

**SOUTH CAROLINA WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION**  
**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, 8.15.13 at 1:00 p.m., at the McNair Law Firm, 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 15, 2013 at 1:00 p.m. Board members present at the meeting were: President, Cynthia Hall Ouzts; President-Elect, Tara Shurling; Secretary, Kelly Jolley; Immediate Past-President, Hon. Carolyn Matthews; Sheila Bias, Cheryl Bullard, Amie Clifford, Laura Hart, Jennifer Howe, Karen Huelson, Hon. Alison Lee, Sarah Leverette, Julie Moose, Stephanie Nye, Kathy Smith, Flo Vinson, and Liz Zeck. Also present were: Mikki Lindler, on behalf of Marguerite Willis, and Emily McMillan, Stephanie Nye's law clerk.

Attending the meeting by phone, were: Molly Cherry, Ashley Cuttino, Hannah R. Metcalfe, and Ayesha Washington.

Excused absences: Treasurer, Marguerite Willis, Judge Mullen, Jennifer Rubin, Abigail Walsh, and Amanda Williams.

- I. **President Ouzts called the meeting to order.** President Ouzts added an item to the Agenda – item “H” under New Business – it would be an update concerning the Charleston School of Law.
- II. **The Minutes** of the May 16, 2013 meeting were read, moved and approved.
- III. **Treasurer's Report.** Marguerite Willis could not attend. Mikki Lindler (Assistant to Marguerite) was present to answer questions. Mikki reported that the account balance at Wells Fargo was \$59, 921.56, and at BB&T the account balance was \$35,954.28. Mikki did note that many regions had not made use of the \$1,500.00 allotment that had been set aside in the budget for each region's events and she encouraged the regions to use these funds before the end of the year.
- IV. **President's Report.** President Ouzts said she had already sent her report via email, but she reminded everyone that she had recently attended the NAWL and the NCWBA National Conferences and she had gotten some great ideas from both conferences that she would discuss under “New Business.”
- V. **Executive Committee Report:** President Ouzts reported that the Executive Committee had no report.
- VI. **SCWLA Foundation:** Liz Zeck reported that they were just getting out the applications to the law schools for the Foundation Scholarships that would be available for each of the law schools in the amount of \$1,500.00 each. Liz also reported that within a week or so - they hoped to send out a request for nominations for the “Martha Dicus Award” which would be awarded at some point during our upcoming Conference. Liz said that she would be working with Jennifer Howe to get ten minutes on the conference program to present this new award.
- VII. **Committees**
  - A. **Awards/Nominations:** Tara Shurling reported that her committee had recently met and they were humbled by the accomplishments of the many great individuals who were nominated this year for the Bissell Award. At the end of all their discussions, the committee decided that Liz Crum would be their recommendation for this year's Bissell Award. Tara went on

to say that because there were so many worthy candidates, she recommended that nominations be carried over for at least *two* years for consideration for this award. In the past, nominations had only been carried over for one year. Tara then made a motion that the board vote to bestow the Jean Galloway Bissell Award on Liz Crum for 2013, and this motion was seconded and unanimously approved. Tara also moved that all Bissell nominations be retained for two years (after their initial submission) for consideration for this award, and this motion was seconded and also voted upon favorably. President Ouzts said that someone from SCWLA would go in person to announce the good news to Liz Crum immediately after the meeting.

