounts? Affinity programs? Perks?

Survey members about what they like/don't like/need/want  
We should survey members every year

5. **Leadership Guide:**

Nancy has a draft going of the leadership guide  
What are the sticking points, challenges, what are the timing issues

It will contain explanations of current projects, e.g. what are the core things you need to know about to continue this project (leadership notes)  
What is the deliverable: what is the goal with this project

6. **Challenges Facing Our Members:**

What are members' biggest challenges?  
EC members go around the room each offering their view:

- ★ Earning a living
- ★ Getting affordable help
- ★ How to compete with larger firms with lots of assets - how do I level the playing field?
- ★ Where do I get the tools?
- ★ Representation that is affordable to client
- ★ Providing affordable services but there's a tendency to run out the cost for those clients that can afford
- ★ Connecting - networking skills, connecting with resources, referrals
- ★ Finding resources to make practice work
- ★ Time management
- ★ Maintaining a full pipeline of clients

- ★ Using available technology & keeping up with new technology & advice on how to utilize effectively
- ★ Getting the right clients, building the practice effectively, efficiently, profitably
- ★ How to stay relevant - lawyers are becoming extinct - LLLT, Legal Zoom, self-help, etc
- ★ Finding employment; earning a living; making money; finding clients
- ★ How to run the business side of the practice; knowledge; advice; business nuts & bolts

7. **Discussion of Revising the Section's Mission Statement:**

Jennifer led the discussion.

For some time, we've been undertaking projects that seem to be outside our existing Mission Statement. Perhaps it's time to revise and expand the Mission Statement. (Everyone agrees). So what are the core reasons for our Section's existence?

We help members create a sustainable law practice by providing information related to:

*Ethics*  
*Business development*  
*Evolving legal services*  
*Staying relevant*  
*Staying competitive*

- ★ We help members remain competitive by giving information about the latest technology
- ★ We help members stay connected by creating opportunities for relationship building
- ★ We direct members to "best practices" resources
- ★ We help members to be lean

**What are we NOT?**

We are not here to teach members the law  
We are not here to vet resources

**Why did YOU join the Section?** EC members respond:

To be connected with other solos  
To learn "how to's"  
To learn the business aspect of running a law firm  
To network with other solos for support

**What are some of the themes of our Mission?**

Adapt - Agile  
Sustainability  
Connection  
Conduit to resources  
Clearinghouse of information:  
LPM  
Technology

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Business development  
Ethics  
Methods of delivering legal services

We are a global universe of information.

Do we differentiate or target certain size firms? Our target is firms of 5 or less.

### *Possible New Mission Statement Options*

1. We help members navigate the changing landscape of law practice.
2. We help solo and small firms navigate the changing landscape of law practice by connecting them to resources and each other.
3. Helping solo and small firms navigate the changing landscape of law practice by connecting our members to practical resources and each other.
4. We connect solo and small firms to practical resources and each other:  
*We do this by bringing education, resources and focus to the tools and best practices that support an efficient, ethical and financially satisfying law practice.*

#### 8. **Treasurer's Report:**

Bruce gave the Treasurer's Report.

The Chair of each sub-committee must keep track of expenses and revenue  
Need to allocate expenses in the right places  
Please let Bruce know when you spend money  
Please send a copy of expense reimbursement requests to Bruce

Committees must prioritize and budget for projects within amount budgeted

Each committee chair is responsible for the committee's budget & communicating it with Bruce

#### 9. **GlobalMeet discussion:**

GlobalMeet is the software platform we use to conduct our free-to-members Webinars.  
There were some glitches with the software initially  
Attendance is capped at 125. We've hit the ceiling every single time  
Conclusion: we've outgrown GlobalMeet

GlobalWebinar, assumed to be out within a month, will be \$249/month  
(conclusion: cost prohibitive)

JoinMeeting = \$20 a month; 250 attendee limit

GoToMeeting = \$49/month = 25 attendees

Mark & Greg will explore options. If anyone has insight into a webinar platform, let Mark or Greg know.

10. **Annual CLE Report.**

Ann gave the report on the Section's annual CLE, titled: *The Successful Small Firm: 7 Ways to Increase Efficiency and Cash Flow*. This year's CLE yielded the highest attendance over the last several years: 117 total, 76 were online. Ann reports this is the last year of offering faculty guest passes. We should, as a Section, raise a squawk about this change in policy.

11. **Executive Committee / Leadership Manual:**

Nancy discussed the Leadership Manual. This project will result in one place where everything EC related will reside. One place for all information related to the Section. How to be an Executive Committee member; the State of the Union, financial reports, etc.

EC members also suggested that the Leadership Manual should include:

*Expectations of EC members*  
*Office duties/job descriptions*  
*WSBA services available*  
*Existence of Archives*  
*Member benefits*  
*Memorialize WSBA Treatises*  
*Who has our stuff & where to we keep it?*

12. **Collaboration with Senior Lawyers Section:**

Ann reports that we will partner with the Senior Lawyers Section in providing a webinar to both Sections' members sometime in March. The theme will be on securing help in your law practice, including use of independent contractors, temporary and virtual workers and managing employees. Jennifer will also be a presenter.

