

**SOUTH CAROLINA WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION**  
**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, 10.10.13 at 10:30 a.m., at the Westin Poinsett, Greenville, SC**

The Board of Directors of the South Carolina Women Lawyers Association met at the Westin Poinsett in Greenville, SC on Thursday, October 10, 2013 at 10:30 a.m. Board members present at the meeting were: President, Cynthia Hall Ouzts; President-Elect, Tara Shurling; Secretary, Kelly Jolley; Treasurer, Marguerite Willis; Immediate Past-President, Hon. Carolyn Matthews; Webmaster, Stephanie Nye; Sheila Bias, Cheryl Bullard, Amie Clifford, Ashley Cuttino, Laura Hart, Jennifer Howe, Karen Huelson, Hon. Alison Lee, Sarah Leverette, Hannah Rogers Metcalfe, Julie Moose, Jennifer Rubin, Kathy Smith, Flo Vinson, Amanda Williams, and Liz Zeck.

Excused absences: Molly Cherry, Hon. Carmen Mullen, Abigail Walsh, and Ayesha Washington

- I. **President Ouzts called the meeting to order.**
- II. **The Minutes** of the August 15, 2013 meeting were read, moved and approved as submitted.
- III. **Treasurer's Report.** President Ouzts noted that the Treasurer's Report (Profit Loss Actual & Profit Loss Detail, Budget 2012 Comparison with 2013, CLE Sponsor Comparison, and our BB&T Savings Report) had been sent to everyone via email. President Ouzts reported that we were fiscally sound - with an account balance at Wells Fargo of approximately \$35,000.00, and a savings account balance at BB&T of nearly \$36,000.00. President Ouzts said she hoped that the regions would make use of the funds that were still available to them and suggested that Liz Zeck or Kelly Jolley encourage them to do so.
- IV. **President's Report.** President Ouzts said she had already sent her report via email, but she reminded everyone that we had recently gone past the "900" membership mark. President Ouzts credited Liz Zeck with her aim of getting to "1,000" members - and also gave the regions credit for planning inspiring events that were garnering new members. Everyone agreed that the free CLEs that we offered regionally were a big part of the increase and the reduced rate for SCWLA members at the annual CLE had also been a big draw. President Ouzts said that her Women in the Military Committee and Gender Equity Committee were doing well.
- V. **Executive Committee Report:** President Ouzts reported that the Executive Committee had no report.
- VI. **SCWLA Foundation:** Liz Zeck reported that she was really excited that at 4:45 (today) they would be giving out the first "Martha Dicus Public Interest Award," to Sue Berkowitz who was the obvious recipient to everyone involved in the creation of that award. Liz reported that Mary Sharp (close friend of Martha Dicus and former SCWLA President) would talk about Martha and the Award and make the presentation to Sue. Liz also noted that the Foundation had a fundraiser planned for November 20<sup>th</sup> at the Columbia Museum of Art which would involve a tour of the Annie Leibovitz Exhibit, *Pilgrimage*. At this event, SCWLA would pay the basic costs and whatever checks attendees wrote - would go completely to the Foundation for scholarship purposes. At the last fundraiser the cost to SCWLA was around \$600 and the Foundation received between \$1700 and \$1800. President-Elect Shurling suggested that we might want to consider creating a "Fellow," category where members could pledge a certain amount to become a "Fellow," and could pay off that amount over the course of a year. Liz Zeck said that she hoped to give out the first Foundation Scholarships in April at the Equal Payday event we would

be having with the Women In Law Group from the USC School of Law. Liz also noted that she hoped to have more SCWLA Foundation fundraisers in other regions.

## VII. Committees

**A. Awards/Nominations:** President-Elect Tara Shurling reported that she was excited about the Bissell Reception with its great location at the Womble Carlyle Law Firm and the wonderful food that would be served. Tara reported that she had taken the leather notebook that McNair had sent in with all the letters for Liz Crum's nomination – and had it embossed with “The Jean Galloway Bissell Award 2013, Liz Crum” to give as a special gift to her.

**Next year's special award:** Tara suggested that whatever we decided to call the award that would be given to Justice Toal next year – she hoped we would consider getting a block of marble and placing a small bronze ladder with a bird on it – and use that as the “award.” Judge Konduros, Tara said, had suggested that we use an artist friend of hers to design our award in this way and hopefully this artist would let us know what the cost of this sculpture would be by the next board meeting. The Board agreed that this was an excellent idea.

**B. Professional Development (Career Dev./Mentor/Ladder):** Amie Clifford reported that she was still planning on doing a Leadership Conference next year and said that in doing her research she had found that a number of organizations in this state do women leadership conferences all over this state and she had gathered info on all of those. Amie said that she and Sarah Leverette would be sending out a listserv soon to get other members to join this committee to see what we needed to do and that might mean partnering with some of these other groups that had been very successful in pulling 100's of women leaders into their programs.

