

SENIOR LAWYERS SECTION
MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

May 19, 2020

This was our third consecutive meeting conducted entirely by phone, again due to the coronavirus crisis; this time, we employed the wonders of Zoom. The following Executive Committee members “attended” this meeting: Chair Eleanor Doermann, Brian Comstock, Steve DeForest, Al Armstrong, Ron Thompson, Joe Gordon, Jim Riehl, Dudley Panchot, Morrie Shore, Carole Grayson and Eleen Trang of the WSBA. Not able to be present were BOG Liaison Tom McBride, Scott Osborne and Jeanine Lutzenhiser.

CHAIR’S REPORT

Eleanor welcomed all aboard our first “Zoom” meeting. She suggested that we start off with the Secretary’s Report.

SECRETARY’S REPORT

Al’s minutes of our April 21 meeting were approved by Motion.

TREASURER’S REPORT

We have received the WSBA Statement of Activities showing our financial position as of March 31. Ron mentioned that we signed up three new Section members in March. Our fund balance as of March 31 was \$9,426.52. It was suggested that since the Statement of Activities is prepared by the WSBA, our formal approval isn’t necessary; the Committee did acknowledge our receipt of the Statement.

COVID-19 UPDATES

Eleanor mentioned the WSBA Foundation Emergency Fund proposal. Eleen indicated that sections are being asked to consider donations to this fund, in light of financial setbacks of solo and small firm practitioners occasioned by the Covid-19 crisis. It was stated that our Section does not have to make a commitment right now. Jim mentioned that, in light of our budgetary concerns we cannot provide anything of substance. Dudley recalled that, many years ago, our Committee donated \$10,000 to the Plymouth Housing Group. Brian thought we could donate about \$500. Eleanor said we can revisit this matter in June.

SPRING SECTION LEADERS’ DISCUSSION

Eleanor discussed the WSBA’s three upcoming webinar presentations: Executive Committee Best Practices-onboarding, Retention & Leadership, May 27, 12:00 to 1:30; Member Engagement & Recruitment, May 28, 12:00 to 1:30 and Technology, May 29, 12:00 to 1:30. Eleanor said she will attend the Technology session.

SENIOR LAWYER COMMITTEE TASK FORCE UPDATE

Both Carole and Eleanor said that due to the current health crisis, their respective energies have been directed elsewhere. Morrie suggested that we discuss the Task Force at a Committee-wide meeting, and Eleanor said she thought we could possibly do that at a later date.

ANNUAL CLE

It was confirmed that our CLE will be rescheduled to October 30. It was stated that we will have to find out if our speakers, previously scheduled for May 1, will still be available and willing to present on our new date. Also a concern was voiced that the CLE may yet be postponed again if the crisis does not abate. Morrie said we should decide no later than August whether or not to postpone our CLE again. And, we should be realistic—many of our potential attendees may be wary of attending a function with a crowd present, even if the crisis has eased by then. Ron agreed, noting that the majority of our attendees are in so-called vulnerable groups. Dudley said we should be aware of the last date we can cancel our October date with the Marriott without penalty. Carole confirmed that she had sent a letter to our presenters (after running it by Jim) outlining our plans to reschedule to October. Jim commended Carole on her letter. Eleanor said we will keep track of this matter as the summer progresses.

MINI-CLE

Eleanor said she had talked to Devorah about our mini-CLE; Devorah said the Bar needs the presenters' material six weeks in advance of any mini-CLE. Eleanor noted that the WSBA's Kevin Plachy helped with our last mini-CLE but we won't have his help this next time, so she will be prepared to engineer the affair without Kevin's help. It was noted that if our all-day CLE does not come to pass, perhaps we could prevail upon one or more of our confirmed speakers to present at our mini-CLE. Eleanor said she should set a mini-CLE date about three months in advance, perhaps in the fall. Brian asked about possible topics for this event. Eleanor suggested something having to do with the coronavirus situation. Carole noted that Mike Frost has a Zoom account and maybe we should use his skills relative to that technology, both as to a mini-CLE situation or as to its application to our remote Executive Committee meetings.

It was observed that in a webinar presentation, the speakers themselves are not seen by the attendees; only the slides and the Power-Points are viewed. Live real-time presentations, with the speakers seen by the viewers, are more apt to hold the attention of the attendees. Lacking this medium, the speaker should try to employ frequently changing slides so the audience will better focus its attention, Eleanor said. She will work with Devorah on this.

COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Eleanor said she would try to contact Scott.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS IN THE NEAR FUTURE

It was decided that we would have our June Executive Committee meeting as we have done in the past, albeit remotely. It was also decided that we should have (remote) meetings in July and August, if only to touch base about our October CLE.

YOUNG LAWYERS LIAISON MATTER

Carole suggested we mention our search for a Young Lawyer liaison in a post to the Young Lawyer Section's Listserv as well as that of the Solo and Small Practice Section.

MORE ON THE ZOOM MEETING FORMAT

Morrie voiced support for continuing to use the Zoom format for our remote meetings. It was suggested that Eleanor see about us getting access to the WSBA Zoom account. Ron suggested that we consider making use of Zoom a subject of one of our CLE or mini-CLE presentations.

ADJOURNMENT

Eleanor adjourned the meeting.

Our next meeting will take place on a remote-attendance basis on June 16 at 10:30 am.