

SOUTH CAROLINA WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
July 22, 2005 – 2:00 p.m.
UNAPPROVED

- I. The Board of Directors of the South Carolina Women Lawyers Association met in Columbia for a meeting at the Ogletree Deakins Nash Smoak & Stewart Law Firm. Present at the meeting were:
- Katherine Dudley Helms, President; Alice Paylor, President-Elect; Rosalyn W. Frierson, Secretary; Immediate Past President, Kathryn (Kif) Cook; Barbara Barton, Jenny Horne, Stephanie Nye, Barbie Seymour, Dotsy Helms, Tamara Curry, Amie Clifford, Zandra Johnson, Liz Zeck, and Webmaster, Eleanor Kellett. Present by phone: Toya Hampton Greene, Treasurer, and Rita McKinney.
- II. **Minutes** of May 6, 2005 Meeting. The Minutes were approved. Amie Clifford suggested that future Minutes include not only the list of those attending, but also a list of those absent and whether their absence was excused. The suggestion was accepted and the September 2005 Minutes will include a listing of absent members.
- III. **Treasurer's Report.** Toya Green reported dues collected in 2005 totaled \$25, 850.00. The current balance is \$14,850.00 and expenses as of 12/31/04 were \$11,093. President Helms noted that a budget of \$3,500.00 has been set for the Bissell Reception.
- IV. **Regional Reports.** The **Low Country** - Natalie Bluestein submitted a written report that they continue to have lunch meetings on the third Wednesday of each month, and the speaker this month is Linda Seabrook who will speak on "Updates in Federal and State Domestic Violence Laws." Many members donated tote bags and small luggage for DSS, and professional clothing to be distributed through the Charleston Center for Women's program for formerly abused women rejoining the work force. President Helms commended Natalie for the fabulous job she does for this organization.
- V. **Committees.**
- a. **Membership.** No report.
- b. **Career Development.** Stephanie Nye reported that the Career Development Committee continues to work on guidelines for the mentor-mentee program. Stephanie plans to start the mentoring relationships by having the mentors invite their mentees to the local regional luncheon, and to also set a time for the duration of the relationship. Stephanie also planned to ask each of the mentors to provide a brief report about the success or failure of the pairing and provide suggestions for ways to improve and monitor future programs. Stephanie asked everyone to send their ideas to her via email at her new email address of snye@sc.rr.com.
- c. **Education.**
The 2005 CLE Co-Chair Amie Clifford distributed a tentative schedule for the October 14, 2005 CLE to be held at the Embassy Suites in Columbia. The committee determined based on last year's evaluations that those attending did not really want the more specific substantive presentations on specific areas of law. The majority who responded preferred more general topics to help them in their practice or to help them be a better advocate. While a few wanted only women speakers, the committee's aim is to have the best possible speakers regardless of gender. Co-Chair Liz Crum plans to forward the tentative schedule to the S.C. Bar for publication to bar members. The board agreed that all planned topics look excellent. The breakfast and lunch time-slots are still available, if additional topics are desired.

2006 Supreme Court Trip – Liz Zeck reported that since notice of the trip appeared in the *Briefcase*, she has received several inquiries. Liz also asked the board if the current, all inclusive, nightly rate of \$260.00 at the Phoenix Park is an acceptable rate. The board agreed, but cautioned Liz to be sure our trip does not coincide with the booking of the police officers’ convention. A listserv regarding the trip will be sent out in late August.

Documentary –Kif Cook reported that she plans to speak with Kathleen Harleston, and by the next meeting Kif hopes to have a plan on what can be done with the documentary.

- d. **Awards and Nominating.** Rosalyn Frierson reported that the deadline for receiving nominations for the **Jean Galloway Bissell Award** is August 5th. The committee will submit recommended nominees to the Board for a vote at the September Meeting. Cathy Kennedy will check into possible locations for the Bissell Reception.

Firm Awards. Two new awards - honoring a firm where women are given the greatest leadership roles (*the Ladder Award*), and honoring a firm or company that offers a family friendly workplace are still being planned for 2006. Rosalyn indicated that the committee has been looking at criteria used by Women Bar Associations in North Carolina and Ohio for similar awards. The creation of these new awards will be announced at the October 2005 CLE with the first awards presented in 2006.

Compleat Lawyer Award – Bebe distributed a handout on this award that is presented by the Chief Justice to USC Graduates. The award is given to several different individuals in different *length of practice* categories. The recipient must be “a USC Graduate who exemplifies the highest standard of professional competence, ethics and integrity.” Three supporting letters in addition to the nomination are required. Kathy Helms will send a listserv message to encourage SCWLA members to submit nominations.

