

# SCWLA Board Meeting Minutes

August 23, 2019

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

**Board Members attending:** *In person:* Amie Clifford, Ashley Cuttino, Jackie Edgerton, Karen Huelson, Elizabeth Hutton, Mary LaFave, Laura Paton, Jasmine Smith, Mary Beth Pfister, Johanna Valenzuela (portion of the meeting); *via phone:* Allyce Bailey (portion of meeting), Austin Bruner, Nancy Olah, Bhumi Patel, Margie Pizzaro, Leah Cromer, Richele Taylor.

**Board Members absent, excused:** Ayesha Washington, Sheila Willis

**Board Members absent, unexcused:** Ashley Bruner

**Others in Attendance:** *In person:* Mikki Lindler (Executive Director), Jessica Gooding (Membership Committee Chair); *via phone:* Kristin Nichols (Regional Rep Coordinator), Jillian Barton (Low Country Regional Rep – portion of meeting)

## I. Call to Order

President Amie Clifford called the meeting to order at approximately 12:05 p.m.

## II. Consent Agenda

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

- Committee Reports
  - Governance Committee (*Nancy Olah, Chair*)
  - POWER/Judicial Election Taskforce – (*Barbara Seymour, Chair*)
  - POWER/Legal Services Committee (Amie Clifford)
  - Membership - Military Subcommittee (*Kathy Smith, Chair*)
  - SCOTUS Admissions Ceremony (December 16, 2019) – *Amie Clifford*
- Region Reports
  - Low Country – *Jillian Barton*
  - Olde English – *Nancy Olah*
  - Upstate - Spartanburg – *Elizabeth McFarland*

Mary Beth made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Laura and was unanimously approved by the Board.

## III. Minutes from June 27, 2019 Meeting – *Nancy Olah*

Karen asked for a clarification in the Minutes from the June 27, 2019 Meeting. During the meeting, Nancy circulated a revised version of the June 27, 2019 minutes for posting on the website that

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removed the language that Karen was concerned about. A motion was made to approve the revised Minutes, Jackie seconded it, and it was unanimously approved by the Board.

#### IV. President's Report – *Amie Clifford*

Amie reported that she and Ayesha went to San Francisco for the annual meeting of the National Conference of Women's Bar Associations. Amie commented on the Good Guys program which recognizes and honors male lawyers who support and mentor women. The Good Guys program also puts on programs for male attorneys with respect to diversity. Amie commented that we may want to consider doing something similar in the future. Amie also mentioned mylegalbff.com and said that we will discuss it later in the meeting.

Amie also mentioned that the Expungement Training Clinics will continue to be held in the regions until October. For the last three months of the year, we want the regions to hold Expungement Clinics on weeknights at schools, technical colleges, libraries or churches in their communities. The Regional Representatives are asked to appoint one person on their Regional Planning Committee to be the point person. At this point, Kristin joined the call. Amie asked if Kristen had a report about the Regions.

#### V. Executive Director's Report – *Mikki Lindler (none)*

#### VI. Committees\*

- Conference Committee – Selling speaker books at conference - *Johanna Valenzuela (moved to later in the meeting)*
- Nominating Committee – *Sheila Willis*

Although Sheila was not in attendance at the meeting, Amie mentioned that the Board needs to nominate two members of the Nominating Committee. Amie reminded us that the Nominating Committee is composed of the President, the Immediate Past President, an appointee of the President, and two people appointed by the Board. Amie indicated that her appointee is Debra Gammons.

There were no reports from the following Committees:

- Bylaws Committee – *Julie Moose (Amie commented that she had not heard from Julie in a while and that she will reach out to see if she is still willing to serve in this capacity)*
- Book Club Committee – *Margie Pizzaro (skipped)*
- Finance Committee – *Ashley Cuttino (skipped)*
- Long Range Planning Committee – *Ayesha Washington (skipped)*
- Media/Communications Committee – *Rebecca Farmer (skipped)*
- Power/Legislative Committee – *Macaulay Morrison (skipped)*

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- POWER/Community Committee (no report) – *(Allyce Bailey, Chair)*
- POWER/Recognitions Subcommittee - no report *(Austin Bruner, Chair)*

## VII. Regions

There were no reports from the following Regions:

- Grand Strand – (no report) – *Bhumi Patel*
- Pee Dee – (no report) - *Susan Firimonte*
- Sea Island – (no report) – *Emily Boatwright*
- Upstate – Greenville (no report)- *Ashley Parr*

## VIII. Old Business

- Sarah Leverette Portrait Fund *(Amie Clifford)*

Amie mentioned that Sheila received an inquiry last year from the Law School about securing our organization's support to raise \$25,000 for the creation of a portrait of Sarah Leverette. Amie reminded us that the Board voted last year to lead the fundraising effort for the Law School. Amie will reach out to Eve Stacey about potentially leading this effort and the League of Women Voters. Karen mentioned that one of the Midlands members had inquired about this effort and wants SCWLA to be behind it.