**The Portia Award:** Tara Shurling reported that there had been many discussions about our desire to give our new “Portia Award” to Chief Justice Toal especially because next year we would be kicking off a year in her honor and our 2014 Conference would involve a retrospective of her illustrious career. SCWLA would be having its own Anniversary celebration next year and Tara believed it would make sense to make the Chief the first recipient of our new award as she had been our first recipient of the Bissell. Tara made a motion that Chief Justice Jean Hofer Toal be named as our first Portia Award winner and that the award be bestowed at our Annual Conference in 2014. A motion was made, and later withdrawn, that Tara’s motion be held in abeyance so that the announcement did not leak out about the recipient of this award too far in advance. Some board members noted that as the last year or so of The Chief’s tenure approached, there would be other groups that would seek to honor her and name awards after her and it would be prudent on our part to act in a timely manner. Tara noted that the Chief often referred to SCWLA Members as “her girls,” and it would only make sense for us to be upfront with some tremendous honor for her – as the Chief was already aware that we were centering the planning for the 2014 Conference around her. Amie Clifford asked why our new award could not be named after the Chief Justice, herself, since the Chief was the preeminent female lawyer in South Carolina – and even though she had never been our President – she was our leader. Amie believed that this award should capture the Chief’s spirit and what the Chief had done for women lawyers. This award should be truly unique, Amie said, and should only be given when a truly exceptional candidate becomes obvious. Laura Hart, who had worked on criteria for the Portia Award, said that that award had broader criteria than the Bissell and was created to be given out only on rare occasions-and that it was in some ways similar to the Bissell but it had more to do with national stature and lifelong achievement. Tara pointed out that if we wanted our second SCWLA award to be a broader, more life-time achievement oriented award - to go to the Chief, then it certainly wasn’t too late to choose to re-name it. Judge Matthews said that she would like to make a motion that the Portia Award be renamed the Jean Hofer Toal Portia Award. Amie Clifford said that since the Chief was a national innovator in the judicial arena, she would like to see the award named simply, the Jean Hofer Toal Award as it would be recognizing a national lifetime of contribution. A motion had been made and seconded, previously, to send all decisions about this award back to the Awards Committee (for further discussion) and President Ouzts asked for a vote on that motion, and it failed. Amie Clifford then made a motion that we create the Jean Hofer Toal Award that would be given out periodically to recognize lifelong contributions made not only within SC but nationwide on behalf of women and women lawyers. Tara Shurling said that her preference would be to have just two awards –the annual Bissell and the periodic awarding of the Jean Hofer Toal Award that would recognize lifetime achievement on even a national level but it would be awarded only when there was a truly exceptional candidate. Amie asked that her motion be amended to have the criteria for the Portia Award be the criteria for Jean Hofer Toal Award. President Ouzts asked if that meant they wanted to rename the Portia Award, the Jean Hofer Toal Award? Amie said yes. There was some further discussion regarding adopting the criteria from the Portia without reviewing it for the Chief’s award, and Judge Matthews said that there was no need to delay naming an award

after Jean Hoefler Toal – especially since she had always been SCWLA’s biggest supporter and had been by SCWLA’s side since its inception, and had made every Bissell presentation wonderful with her participation. Judge Matthews said it would indeed be our honor to attach the Chief’s legacy to ours. Kelly Jolley said that if the only concern was about the criteria – why not go back to Amie’s original motion to just create an award named the Jean Hoefler Toal Award and then ask the committee to develop the criteria by the next meeting. Amie accepted Kelly’s suggestion as a friendly amendment and the motion then was: that we would create the Jean Hoefler Toal Award, and would ask the committee to develop the appropriate criteria and recommend them to the board at the October meeting. This motion was seconded and voted upon favorably.

**B. Professional Development (Career Dev./Mentor/Ladder):** Amie Clifford reported that she did not have a specific report but had come up with several new projects we could do. Amie said that if we could find sponsorships, it would be nice to have a women’s leadership conference (not just limited to women lawyers) next spring. Amie said that Ernst & Young had done a lot of research on women leaders nationally and internationally and that they had addressed all the various issues. Amie also said that she would like to get someone like Anne Doyle (who wrote the book *Powering Up*) as a speaker at the conference. Amie said she was aiming at a one day conference next year (possibly two days in 2015) that would be self-supporting and not cost SCWLA anything. Amie said that a conference like this that focused on leadership and life skills would be extremely beneficial to our members. A survey of our members, Amie thought, would also be important to find out what our members actually wanted from us in terms of professional development and member services. A motion was made to refer the potential “Women’s Leadership Conference” to Amie’s Committee with a request to report back to the board (on details, cost, speakers, etc.) at the October meeting. Amie requested additional committee members and Sarah Leverette volunteered. President Ouzts suggested that Amie prepare a listserv to recruit committee members statewide. Liz Zeck said she would be happy to work with the regions on developing Amie’s Leadership conference.

**Mentoring:** Stephanie Nye reported that we had received a mentoring request from a potential law student and that President Ouzts had given her permission to ask the board if someone would be willing to accept this protégé. Stephanie asked anyone interested to see her after the meeting.

