

SOUTH CAROLINA WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 13, 2009–2:00 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, SC, on Thursday, August 13, at 2:00 p.m. Present at the meeting were: President, Jenny Horne; Treasurer, Liz Zeck; Secretary, Judge Matthews; Immediate Past President, Liz Crum; Bebe Barton, Marguerite Willis, Ericka Williams, Julie Moose, Mary Hewlette, Cindy Ouzts, Sarah Leverette, Kelly Jolley, Karen Huelson, Cheryl Bullard, Abigail Walsh and Tara Dawn Shurling.

- I. President, Jenny Horne called the meeting to order.**
- II. The Minutes** of the April, 2009 meeting were read, moved and approved.
- III.** President Horne introduced Heather Matthews (Communications Director for Nexsen Pruet) who graciously had agreed to give us some tips on how to promote our upcoming CLE. President Horne thanked Nexsen Pruet for their recent sponsor donation of \$5000 for the Bissell Reception. After praising the look of SCWLA’s new website, Ms. Matthews said that the Fall CLE tied in beautifully with our *Mission Statement* -to promote the effectiveness and influence and status of women. Heather said that through our upcoming CLE – we would indeed be promoting the status and influence of women. Heather suggested that we also pursue TV, newspaper and online coverage of our event. She said all effective promotion started with a plan and we needed to ask ourselves - who do we want to reach and how do we want to reach them? Then she said we needed to take charge of what we wanted communicated and how we wanted it conveyed. Heather said we needed to have a strong enough presence in the legal community – to make the news media turn to us (for comment) as often as they turned to men. She said we needed to build relationships with reporters and to establish ourselves as “thought leaders” in this State. Heather pointed out that the “new media” (like *google* and *utube*) is changing everything - especially the way we consume information – so getting information online right now about our event was imperative. Heather suggested that we create a “Communications Committee” to create a plan that would get every member to fill out their bio in our online directory. She also suggested that every member of the board put their photo on the website.
- IV. Treasurer’s Report.** Liz Zeck had previously sent reports to everyone via email, but noted that SCWLA’s current worth was over \$61,500.00. Liz stated that because of the healthy sponsorship donations, we could anticipate that we would not suffer significant depletion of our funds from the cost of the Bissell. Liz stated that we were already ahead from last years on dues received and she anticipated receiving at least \$1000 more in dues before the end of the year. There had been a cost of \$4500 for the design and upload of the website as well as a \$1250 quarterly fee to Stephanie. Liz said that she anticipated getting a minimum of \$25,000 in Bissell sponsorships and expected that SCWLA would pitch in \$5000 to the fund. A discussion was held about providing funds for an anticipated judicial forum in Greenville and the board moved and approved an expenditure of \$1000 to assist the Upstate with that event.

V. **Regional Reports.** Natalie Bluestein could not attend but Jenny Horne noted that the Low Country continued to have monthly lunches on the third *Thursday* of every month and had *speakers* every other month. They also anticipated offering 4 free CLEs to members only. Also planned was a reception with the local WIL in the fall. The Greenville area of the Upstate – were reportedly planning an upcoming judicial forum and a happy hour. The Midlands. Karen Huelson reported that they continued to have first Thursday lunch meetings with varying speakers, at the Palmetto Club and Stephanie Nye and Robin Wheeler had done a program on the new website and recently Marguerite Willis had a huge audience for a program titled, “What’s in your Pocketbook?” Last April, the Midlands had a late afternoon reception with WIL at Wild Wings in the Vista, and another get together would be planned in late fall.

Media Reports. Website. Stephanie Nye could not attend but she had submitted a website report. It was suggested that a notice go out sometime soon to remind everyone to fill out their biographical profile so that we could have a fully usable member Directory.

VI. **Committees.**

a. Membership.