- Creation of Advisory Board (Bylaws Art. XIII) *(Amie Clifford)*

Amie indicated that the Bylaws were amended under Molly Cherry to provide for the creation of an Advisory Board. The purpose of the Advisory Board is to provide feedback on how SCWLA's Board is doing, to make suggestions, and secure the financial health of the organization.

There was a lively discussion with 18 names put forward for consideration. Each of the women suggested will be contacted, and if they meet the eligibility requirements and are interested in serving, this will be reported at another meeting and included in the minutes for that meeting.

- CLE Reporting, Materials, and Record Retention *(Amie Clifford)*

Amie reminded us of the reporting requirements (attached to the meeting agenda), and noted that all original sign-in sheets need to be sent to Mikki for retention for a two year period. A copy of the accreditation and the application should also be forwarded to Mikki. Amie told us that we should use the sign-in sheet attached to the meeting agenda, and should also be asking attendees to also do evaluations.

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## **IX. Conference Committee** (*Johanna Valenzuela*)

Johanna joined the meeting and we returned to the Conference Committee Report. Johanna discussed the keynote speaker and her request concerning purchase of her books as part of her compensation package. Johanna has negotiated the keynote speaker's fee from \$5500 to \$4500 and we will buy 100 of her books on harassment at \$8 per book. ABA will ship the books for free and will accept back ones that we don't sell.

Johanna also mentioned that they are planning a Judicial Breakfast during the morning, with networking and the ability to hear from different levels of judges. Several program topics include a CLE on trial best practices, Money and Finances for Women, and we discussed whether we should reach out to the leaders of mylegalbff.com to engage them.

## **X. Treasurer's Report** – *Ashley Cuttino*

Ashley indicated that while our income is a little low because we are about \$12,000 short on Sponsorships, our expenses are also lower than expected. Someone asked Johanna about registrations for the annual conference and she indicated that we are a little behind because we want to nail down the agenda before reaching out to obtain registrations. Questions were asked about sponsorships and whether we could have conference sponsorships. Amie indicated that because we switched to annual sponsorships, we couldn't reach out to new sponsors and ask them to sponsor the conference. It was suggested that we could begin soliciting for 2020 sponsors now, and give the 2020 sponsors the benefit of being mentioned at the conference since it is being held so late in the year. Bhumi gave an example that because her firm has been acquired since the beginning of the year, there was probably no one who would have paid attention to the earlier ask, and that her firm should be asked again. Amie mentioned our lowest level of sponsorship (\$500) which has one membership as a benefit, and we discussed the fact that a solo practitioner can obtain that sponsorship and get a refund of her membership.

## **XI. New Business**

- South Carolina Leadership Request was on the agenda but was not discussed.
- Amie indicated that Emily Boatright has resigned both as a Board member and as a regional representative, and that we need to find a replacement for her in the Sea Island Region. Amie indicated that Jillian Barton (the new Low Country regional representative) has been doing a great job and had created a survey that we can possibly replicate for all use with all of our members. Jillian joined the call briefly toward the end of the call and indicated how pleased she was to serve in this role.
- Sponsorship and Donation Requests

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- Membership Committee – WIL Race (\$1000) (*Jessica Gooding*)

Jessica gave us background on the race which will be conducted on 9.21.19 and the request from the Membership Committee for \$1000 in sponsorship money. Amie commented that she doesn't see how sponsoring the race fits into our mission. There was a discussion of reducing the cash portion of the sponsorship to \$750 and doing \$250 of in-kind SCWLA branded logo items like water or umbrellas. Many different opinions were expressed. Several Board members brought up the fact that we are the single most important contributor to the race and that we should not reduce our sponsorship so close to the race. Another Board member brought up that we are not sponsoring similar events at the Charleston School of Law. After thorough discussion, Mary Beth moved that we approve a sponsorship of \$1000, which will consist of \$700 in cash for the race, and \$300 for water or SCWLA promotional items. Laura seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by the Board. The funds for this sponsorship will come from the Membership budget.

## **XII. SCWLA Foundation (Old Business)**

The Board discussed whether to go into Executive Session, and decided not to do so. Mary gave a detailed report to update the Board. Following detailed discussion, Mary made a motion to proceed with promoting a special meeting of the Foundation to elect an active Foundation board. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved by the Board. Mary also brought up the fact that the attorney hired to help the Board with this matter has probably spent at least 30 hours of time. The Board discussed where there is room in the budget to fund this expense. A motion was made to approve payment to the attorney of up to \$4000, seconded, and unanimously approved by the Board.

## **XIII. Upcoming SCWLA Events**

- 08.27.19 Low Country Networking Breakfast
- 09.13.19 Olde English Region CLE on representing clients with Limited English Proficiency
- 09.25.19 Pee Dee - Expungement and Pardons Clinic
- 10.30.19 Upstate/Spartanburg CLE Luncheon
- 12.16.2019 SCWLA SCOTUS Admissions Trip

## **XIV. Next Board Meeting**

(Not mentioned at the meeting but the September 19, 2019 date has been on our calendar.)

## **XV. Adjournment**

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The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:05 p.m.