**C. Education:**

**1. 2013 CLE Greenville:** Jennifer Howe reported that the 2013 Conference Committee had thought they had NPR’s award-winning legal correspondent, Nina Totenberg, signed up to speak – but for some reason things changed and NPR would not release her. Jennifer said the committee just moved on from its disappointment and stuck to their original agenda but asked Sean Carter to do *two* hours. Jennifer did say that they had gotten the Bar to give SCWLA members the reduced price of \$250.00. Non-members would be paying \$295.00. Jennifer said that what was needed now was money from sponsorships and asked everyone on the board to please ask their firms to participate. Jennifer said there would be an ad in the September & November issues of the Bar Magazine thanking our sponsors. The link to register and the conference brochure should be available by the third week of August. Jennifer said she was working with the 2014 CLE Committee to be sure that she could help them learn from her 2013 experience and she said she would make it her mission to be sure to help future CLE committees. The Board dinner on Thursday evening (after the Bissell) would be at the American Grocery Restaurant in Greenville. Jennifer said that the Westin Poinsett was a fabulous hotel and that she hoped everyone would stay in Greenville over the weekend because they would really enjoy the “Fall for Greenville” festival.

2. **Washington DC Trip 2014:** Amie Clifford reported that the exact date had not been set yet, but she was aiming at a December 2014 date.
  3. **2014 CLE Charleston:** Amanda Williams could not attend, but President Ouzts read her report. Amanda's committee already had a meeting and had the date set at the Wild Dunes Resort (Isle of palms, SC) for Friday & Saturday, October 10-11, 2014. The committee decided to combine the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of SCWLA with recognition of the career of the Chief Justice. President Ouzts urged anyone interested in serving on this committee to contact Amanda. Someone suggested that it would be great to get the President of the "National Association of Chief Justices" to attend our 2014 conference. Stephanie Nye said that the Chief had many friends in that association and Stephanie thought the Chief would be happy to help with invitations to those justices.
  4. **Other CLE's:** Amie Clifford reported that she was still working on getting Jack West to come in and do a CLE for us. Jack worked with a group of lawyers that represented the American Embassy employees that were taken hostage (as seen in the movie *Argo*). These individuals obtained a civil judgment in a federal case and they had been up to the Supreme Court at least twice and they had been trying to collect the money. Amie said that Jack said he would come to speak to us, but not until the litigation had been resolved. President Ouzts asked anyone with ideas for potential CLEs to please email them to Amie.
- D. By-Laws:** Julie Moose reported there were no bylaw issues pending.
- E. Community Outreach:** {Non-Silent Auction Chairs: Liz Zeck & Amanda Williams. Silent Auction - Marguerite Willis and Tara Shurling.} Tara Shurling reported that she had sent out a listserv regarding the silent auction and it included member and non-member donor forms. Tara asked Jennifer Howe for the name of a women's center that would be designated to receive the funds raised at the 2014 Conference Silent Auction. Jennifer suggested two worthy centers and described the activities of both centers. Tara Shurling moved that the board choose Safe Harbor, Inc. and the motion was seconded and voted upon favorably. Tara also asked the board to start collecting recipes and household hints - in preparation for Tara putting together a SCWLA cook book for sale as a fundraiser in conjunction with the 2014 CLE. Tara said it would raise additional funds for the charity and be a nice memento from SCWLA's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Sheila Bias questioned the appropriateness of women lawyers producing a "cook book." Molly Cherry suggested that we might come up with a more modern title than "cook book." President Ouzts suggested calling it the "gender equity" cook book. Someone else suggested calling it "Wine & Dine," with recipes that recommended appropriate wines to go with recipes. Tara said she changed her motion, and she moved to create a committee that would compile household hints and recipes, and that committee would get together and decide on a format, and it would include a list of proposed titles that the board would have the opportunity to vote on." Sarah Leverette said we should solicit recipes from spouses and Tara agreed. Someone else suggested that a section for takeout (with phone numbers) from good restaurants, be included. A motion was made for Tara to create this committee and it was seconded and voted upon favorably.
- F. Long Range Planning:** Kelly Jolley reported that her committee was planning the SCWLA Retreat for January or February 2014. The committee's recommendation was to hire Susan Sneider of Vista Consulting who facilitated the planning for a National Women's Organization. Kelly said Susan had done a networking presentation a few years ago at one of our annual CLEs. Susan had agreed, Kelly said, to facilitate an all-day strategic retreat in January or February for a discounted price of \$2000 (no charge for travel) and offered to donate three hours of interviews (prior to the retreat) of four individuals we designated: someone in leadership, someone who was a leader, someone we would expect would be a leader, and someone we thought felt disenfranchised. Kelly moved that Susan be hired at \$2000.00 to do the retreat and this motion was seconded and voted upon favorably. Kelly

recommended that the date be set for February 8, 2014 and everyone agreed. President Ouzts asked everyone to put the date on their calendar.

