

SOUTH CAROLINA WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Friday, November 21, 2008– 2:00 p.m., at the McNair Law Firm in Columbia, SC

The Board of Directors of the South Carolina Women Lawyers Association met at the McNair Law Firm in Columbia at 2:00 p.m. Present at the meeting were: Treasurer, Liz Zeck; Secretary, Natalie Bluestein; Amie Clifford, the Hon. Carolyn Cason Matthews, Sarah Leverette, Toya Green and Karen Huelson. Mary Hewlette, Kelly Jolley, Cindy Ouzts, Cheryl Bullard, and Immediate Past President, Rosalyn Frierson, attended by phone.

- I. **Treasurer Liz Zeck (filling in for President Crum) called the meeting to order.**
- II. **The Minutes** of the August 15, 2008 meeting were read, moved and approved
- III. **Treasurer's Report.** Liz Zeck had already emailed reports to everyone via email, but noted that SCWLA was up \$11,000 from last year at this time, and our current worth was around \$30,000.00. Liz said that she needed to get together with Natalie Bluestein to decide what it would cost to make the documentary usable while we had the funds to pay for it. Amie Clifford said that next year's CLE with Justice O'Connor might require significant funds – but others commented that we should be able to raise significant funds to assist us in such a noteworthy endeavor. Sarah Leverette thanked the board for the funds given to help pay for the reception for the *Judicial Selection in SC* Symposium in September – which had been such a great success.
- IV. **Regional Reports.** The Low Country had a 2-hour Ethics CLE (with Barbie Seymour) planned for December 17th (their holiday lunch) where they would also be collecting items for "Pet Helpers." They continued to have their monthly lunches at *Carolina's* on the third *Thursday* of every month with speakers on legal or general interest topics. Natalie said they had been successful in encouraging their own members to speak on areas of their own expertise-rather than seeking non-member speakers. The Midlands. Karen Huelson reported that they continued to have first Thursday lunch meetings with varying speakers, at the Palmetto Club: the Holiday lunch would be on Friday, December 12th – and items would be collected for the DHEC project that Cheryl Bullard talked about for children removed from homes where meth had been manufactured, and a free 2-hour Ethics CLE with Barbie Seymour was planned for January 15th at the Palmetto Club. Kelly Jolley reported that the Sea Islands Region had a lunch in October with the Hilton Head and Bluffton female attorneys, and planned another lunch for December 15th. Kelly also agreed to be the new Sea Islands Rep for the Hilton Head area of the Sea Islands Region, and offered to find someone new to do the Beaufort area of the region – since Mary Fran Gallagher wished to resign as rep. The region was encouraged to offer a free Ethics CLE to members – prior to the March 1st reporting period.

Media Reports. Website. Webmaster Eleanor Kellett had reviewed the proposed Association Magnet website provider contract, and sent the board her recommendations in regard to several items. Mary Hewlette Chairs the committee that is checking out what "Association Magnet" has to offer and their proposed provider contract, and is also investigating other potential providers. Mary told the board that her son (who is extremely tech savvy) investigated the Association Magnet

website provider, and found it to be of the highest quality. Jeffrey Goodman from Association Magnet (a website host for various organizations) gave an impressive demo to the board at the last board meeting. Current Webmaster, Eleanor Kellett plans to resign as webmaster, and SCWLA is definitely in need of a new website where: members can update their contact info; log in their areas of practice in a directory for members that can also be made available to the general public if individual members so choose, and; members have the opportunity to post content for the newsletter with a program that would help our current editor put the newsletter together. Liz Zeck said that having a high quality website like the one Association Magnet could provide -would undoubtedly increase use, membership, effectiveness and efficiency. Amie Clifford said the board has a responsibility to investigate several website options before making a decision because we will be using members' dues. Kelly Jolley (Website Committee member) reported that she had looked at several potential website providers and found that Association Magnet's start up fee was extremely low when compared with other similar quality sites. Amie Clifford asked Mary to contact Keith Haig at Carolina Solutions to see what they had to offer as another potential provider – an example of their work could be found at (www.ethicsforprosecutors.com). Mary Hewlette described Association Magnet – as the Mercedes Benz of the industry – and her only question was whether the cost was appropriate for our needs. Mary did state that the start up price was extremely reasonable – and though monthly costs were higher than other providers – that could be offset by the cost saved on no longer paying for layout design for the newsletter. Amie asked Mary to ask Jeffrey Goodman what their policy was on “outsourcing.” Others asked Mary to question Jeff about liability for credit card info. Another question was whether we can sell ad space to gain revenue – and if we do – does it need to be “streaming” video.

Briefcase. Editor, Stephanie Nye could not attend.