### C. Education:

**1. 2013 CLE Greenville:** Jennifer Howe said that she was happy that everything was going so well and she gave special thanks to Lynsey Kmetz and Von Snelgrove for all their work in putting the 2013 conference together. Jennifer showed the board what would be included in the packets that all conference attendees would be receiving and that included: a clear blue plastic folder with the SCWLA logo on it; a welcome letter with the names of all those on the committee; a guide for shopping, dining and drinks; the conference agenda; the list of sponsors & exhibitors; a blank page for notes, and; a burlap wrapped wine glass with the SCWLA logo etched on it. The Board exclaimed its admiration for the beautiful glasses and wanted to know if there were extras. Jennifer said that she had ordered ten extra boxes of 12. Jennifer believed that for everything in the folders the cost was only around \$1600 – and that cost was more than covered by the sponsorship money which was around \$21,000.00. Jennifer said that the money we raised in sponsorship would all be coming back to SCWLA though \$8,000.00 was allocated for the Bissell. Jennifer said that she believed we would have a minimum of 125 attending and hoped it might be as high as 150. The board applauded Jennifer for all her efforts and she reminded everyone to thank Lynsey Kmetz, also. President Ouzts also thanked Jennifer for her willingness to assist Amanda Williams with next year's CLE.

**2014 CLE.** Amanda Williams reported that her committee had one meeting since the last board meeting and the current plan was to honor Chief Justice Toal throughout this event and to have the 2014 CLE split into two days – a full day on Friday, October 10, and a half day on Saturday, October 11<sup>th</sup>. Amanda said that President Ouzts and President-Elect Shurling and Marguerite Willis had been working with Stephanie Nye to co-ordinate everything with Chief Justice Toal to get her ideas on topics and speakers that she would like to incorporate into this event. The Venue contract with the Wild Dunes Resort had already been signed. President-Elect Shurling reported that Chief Justice Toal did not want us to skip doing the Bissell Award in 2014 – so that would mean that we would need to do the Bissell Award on

Thursday night before the Conference and on Friday we would have a black tie optional event in the evening where we would be honoring Chief Justice Toal. On Saturday morning there would be some interesting CLE breakout sessions followed by a golf tournament – and after that – the Chief had invited everyone to her home on the Isle of Palms for a 19<sup>th</sup> Hole (catered) Bar-B-Que. Everyone agreed that this entire conference would be amazing and thanked Amanda for her willingness to chair the committee. President Ouzts asked for additional volunteers to assist Amanda and Amie Clifford, Sheila Bias, Stephanie Nye, Jennifer Rubin, and Liz Zeck volunteered.

2. **Washington DC Trip 2014:** Amie Clifford reported that the exact date had not been set yet, but she was still aiming at a December 2014 date. Amie also encouraged even those who had already been admitted to the Supreme Court Bar – to also join everyone on this trip because it would be such a great time to be in DC.
  3. **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 also ask one of the plaintiffs to come and speak to us, but not until the litigation had been resolved. Amie said she might even see if the Nickelodeon could do a special showing of *Argo* to coincide with the CLE. It was suggested that this might even turn into a fundraiser for the Foundation. Amie suggested that the cost might then be \$100 for a 2 hour CLE – and it might be a great draw for the general community.
- D. By-Laws:** Julie Moose reported there were no bylaw issues pending. A question was raised about the need to be a board member in order to become an officer. This was something that was resolved several years ago when it was put in the bylaws that you did not need to be a board member to be an officer. Julie said she would look at the bylaws to be sure that was correct.
- E. Community Outreach:** {Non-Silent Auction Chairs: Liz Zeck & Amanda Williams}. Silent Auction - Marguerite Willis and Tara Shurling. President-Elect Tara Shurling reported that she had been working with Marguerite Willis on setting up the Silent Auction until nearly 2:00 a.m. that morning. The auction would go on throughout the day on Thursday and would resume on Friday morning and end at 11:30 a.m. – and bidders would have until 2:00 p.m. to come by and pay and pick up their items.
- F. Long Range Planning:** Kelly Jolley reported that the board had approved the hiring of Susan Sneider of New Vistas Consulting to facilitate our board and interested member SCWLA Retreat scheduled for February 8, 2014 in Columbia, at the Willoughby Hofer Law Firm. Regional Representatives would definitely be encouraged to attend. Kelly said she would be getting together with President-Elect Shurling to set the April and August meeting dates so everyone would have those dates well in advance.
- G. Communications:** Stephanie Nye reported that she and Sheila Bias continued to update SCWLA's social media presence and would be doing so throughout the entire conference. Stephanie asked if we had a photographer and Jennifer Rubin raised her camera and Stephanie asked Jennifer to send her the best photos as soon as it was convenient. Stephanie asked that the regions continue to keep her informed with news of their events and postings on the website's regional calendar.
- New "Email" list.** SCWLA member, Jennifer Ashburn had suggested and helped to develop a SCWLA email list which would allow SCWLA members to communicate via email directly with each other regarding the latest developments in the law, research, tips, questions regarding legal issues and much more. Jennifer Ashburn had also asked for permission to create an additional SCWLA list of interested women attorneys who would like to make their skills and contact info available to fellow attorneys who might want to contract them for

specific work. This special email list would be ready to go soon and it was anticipated that it would launch within a week. Anyone wishing to participate would receive a set of rules and the Bar had agreed to let us use its server. The list would be overseen by Jennifer and the Administrator -as moderators. Jennifer created and purchased a sign and an easel to advertise these lists during the conference and Stephanie asked the board to approve reimbursement for these items in the amount of \$76.63. A motion to do so was made and seconded and approved. Stephanie said that the expense could be included in the "Communications" section of the budget.