- G. Communications:** Stephanie Nye reported that the Speaker database section had been created and we now had a “board” log-in password to an area where board members could review Minutes, etc. To enter this area, Stephanie told board members, click on the button in the upper right hand corner and the access password was: “palmetto.” There was also the *shell* of our speaker database and we needed regional reps to send speaker evaluations to Stephanie in any form they wanted and she would get them posted. Stephanie asked that these evaluations include the date and title of the presentation, any fees paid to speaker, contact info for the speaker, and an overall impression of the speaker (would the regional rep recommend the speaker?).

**New Listserv.** SCWLA Member, Jennifer Ashburn, had asked for permission to create an additional SCWLA listserv with the SC Bar, for interested women attorneys that were seeking advice and/or making their skills and contact info available to fellow attorneys who might want to contract them for specific work. President Ouzts asked that the board be given an update on the development of this listserv at the next meeting. Stephanie also said she was still working on the PowerPoint - of past Bissell recipients - for the Bissell Reception. Stephanie said we definitely needed to develop a system for getting members to sign a waiver for the use of their image on our website or brochures. Liz Zeck said attendees at the CLE should sign such a waiver (using the SC Bar’s forms if possible) as they sign in for the conference.

**H. Regional Activity Liaison/ Regional Reports:** Liz Zeck & Kelly Jolley.

- a. Midlands-**Karen Huelson noted that Midlands member Sarah Leverette has been profiled by the South Carolina Law Review in its alumni column. She forwarded a copy for SCWLA's website and it was also available at [www.sclawreview.org](http://www.sclawreview.org)  
**Also** – Midlands member, Sue Berkowitz, Director of the South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center, had received the Matthew J. Perry Public Service Award. The award was bestowed by the South Carolina Association for Justice for Sue's tireless work in providing legal assistance and advocacy services to the public

**VIII. New Business:**

- A. Riley Diversity Institute.** Judge Matthews reported that the Riley Institute started 6 years ago in Greenville and there were now classes in Columbia and Charleston and they were held in the fall and spring. The cost to sponsor one person for any one of these training sessions was \$3,000.00 and the board would of course select the individual. A class involved six full days of instruction and it could be split among two people. The class was about leadership styles and diversity in the way people think and act and it wasn’t just a think tank, it was a real opportunity to network with some of the major industries in the state, and it was a great marketing opportunity for any lawyer because you would get to interact with folks from Boeing, SCANA, Bellsouth, and the big banks, etc. Judge Matthews said she just thought it would be a good thing to get SCWLA’s name added to people sponsoring these classes and symposiums. President Ouzts said that she thought it would be a great benefit to our membership (and to our state as a whole) to sponsor one scholarship a year to this Institute. President Ouzts asked for a motion that for 2014, SCWLA budget \$3,000.00, to award a scholarship to a member based upon whatever qualifications our appointed committee came up with. Liz Zeck said she made the motion with the qualification that whoever received the scholarship – commit to make some presentations in the regions. Sheila Bias suggested that a sitting committee like Professional Development be tasked with coming up with the selection guidelines. President Ouzts said she agreed and asked the Professional Development Committee to come up with the necessary selection guidelines and decide how they might like to split the money as well, and report to the board at the next meeting. Judge Matthews said that one of her early ideas was that this opportunity should first be offered to

members of the board – and that would be another great aspect of serving on the board. President Ouzts said any additional questions should be directed to Amie.