- e. **Editorial Committee.** **Website-** Eleanor Kellett presented SCWLA with a composite photograph made up of all of the Law Day gatherings of women attorneys on their court house steps. President Helms commended Eleanor for her work with the Ladder Group and the wonderful collage of regional members’ photos from the recent May Day photo-shoots and luncheons.

Briefcase – August 5th is the deadline for fall submissions.

Directory- The cost of producing the Directory online or as a CD is being explored.

- f. **Bylaws.** No report.

- g. **Diversity.** Plans for this committee generally include fostering diversity in the work of all SCWLA Committees.

- h. **Community Outreach.** Kathy Helms reported In Tara Shurling’s absence that several regions have collected professional clothing for women and these garments have been distributed to local women’s shelters. Tote bags and small luggage have also been collected and given to regional DSS locations for foster children. Information about the results of this drive will be included on the website and in the *Briefcase*.

- i. **The Ladder Group.** Bebe Barton reported that The Ladder Group met July 14th and that Eleanor Kellett has compiled a spreadsheet which includes all judicial positions and a database which includes the name, gender, contact information, and term dates for every sitting judge. The spreadsheet was circulated and Bebe indicated that it will be used to identify judicial slots that will be coming available. Bebe gave special thanks to Eleanor Kellett for her efforts in creating these databases. In the future, there will be similar databases for all elective offices and all positions on boards and commissions. Bebe noted that these materials have been copyrighted. All copies will be numbered and a chart will be kept of whoever receives copies. Bebe also

reported the formation of a Legislative Subcommittee chaired by Francesca Macchiaverna. The ultimate goals of this subcommittee are to draft proposed legislation to change the judicial selection process and to form alliances with other women's groups so that we can speak with the largest possible voice. The focus will continue to be changing the composition of the Merit Selection Commission. Amie Clifford suggested that another worthy goal would be to work on legislation that would require magistrates to be lawyers, and in the short term women lawyers should be encouraged to pursue magistrate positions. The Legislative Subcommittee will meet August 15th and Laurie Funderburk will be attending to share her legislative expertise. Bebe noted that a replacement for the current Chair of this subcommittee is sought as Ms. Macchiaverna will not be able to continue. The next Ladder Group Meeting will be September 22nd. Bebe is planning an evening at the Mad Platter on September 22, to honor all of us who are breast cancer survivors or those of us who have been touched by cancer. Bebe reported that she continues to pursue the Bankruptcy Judgeship created by a recently passed Congressional Reform Bill, and that she was happy to report that many have reached out to assist her.

NEW Judgeship – 14th Circuit –Bebe reported that Circuit Court Judge Jackson V. Gregory will not be seeking re-election. Bebe encouraged anyone qualified and interested within that circuit to come forward, but also asked anyone who knows of a qualified candidate to call and encourage them to pursue it

j. Long Range Planning. No report.

- VI. **New Business.** Natalie Bluestein gave a brief overview of a proposal from an insurance company to offer some form of insurance to our members. Kathy Helms stated that additional information would be needed and we will review the information to see what the potential might be.

The National Conference of Women Bar Associations NCWBA will be in Chicago this summer (August 5th) in conjunction with the ABA Convention. Former SCWLA President, Mary Sharp is on the NCWBA Board and the CLE topic is *Why Women Bar Associations Matter*-which includes a panel on getting women into leadership roles. Bebe Barton will be speaking on *Women in Leadership Positions on the Bench*.

Courtesy Policy. Kathy Helms and Rosalyn Frierson proposed the following courtesy guidelines policy to provide consistency in responding to significant events in members' lives. Death of a member - \$50.00 contribution or floral arrangement, or as approved by the Executive Committee; Member hospitalization/illness/life changing event – card; Death of an immediate family member (spouse, parent, child, or sibling) – card, however if circumstances suggest otherwise, as approved by the Executive Committee. The SCWLA Administrator will be the contact for notification purposes and will notify the entire board. Formal cards from the organization will be printed to have available for the Administrator to send out immediately upon notification of events. The Executive Committee will make a determination whether additional acknowledgements should be made. The Courtesy Policy was adopted. The entire membership will be notified of the courtesy policy via the website and *Briefcase*.

- VII. **Next Board Meeting:** September 16th in Columbia at 2:00 p.m. at Ogletree Deakins Law Firm, 6th floor. The board was placed on notice that the next meeting may be a teleconference and the board may meet in person on October 13th, prior to the Bissell Reception.

- VIII. **Adjournment.** There being no further business, the motion to adjourn was adopted.