

SCWLA Board Meeting Minutes

June 27, 2019

In Person Meeting (Offices of Nexsen Pruet, Columbia, South Carolina)

Board Members attending: *In person:* Amie Clifford, Karen Huelson, Elizabeth Hutton, Joanna Mary LaFave, Leah Montgomery, Nancy Olah, Jasmine Smith, Mary Beth Pfister, Johanna Valenzuela, and Sheila Willis; *via phone:* Allyce Bailey, Austin Bruner, Nancy Olah, Bhumi Patel, Margie Pizzaro, Johanna Valenzuela, and Ayesha Washington Jackie Edgerton, **Board Members absent, excused:** Ashley Cuttino, Margie Pizzaro, Richele Taylor, and Laura Paton.

Board Members absent, unexcused: Emily Boatwright

Others in Attendance: *In person:* Mikki Lindler; *via phone:* Ashley Parr, Jessica Gooding

I. Call to Order

President Amie Clifford called the meeting to order at approximately 12:05 p.m. Everyone in attendance briefly introduced herself. Amie asked if there was a motion to excuse the absences of Ashley Cuttino, Margie Pizzaro, Richele Taylor, and Laura Paton. Johanna Valenzuela moved to excuse their absences. The motion was seconded by Sheila Willis, and unanimously approved by the Board.

II. Consent Agenda

Included on the Consent Agenda for this meeting were reports from the following Committees, Subcommittees, and Regions:

- Committee Reports
 - Awards Committee (*Sheila Willis, Chair*)
 - Governance Committee (*Nancy Olah, Chair*)
 - Membership - Military Subcommittee (*Kathy Smith, Chair*)
 - POWER Committee
 - Legal Services Subcommittee (Expungement Clinics)
 - Recognitions Subcommittee (*Austin Bruner & Carolyn Matthews, Co-Chairs*)
 - SCOTUS Admissions Ceremony (December 16, 2019) – *Amie Clifford*
- Region Reports
 - Midlands Region – *Regional Rep. Karen Huelson*
 - Old English Region – *Regional Rep. Nancy Olah*
 - Pee Dee Region – *Regional Rep. Susan Firimonte*
 - Upstate Region (Spartanburg) – *Regional Rep. Elizabeth McFarland*

Karen Huelson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by

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Sheila Willis and was unanimously approved by the Board.

III. Minutes from April 18, 2019 Meeting – *Nancy Olah*

Nancy asked if there were any revisions to the April 18, 2019 Board meeting. Since there were no revisions, Nancy suggested that the Minutes be added in the future to the Consent Agenda, and explained that they can always be removed from the Consent Agenda at the meeting if someone has questions or revisions. Nancy indicated that including the Minutes in the Consent Agenda in the future will eliminate the need for a separate vote. Mary LaFave made a motion to approve the Minutes from the April 18, 2019 Board meeting. Leah Montgomery seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board. [Please note: As a result of the discussions under Old Business concerning South Carolina Women Lawyers Foundation, Nancy was instructed by the Board to redact the portion of the April 18, 2019 minutes which dealt with the legal advice that the SCWLA received from the attorney it has retained to handle this matter. During the meeting, Nancy circulated a redacted version of the April 18, 2019 minutes for posting on the website, and the Board ratified its earlier approval.]

IV. President's Report – *Amie Clifford*

Amie reported that several expungement training clinics have been held, and that she believes that they have been very successful. Amie awarded this month's Rock Star award to Bridget Brown, with Appleseed, a SCWLA member who has been working with Gale DuBose to come up with the training program. Amie mentioned that Bridget is doing all of the training clinics except for one. Bridget has also come up the idea of an "adopt a school program" as the site for the expungement clinics to be held in the fall in each region.

Amie reported that we have received a grant of \$5000 from the SC Bar Foundation. We had requested \$12,000, but Amie felt good about the amount of the grant we have received, even though it means that it will severely reduce the number of expungement fees that we will be able to cover. Amie wrote the grant with assistance from Mikki. Ayesha asked about compliance requirements.

V. Treasurer's Report – *Ashley Cuttino*

Since Ashley couldn't attend the meeting, Amie asked if there were any questions about the financial statements. She noted that we are down on our projected sponsorship revenue and also mentioned that there is a provision in the Bylaws for creation of an Advisory Board for the purpose of determining our relevance to our members and to secure financial stability for our organization. Amie asked everyone to look at that portion of the Bylaws and to come back to her and Ashley with 2-3 names of good potential Advisory Board members. Sheila asked questions about the sponsorship, and encouraged Board members who are with a firm to get the firm to consider sponsorship. Mary Beth indicated that we sent targeted letters to all SCWLA Board members.

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Nancy posed the question that, given that we were now mid-year, whether we should get letters out in August-September for 2020, and indicate that if a sponsor paid and committed now, that they would be listed as a sponsor for the balance of 2019. Amie commented that this was always intended to be a rebuilding year, but that in the next 4-6 weeks, we need to be seriously looking at how to secure sponsorship funds for 2020. Amie also commented that we are trying to build the Finance Committee's membership.

Karen asked a question about Stasmeyer, Inc. (an IT firm), and wanted to know if they were an annual sponsor or a conference sponsor. Sheila indicated that they were a conference sponsor, but Mikki mentioned that she thought that they were an exhibitor last year. Amie cautioned that we need to be careful about linking sponsorships with CLE presentations because the ability to speak at CLEs is not currently a sponsor benefit. The consensus was that Mikki should reach out to them to ask for their support of our organization.