- B. 100 First Women Judges project.** The National Conference of Women’s Bar Associations (NCWBA) brought the idea of each state’s women bar association doing a history of their first 100 women judges to President Ouzts’ and Judge Matthews’ attention. Judge Matthews reported that South Carolina had not had 100 women judges in its history. Our first woman judge had been the Hon. Judy Bridges (McMahon) in 1983, and even if we counted the dead judges, we wouldn’t have had 100. Judge Matthews said that right now (excluding popularly elected probate judges) we had 38 living women judges. Judge Mathews said she believed this would be an excellent project for SCWLA to undertake and if the board wanted her to explore further, she would gather photographs and bios but preferred to do the editing part of the project. Some board members suggested that it could just be titled – “South Carolina Women Judges.” Board Members suggested it would be great to have this book ready to sell at the 2014 conference. Liz Zeck volunteered to assist Judge Matthews and so did Flo Vinson, Sheila Bias, Laura Hart and Jennifer Howe. Their report would be submitted in October.
- C. History of Women Lawyers project.** President Ouzts withdrew this from the agenda.
- D. SC Bar Convention Sponsorship.** President Ouzts reported that we had received our annual request to be a sponsor for the *wine tasting* at the Bar convention this year and because we had been such loyal sponsors of this event, the Bar had offered to accept \$2,000.00 from us for what it would cost any other sponsor \$3,000.00. President Ouzts motion was made to approve this sponsorship for \$2,000.00 (at the Gold \$3,000.00 level) and it was seconded and voted upon favorably. President Ouzts said that SCWLA did get a lot of PR out of this event.
- E. Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**-request for sponsorship. The date would be November 12<sup>th</sup> at 701 Whaley in Columbia. They requested a \$250.00 donation. For our sponsorship, we would receive two tickets to the event and our name would be listed on the invitation and on their event website. President Ouzts made a motion to approve the amount requested, and it was seconded and voted upon favorably.
- F. Gender Equity project.** President Ouzts **reported** that she and Tara Shurling heard several presentations promoting gender equity the NAWL and NCWBA Conventions they attended. President Ouzts noted that SCWLA has only done one event along these lines and that was the “Equal Pay Day” event in the Midlands with the WIL group from the law school. President Ouzts said she would really like us to focus on a gender equity project and planned to send a listserv asking for ideas and volunteers for a committee to work on this project, for next year, to address the gender equity problem in this state. One idea that was suggested was an equal payday luncheon where you would bring in other women professional groups and have speakers come in and you would talk about the gender equity problem especially in the *pay* area. The San Diego Women Lawyers Association had a huge luncheon where they had signs everywhere saying “Close the gap, Lawyer,” “Close the gap, Accountant,” Etc. The event in San Diego was a multi-professional event which SCWLA had never done before. President Ouzts said she was asking the board (now) to allow her to spearhead such an event for SCWLA next year (around April) and that we should be expecting emails (from Immediate Past-President Ouzts then) asking for our assistance. The board agreed.
- G. JAG Officers and Military Spouses project.** President Ouzts reported that we do have several JAG women lawyers in SC and many women lawyers who are military spouses and we have never reached out to them because they are not members of our Bar. President Ouzts said she met some women in San Francisco who were members of a group called Military Spouse JD network ([www.msjdn.org/](http://www.msjdn.org/)) and President Ouzts said she wanted to help that network connect with the women in SC that might just be here for a year or two. President Ouzts said that SCWLA might want to help this group of women lawyers who we didn’t ordinarily have access to and she planned to send a listserv asking for help in this area.

Liz Zeck suggested a reduced rate for lawyers who were members of the military. President Ouzts said she would send this request to committee.

**H. Charleston School of Law-update:** Jennifer Howe reported that the alumni and students at the Charleston School of Law were very upset over the current management services agreement that was now in place with a for-profit company, "Infilaw Inc." Jennifer said that Ralph McCullough and Alex Sanders were no longer a part of the founding members group of the law school and the students feared the management contract was a precursor to a sale. Jennifer said the school had already had about 50 students transfer and everyone feared the quality of the school would be undermined by a sale to Infilaw. Jennifer said any such sale would have to be approved by the ABA and the SC Committee for Higher Education – so she asked if anyone knew a legislator who could make a difference – that they please make the effort to get this sale stopped. Jennifer said that class size for the fall had already been increased by 50 students. Jennifer said there was a website created by the alumni – [probonopopuli.wordpress.com](http://probonopopuli.wordpress.com) – to get the word out. There was a possibility that the law school might merge with the State – with the State putting up half the funds. Judge Matthews asked if this situation was one that SCWLA should pass a resolution about or make a comment about? Most board members felt that this was an area to tread lightly. Tara Shurling said there was no reason that board members as individuals couldn't make contact and let their feelings be known.

**IX. Member News.** Cheryl Bullard was a new grandmother. Tanya Gee was struggling with her cancer treatments.

**X. Next Board Meeting:** Thursday, October 10<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m. at Westin Poinsett in Greenville

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