V. **Committees.**

- a. **Membership.** Natalie Bluestein recommended that we make the effort to invite newly admitted attorneys to join SCWLA in January. She said that offering free CLE's was the biggest single draw to gaining new membership. Someone noted that another great thing about getting a new website would be that we could send listservs informing “all” women lawyers in each region – about our “free” CLEs – if they became members. Natalie also reported that she had a local merchant who was sponsoring (for SCWLA) a wine & cheese happy hour – with 10% discounts (door prizes, etc.) that night – and she had other friends with restaurants that did something similar. Natalie reported that they also had a growing number of male attorneys joining because of the uniqueness of the Low Country events and the interest in their speakers and topics. Liz said that Natalie really needed to get the word out to all members about all the great things they did in the Low Country – and Amie said that a new website could note “best practices” for regional reps and make it possible for regional reps to have their own sections – to really publicize their events from – and a way to easily sign folks up for events. Natalie also reported that they are considering doing “Done in a Day” community service projects – like teaming up with the Florence Crittenden Home for unwed mothers. These projects help the community and the visibility of SCWLA.
- b. **Career Development.** Amie Clifford said that especially in these difficult economic times – it would be great to have, *on the new website*, a “*Career Center*,” where our membership would be encouraged to list available jobs – and also have the opportunity to read articles about how to get and keep jobs. Amie said we should also start having workshops on “How to Run for Political

Office,” or “How to Run for a Judgeship,” “How to write a Resume,” or in a job interview – “What You Can and Can’t Say Legally,” etc. Additionally, members with special skills – like someone great at writing briefs (who could not work full time) could list their skills and say that they only wanted to work around 10 hours a week.

- c. 2008 (2009) CLE – Bebe Barton. Bebe could not attend, but sent a report on our October 2009 CLE in Charleston with Justice O’Connor as our honored guest. The place is the Francis Marion Hotel, the dates are October 1-3, 2009, the theme of the convention will be “Lady Justice – the way we were and the way we will be.” It begins on Thursday night, with a dinner and interview with Justice O’Connor, then the CLE is all day on Friday, the Bissell Award is Friday night and Saturday there will be a breakfast for the NC Women Lawyers and then there will be a golf tournament. The CLE topics (still being set) will be discussed by three panels in the morning and two panels in the afternoon. Hopefully, Justice O’Connor will be involved in 1-2 of these panel discussions. The luncheon speaker is still being selected and there are tentative plans for the Fourth Circuit to hold a special session sometime the same week in Charleston.
- d. Supreme Court Trip 2008. Abigail Walsh and Toya Hampton Green. \$300 is still available – possibly for a gift to the Harriet McBryde Johnson scholarship fund.
- e. Mini-CLEs. Amie Clifford. Amie suggested that we consider paying the yearly fee (\$600) for being a “CLE provider” – rather than paying \$50 every time a different region sponsored a CLE. With Greenville, the Midlands, the Low Country and other regions giving 3-4 CLE’s a year – it might be cost effective to do so. Amie also said it would be great to pay the blanket provider fee so we could have the option of offering even “30 minute” CLE’s at many of the regions’ monthly lunches – so most members could easily fit it into their schedules.
- f. Awards and Nominating Committee. There was a brief discussion about possibly “emailing” (vs. snail mailing) ballots for the upcoming board election-to save expenses. Since the election is contested, the board decided that ballots should be mailed via USPS – but that in the future, we should look into finding a new way to conduct elections – possibly via the new website.
Bissell Award. No Bissell Award will be given in 2008 because there was no CLE this year. Bebe Barton (in a recent CLE planning meeting) suggested that a certain candidate would be an excellent candidate for the Bissell Award – and many others concurred. The board discussed the pros and cons and it was tabled until every board member’s opinion could be ascertained.
Possible New Awards: It was suggested that a new award might be created (in honor of Harriet McBryde Johnson) for attorneys that champion the rights of the disabled. Amie Clifford thought it would be good to create an award that honored “*advocacy*,” and that it might be called the “**Lady of Justice**” award (judges could not receive it) – Liz Zeck suggested that this award be given posthumously to Harriet – and announced prior to the 2009 Bissell Award – and then everyone could spend a year deciding who should receive next year’s award. It was also suggested that an art work by a SC artist be created as a gift to Justice O’Connor – one that tied into her work, and could be placed in her future museum. Natalie said that she was familiar with an artist who was excellent at tying in significant events in an individual’s life with their portrait.
- g. Bylaws. Julie Moose could not attend. A discussion regarding email dissemination of ballots for the current election was held. The final consensus was that ballots should be mailed out in the

traditional way and if (in the future) the new website offers privacy, security and anonymity for voters – we would make the bylaw change at that time. A motion was made moved and approved that the deadline to mail out ballots be moved to December 1st – and that the return deadline be similarly extended.

- h. Community Outreach. Cheryl Bullard asked if SCWLA could help with a program DHEC is sponsoring to assist children removed from methamphetamine production homes.
- i. Documentary. Liz Zeck. Liz planned to continue to work with Natalie on getting issues resolved and payment set.
- j. The Ladder Group. Amie Clifford. New workshops would be planned – see career development.
- k. Long Range Planning. Marguerite Willis.

VI. New Business.

VII. Member News. Jenny Horne, Toya Green and Scarlet Wilson won their recent elections.

VIII. Next Board Meetings: January 24, 2009 in Myrtle Beach.

IX. Adjournment. There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn. It was seconded and voted upon favorably.