13. **Technology Initiative:**

Greg has decreed that all EC materials will now be available on Google Drive. Jennifer will continue to manage the backup of historic EC materials on Dropbox. We'll teach people how to use Drive at the next meeting.

14. **Membership Directory discussion:**

Despite Greg disbanding the *Ad Hoc* Membership Directory Committee as one of his first official acts, the project needs to be resurrected. It will provide an important vehicle to connect members.

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Goals of directory are reflected in listserv chatter. You often see posts: I'm looking for an attorney in \_\_\_\_\_ area who does \_\_\_\_\_. Looking for tech person, CPA, other service providers in \_\_\_\_\_ area.

Providing a Section Directory adds value for members: centralized home where they could connect with other SSP members to provide that service. Concept is to log into online membership directory. There would be some kind of profile for each member.

Bar associations are using membership service platforms  
Stand alone tool. Not plugged into existing website pages.  
People can set up their own profile. Attorney/non-attorney, practice area, we can set the variables.

There's an off-the-shelf solution: WildApricot.

At the 1,000 member level, it would cost \$100/month

WildApricot is what is called an "Internal Facing Directory"

Greg suggests we could gauge interest in the Directory with a sample size, invite 10% of our Section members to join Wild Apricot. Collect feedback to answer question: is this a valuable tool? Then issue a general invitation to the rest of the membership

Issues:

Management challenges; how to manage members, those renewing, not renewing, updating information, etc. When someone ceases to become a member, they have to be manually deleted, etc.

Features: joining page; member benefits; calendar; member directory, forums page  
Click on member entry, see photos. Address, email, info

Two Section members have agreed to spearhead/help with the Directory project: Daniel Mills and Victor Minjares.

15. **How To Videos discussion:**

Kari led the discussion.

The Electronic Communications Committee has a thought to create a library of short video segments for uploading to the members-only area of the website (hosted and managed by WSBA). What do people think? (Everyone thinks great idea).

Bruce is a videographer - has equipment - has the knowledge. Says that for every 5 minutes of video content, you need to spend 100 minutes of editing. Hmnnn.

The ECC is looking for more than just our own EC member videos, we would also invite Section members to submit helpful content as well.

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Kari asks for input, what kind of topics would EC members like to see?

*Procedural stuff - how to file a motion*

*Here's how to set up an automatic pleading*

*How to fire a client*

Action items: Put together guidelines for creating decent video clips

*Getting lighting right*

*What is behind your head*

*Rehearsing presentation*

*Use a script*

There's a lot involved...

We could solicit video contributions by having a sign up at Conference

Bruce could bring equipment to video people at Conference

16. **Wrap Up:**

**Greg: The tone of the Retreat was very collegial today. Greg really appreciates everyone's work and thoughtful comments. If the subcommittees feel that there's too much on their plates, give feedback and trim the projects back.**

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:10 p.m.**



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## AGENDA

<b>10:00-10:10</b>	<b>Welcome</b>	Greg
<b>10:10-10:15</b>	<b>Approval of December minutes</b>	Jennifer
<b>10:15-11:00</b>	<b>A review of our projects</b>	Greg
	<i>Let's take a step back and review the work we're doing for our members. We'll look at all the events we commit to on an annual basis, as well as the special one-off projects that we have in the works. 10 minutes per Sub-Committee will be allotted for an overview of their projects</i>	
<b>11:00-11:15</b>	<b>Gadget Break</b>	
<b>11:15-12:00</b>	<b>Production session: Leadership Guide</b>	[Breakout]
	<i>While the project review is fresh in our heads we will break into groups to memorialize this discussion for our collective memory. We will collaborate in real time on a Google docs draft of our Leadership Guide.</i>	
<i>A working lunch will be served at noon in the conference room.</i>		
<b>12:00-12:15</b>	<b>Challenges facing our members</b>	Greg
<b>12:15-12:45</b>	<b>What is our mission?</b>	Pete and Jennifer
<b>12:45-1:45</b>	<b>Gadget Break</b> <b>[Opportunity for breakout meetings]</b>	
<b>1:45 – 2:00</b>	<b>Treasurer's report &amp; Sub-Committee financial planning 101</b>	Bruce
<b>2:00-2:15</b>	<b>Should we renew Global Meet?</b>	Greg
<b>2:15-2:30</b>	<b>Board of Governor's report</b>	Jerry
<b>2:30-2:45</b>	<b>"Local" Webinars w/ Senior Lawyers</b>	Marijean/Ann
<b>2:45-3:00</b>	<b>Gadget Break</b>	
<b>3:15-3:30</b>	<b>Membership directory</b>	Greg
<b>3:30-3:45</b>	<b>"How to" videos</b>	Kari
<b>3:45-4:00</b>	<b>Wrap up</b>	Greg