Natalie Bluestein could not attend.

b. Career Development. Amie Clifford.

c. 2009 CLE – Bebe Barton reported on our fall 2009 CLE in Charleston, with Justice O’Connor as our honored guest, at the Francis Marion Hotel with the planned dates of September 30 – October 2nd. Bebe noted that the level of registration was braking all Bar records and the Bar was considering submitting this event for a National Award. The Fourth Circuit planned a special sitting, in Charleston, to kick everything off. The “dinner conversation with Justice O’Connor,” (with Marci Hamilton) was still the most anticipated part of the event. Bebe reported that even the speakers were truly excited about the entire experience. The Bissell Reception (honoring Justice O’Connor) at the Charleston Aquarium was also a highly anticipated event – with reserves expected to reach 400. The NC Women Lawyers planned a breakfast and a golf tournament for their members on Friday. Firms with offices in both North and South Carolina had been asked to help with the cost of the Bissell Reception. There would also be a book signing by Justice O’Connor early on the day of the CLE and a possible reception for Judge Karen Williams just before the “Dinner Conversation” on Thursday. Bebe noted that Judge Williams had been instrumental in making the entire Charleston Seminar – possible - and she wanted to put together a SCWLA team (Women Warriors) to “walk” in Columbia on October 17th, to benefit Alzheimer’s research. Natalie Bluestein would be in charge of the Bissell Reception and all that entailed at the Aquarium. Bebe then discussed the CLE presentations in detail, the lunch speaker (Judge Diane Wood) our annual SCWLA meeting (per our bylaws), Bebe’s panel – which included Rosalyn Frierson and Kathy Helms and their planned discussion of the “survey” and how it indicated high dissatisfaction of women in the legal profession. The board discussed the limitations on publicity for this event due to Justice O’Connor’s concerns and security. Bebe noted that we can never raise money through any connection to Justice O’Connor’s name. Bebe passed around the first draft of an impressive brochure that Amie Clifford had created to go with this event. The board noted that if “sponsors” want to be listed

on the Bissell invitation – they needed to meet the deadline that had been set. Invitations would go out 3 weeks prior to the 30th. Further discussions were held concerning possible ways to raise money for Alzheimer’s research and to honor Judge Williams. Bebe also requested and the board moved and approved that the League of Women Voters be given 4 Bissell invitations in response to their sponsor donation. President Horne suggested that Platinum sponsors receive complimentary “dinner” tickets as a way of thanking their firms for their generous donations. Logistically, the best way to accomplish that would be to send a check back to each firm that would cover the cost of the dinner tickets they had already purchased. Further discussions were held about the equities involved in honoring contributing sponsors and a discussion ensued about what SCWLA and NCAWA had done respectively, to help raise funds for this event. Overall, the board praised Bebe for everything she had done to ensure that the balance between effort and reward was equitable – and everyone praised and thanked Bebe for the incredible time and effort she had invested in this event and the fabulous results. President Horne suggested that we should consider reserving and purchasing additional seats – just to be on the safe side – in case any VIP requested “dinner” tickets at the very last minute. Liz Crum moved that we purchase 10 additional CLE registrations and 10 additional “dinner” tickets – so we would have them available for various individuals we deemed it important to invite – even if it cost us an additional \$5000 – we had already *saved* that amount by the additional funds we had raised. The motion was seconded and voted upon favorably. Liz Crum cautioned that the giving of these tickets should be done carefully in an overabundance of caution about ethical concerns. It was suggested that a committee handle any additional questions and concerns.

- d. Supreme Court Trip 2010. Karen Crane could not attend. The date for the trip is May 1- 3, 2010. Karen had previously stated that she was pretty much following what was done on the last trip – and that the dinner, reception and breakfast were now set. The Hotel is the Phoenix – and the swearing-in fee cost is now \$200.00.
- e. Mini-CLEs. Amie Clifford could not attend.
- f. Awards and Nominating Committee. President Horne reminded everyone that the Bissell Award Committee needed to be set up for next year – and as soon as the October event was over, a listserv needed to go out asking for Bissell nominations for 2010.
- g. Bylaws.
- h. Community Outreach. Tara Shurling said that she wanted SCWLA to put a team together for the Columbia Alzheimer’s walk in October (statewide) and listserv a fundraising effort to combat this affliction.
- i. Documentary. Liz Zeck.
- j. The Ladder Group. Amie Clifford could not be present.
- k. Long Range Planning. Marguerite Willis.

VII. New Business. Kif Cook is working on having the ladder pins available soon. The board moved and approved reserving a room for “SCWLA” at the Francis Marion, during the upcoming events in Charleston.

VIII. Member News.

IX. Next Board Meetings: -September 30th at the Francis Marion- hospitality room.

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