**H. Regional Activity Liaison/ Regional Reports:** Liz Zeck & Kelly Jolley. Liz Zeck reported that all regions were increasingly active and reports for most of the regions had already been sent to all board members. Kelly Jolley said she felt that next year we would do a better job of letting members know how important it was to attend SCWLA's big state-wide events. Kelly also said that having the retreat open to all members and having the annual CLE in Charleston would do a lot to let the members see how this organization works. Karen Huelson reported on having the Midlands' highest attendance at a luncheon when the speaker was Alice Paylor who was a Past SCWLA President and current President of the SC Bar. Karen suggested that all the Regions would benefit from Alice speaking at one of their events. President-Elect Shurling suggested that all regional representatives be given personal business cards with the SCWLA logo on it so they could pass them out to potential members when they have the opportunity. President Ouzts said that Officers would benefit from having these cards, too – and that she wished she had had them when she was attending the National Conferences last summer. President Ouzts asked for a volunteer to create a blank card format with the SCWLA logo on it that could then be used by officers and regional reps to order their own cards. Amie Clifford volunteered to get that done by the end of the year. Amie was also asked to find a company who would then have our "format" on file so the individual representatives and officers could then order their cards directly from them and SCWLA would cover the cost of these cards.

### **VIII. New Business:**

- A. Appleseed Legal Justice Foundation.** President Ouzts reported that the ALJ Foundation gives an award every year to their "Advocate of the Year," and this year Inez Tenenbaum would be the recipient. An awards reception was scheduled for October 23<sup>rd</sup> and we had been asked to be a sponsor for this event. A motion was made that we support this event at the \$1,000.00 level because of the relationship we have had over the years with the recipient. Even though there was not a surplus of funds left in the "co-sponsorship" section of the budget, President Ouzts suggested (that we needed to know for the future) that we had perhaps under budgeted for this category because these sponsorships were highly important for the organization and for the community. Kelly Jolley moved that we co-sponsor at the \$1,000.00 level and after a discussion this motion was amended to put it under "special projects" in the budget (because this was a special sponsorship) – and this motion was seconded and approved. SCWLA would be entitled to 4 tickets to the reception for sponsorship at this level.
- B. DRI Membership-information to members issue.** President Ouzts reported that we received a letter from an attorney in a large law firm in Birmingham Alabama, asking us if we could somehow plug membership in the Defense Research Institute because they are having a diversity initiative. President Ouzts said she was hesitant to send this to the website or Facebook because there were a lot of good legal organizations out there- and she didn't particularly want to support out one group over another. After a discussion, everyone agreed to decline the request.
- C. Dues increase for 2014.** President Ouzts reported that a suggestion had been made that we might want to raise our dues now that the Bar is charging us a small percentage to collect them for us. The amount we are paying the Bar is around 2%. The consensus of the board was not even to form a committee to discuss this – and to just let the idea go. Kelly Jolley

and the Long Range Planning felt it would be important to be informed about exactly how much each person pays and the Administrator was asked to be sure and get that information when she received the 2014 SCWLA database from the Bar.

**D. Underemployed or unemployed scholarship for SCWLA dues.** Jennifer Ashburn suggested that SCWLA offer a scholarship that an individual would need to apply for to receive membership at no cost. Jennifer even came up with a 2-page application for a scholarship. Amie Clifford suggested that it should be only a committee or the officers that review the request – not the entire board, and she also suggested that we look to see what other organizations have done with dues’ waivers. It was suggested that dues “classifications” for possible reduced dues be referred to committee with their suggestions to be presented at the next board meeting. Kelly Jolley said that she would participate in the work of that committee.

**E. Anita Hill Party in Columbia.** Judge Matthews encouraged everyone to attend the Anita Hill Party in Columbia on October 24<sup>th</sup> at 701 Whaley.

**IX. Member News. Jackie Bartley.** President Ouzts reported on the passing of Jackie Bartley. Jackie was a founding member of SCWLA and even helped draft the bylaws. Jennifer Rubin reported that the Columbia Business Journal recently honored their “Legal Elite,” and they recognized Marguerite Willis in her category of *Litigation*, Amy Geddes was recognized in the area of *Insurance Law*, Lisa Hostetler and Cynthia Blair were both recognized in the area of *Real Estate*, and she (Jennifer Rubin) was recognized in the area of *Foreclosure*. It was suggested that the recognition of these attorneys be noted on our Facebook page. Jennifer said it was really important to promote yourself and your friends.

**X. Next Board Meeting:** Saturday, January 25, 2014 at noon, at “Tomasso at Turtle Point” Restaurant on Kiawah Island

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