Amie reiterated that the action items are to get out a new round of sponsorship requests and to begin building the Advisory Board. Nancy mentioned again that it may be too late to get meaningful sponsorships for 2019, and suggested that if a law firm or company was willing to commit to be a sponsor in 2020 that we tell them that they can be a sponsor for the balance of 2019. Sheila suggested that we do a push for 2019 because we are still \$15,000 down. Mikki commented that our exhibitor prices are too low compared with other organizations. Mikki also mentioned that Ashley has asked if she can be copied on all emails about sponsorship.

VI. Executive Director's Report – Mikki Lindler

Mikki reported that expungement clinics have been held in the following regions: Old English, Pee Dee, and Midlands. Expungement clinics are scheduled for Sea Island and Low Country. She said that she would like to get the newsletter out on the Wednesday after the 4th of July (July 10th). She asked if people can please send her information at least two days before.

VII. Committees

- Bylaws Committee (*Julie Moose, Chair*)

There was no report and Julie was not on the phone.

- Conference Planning Committee (*Johanna Valenzuela, Chairs*)

Johanna requested the use of the SCWLA logo and name for a Confidentiality and Subpoena Defense Workshop on August 15 and at a free CLE on August 16 concerning "Expanding Legal Services to Victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in South Carolina and Indian County." No funds were requested of SCWLA – just the use of our name and logo. Mary moved that we allow SCWLA's name and logo to be used for these two events, and Mary Beth seconded

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the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Johanna next discussed the annual conference which will probably be at the Embassy Suites on Greystone on November 7 for the awards reception and November 8 for the CLE. She reported that the Greystone has quoted her less than \$5000, but that the Marriott was initially at \$15,000 and she is trying to get them to come down in cost. She would like to have a judicial breakfast the morning of the conference, with networking and the ability to hear from different levels of judges. She suggested ethics and tech as two potential session topics and said that the keynote speaker might talk about “ladder down harassment.” She suggested that the afternoon might include topics like diversity, rainmaking, and mentoring, with a panel of women leaders discussing leadership lessons, and Jasmine doing a wellness session. Amie indicated that we do not need a vote of the board as long as it is in budget.

- Long Range Planning Committee (*Ayesha Washington, Chair*)

Ayesha said that the Committee had nothing to report at this time.

- Membership Committee (*Jessica Gooding, Chair*)

The Membership Committee will be meeting in the next few weeks. Four lapsed SCWLA members rejoined because the Membership Committee did a drive offering a free ticket to the May 1 SCWLA Movie Night with renewal.

- Nominating Committee (*Sheila Willis, Chair*)

Sheila indicated that there was nothing new to report at this time, but that the Nominating Committee would be ramping up for the elections in the fall.

- POWER Committee
 - Community Outreach Subcommittee (*Allyce Bailey, Chair*)

Allyce reported that the workforce readiness drive is under way until July 19, and there is also an Amazon link. The Subcommittee will be meeting on July 23 to sort through donations. [Based on subsequent newsletter information, these dates changed to August dates, with the deadline for donations becoming August 16.]

- Professional Development Subcommittee (Online Book Club) (*Margie Pizarro, Chair*)

Margie was not able to attend the meeting because of travel, but had circulated a draft of the proposed Facebook page for the Online Book Club and asked for feedback. It was confirmed that

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it will be set up as a “private group” on SCWLA’s Facebook page. Margie also indicated by email that she would like to send an email to the membership to determine authors for the books to be included.

- Judicial Subcommittee (*Barbara Seymour, Chair*)

Barbara was not on the phone, but Amie reported that the Subcommittee hopes that it can come up with a worked product that they can present to SC Bar House of Delegates as an agenda item. The Subcommittee is still in the process of gathering information and that their goals is to come up with a way to improve the process so that more women participate and are selected as judges.

Karen mentioned that the League of Women Voters does something similar and posed the question of whether we should consider collaborating with them or stay on parallel paths.

- Legislative Subcommittee

Amie reported that they are still looking for a Chair for this Subcommittee. She will continue to provide the legislative updates for the newsletter until a Chair is in place. There was nothing new to report this month.

- Media/Communications Committee (*Rebecca Farmer, Chair*)

Amie reported that Rebecca agreed to serve as Chair of the Committee but there was no report at this time.

VIII. Regions

Amie reminded everyone that Kristin Nichols had agreed to serve as Regional Representative Coordinator.

- Grand Strand Region – *Regional Rep. Bhumi Amit Patel*

There was no report because Bhumi had to leave the meeting at approximately 1:10 pm.

- Low Country Region – *Regional Rep. Hannah Gallagher*

There was no report.

- Sea Islands Region – *Regional Rep. Emily Boatwright*

There was no report.

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- Upstate Region (Greenville) – *Regional Rep. Ashley Parr (Spartanburg)*

There was no report.

IX. Old Business

- SCWLA Foundation (*Mary LaFave & Sheila Willis*)

The Board went into Executive Session during this portion of the meeting.

- SC Bar Association Grant Request (*Amie Clifford*)

Amie provided information about the \$5000 grant received during her President's Report.

- SCWLA Website (*Mikki Lindler*)

Mikki said that she nothing new to report.

X. New Business

- Sexual Assault Awareness and Education – *Amie Clifford*

This topic was not discussed, because we were out of time and people were leaving the meeting.

- CLE Reporting, Materials and Record Retention – *Amie Clifford*

Amie reminded everyone to send in the original sign-in sheets to Mikki (even if she has received a scanned copy from you) because SCWLA has to maintain the originals for two years.

- Other

Amie briefly mentioned the Sarah Leverette portrait fund, but we did not get a chance to discuss it.

XI. Upcoming SCWLA Events

XII. Next Board Meeting

Everyone was reminded that the next Board meeting will be held on August 23 in Columbia.

XIII. Adjournment

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The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:09 p.m.