

**SOUTH CAROLINA WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION**  
**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, March 14, 2013–1:00 p.m., at 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, March 14, 2013 at 1:00 p.m. Board members present at the meeting were: President, Cynthia Hall Ouzts; President-Elect, Tara Shurling; Treasurer, Marguerite Willis; Immediate Past-President, Carolyn Matthews, and; Webmaster, Stephanie Nye; Sheila Bias, Amie Clifford, Laura Hart, Jennifer Howe, Karen Huelson, Sarah Leverette, Jennifer Rubin, Kathy Smith, Flo Vinson, Ayesha Washington, Amanda Williams, Liz Zeck and special assistant to the Treasurer, Mikki Lindler.

Attending by phone: Secretary, Kelly Jolley, Ashley Cuttino, Molly Cherry, and Julie Moose.

Excused absences: Cheryl Bullard (conflict); Abigail Walsh (conflict); Hannah Metcalfe (conflict); Judge Lee (conflict).

- I. **President Ouzts called the meeting to order**, welcomed everyone, and expressed her appreciation to the McNair Law Firm for allowing SCWLA to conduct its board meetings in one of the best board rooms in Columbia. President Ouzts asked Stephanie Nye to find a place on the website to thank McNair for their generosity and continuing support for SCWLA.
- II. **The Minutes** of the January, 2013 meeting were read, moved and approved
- III. **Executive Committee Report.** President Ouzts said she hoped everyone had read the committee's report that had been emailed to everyone and summarized that the committee had agreed to the Sea island's request for \$500 (from the \$2,500.00 Regional Pool fund) to support a very worthwhile organization – Low Country Legal Volunteers – and their Wild Women's Tea Party Fundraiser on April 13th. The group is made up of retired attorneys who help women and children and we knew from their thank-you note that in the last 6 months of 2012 they assisted in 109 litigated cases and of those, 83 were female. Additionally, the committee also decided to sponsor the Black Law Student Association's Annual Dinner at the Silver Level (\$250) and with that SCWLA received 3 tickets to their March 28<sup>th</sup> event. Since Justice Beatty would be the featured speaker, the committee offered one ticket to Karen Huelson (Clerk to Judge Beatty). The other two tickets were offered to the board and Ayesha Washington and President Ouzts said they would attend.
- IV. **Treasurer's Report.** Marguerite Willis. Marguerite referenced a report that had been circulated by email prior to the meeting but said there were some slight revisions to that document. Marguerite reported that in our BB&T account we had \$35, 946.00 and in the Wells Fargo account we had \$74, 471.00. In order to fund the 2013 budget, Marguerite said we would need to move \$7, 700.00 from savings but that money had not been transferred, yet. Marguerite reported that she would also be tracking regional expenditures, and she had received a question from Regional Representative, Kathleen Chewning, regarding funds raised within her region. The question referenced regional funds that were raised beyond the amount that had been spent and whether the region could then retain those funds for future events and Marguerite said she agreed that they could. Marguerite said she would share her quarterly regional funds' report with Liz Zeck and Kelly Jolley (the Regions Committee) so they could keep the regions informed about available funds. Since the regions did *not* make use of their allocated funds last year, this year's plan (with the help of Liz, Kelly and President Ouzts) was to keep the regions informed

about what money was available and to strongly encourage each region to plan events (CLEs, and events for recruitment and networking) to make use of these funds. Liz Zeck said it was still important that all regional monies be tracked through the Treasurer and that all checks be written directly to "SCWLA." Marguerite responded that they were indeed tracking all regional funds appropriately. A motion was made to approve the Treasurer's Report as submitted and it was seconded and voted upon favorably.

- V. **Regional Activity Liaison Committee:** Liz Zeck & Kelly Jolley (Stephanie Nye and President Ouzts). Liz Zeck reported that the focus of this committee had been to encourage more activities outside of the big cities and to identify and recruit active representatives for these regions. The committee's efforts were rewarded with several new regional representatives and even a "new" region in the Aiken area named "Thoroughbred Region." Liz said that having active regional representatives had indeed resulted in increased membership in the all the regions and the committee's goal for the future was to help encourage and co-ordinate even more activities. Liz encouraged everyone to let the committee know whatever they would like to see done in their regions. President Ouzts said that she planned to continue the practice of attending various regional events as Immediate Past-President Matthews had done. News about all regional events would continue to be emailed to all board members in the hope that they might take the opportunity to attend whenever possible. Liz reported that a conference call between the committee and all the regional representatives was planned for March 18<sup>th</sup>. President Ouzts noted that regional reports from the Midlands, Sea Islands and Spartanburg had already been emailed to the board.

**Regions:** The Midlands. Karen Huelson reported on two special events to the board. On Tuesday night, April 9<sup>th</sup>, the Midlands has planned an event to honor Women In Law (WIL) from USC School of Law and also invited Midlands members to come out and celebrate "Equal Pay Day," at Gervais & Vine in Columbia. This event would also have the benefit of an on-going art show at the chosen venue. President Ouzts requested photos from this event so she might share them with NAWL. The other special event is the SCWLA Foundation Fundraiser reception planned for April 18<sup>th</sup> at the Columbia Museum of Art which includes a tour of the "Monet to Matisse" exhibit currently on display. Karen also noted that the monthly lunch on April 5<sup>th</sup> would include a one hour CLE on SA/MH that the Bar required every 3 years. Karen said the speaker might be Robert Turnbull from the SC Bar and Amie Clifford suggested Desa Ballard and Tara Shurling said we should contact DAODAS – because they had a woman attorney who was an excellent speaker. The Sea Islands. Cindy Ouzts reported that the Sea Islands has planned a wine tasting on Friday, April 4<sup>th</sup>. The Pee Dee. Flo Vinson reported that they have planned a Lunch and Learn on April 19<sup>th</sup>, at Lizard's Thicket, on Technology, with a lawyer from her law firm. Greenville area of the Upstate. Ashley Cuttino reported that Bonnie Lynch would be taking over for her as regional representative for the Upstate. Liz Zeck complimented Ashley on the wonderful job she had done in Greenville.

- VI. **SCWLA Foundation.** Liz Zeck. Liz reported that the foundation had received its 501(c)(3) status last year and now they needed to make plans to raise money and do something with it. Liz said that scholarships were still their primary goal but that she was looking into grants to support a legal services/public interest law type of organization –possibly connected to the Martha Dicus memorial – but nothing had been finalized, yet. The foundation's first fundraiser will be on April 18<sup>th</sup> at the Columbia Museum of Art. The suggested donation was \$25.00 but the hope was that folks will write bigger checks than that. Liz said that the Museum charged \$20.00 for the first ten guests and then charged \$15.00 for each additional guest – for the food and tour. Liz said that she hoped to get 50 folks to attend and that would mean writing a check to the Museum for \$800.00. Liz made a motion that SCWLA agree to use part of the money that was already

budgeted (\$4,000.00) for the foundation – to write a check to the Museum for the \$800.00 – and then everyone attending could write their checks directly to the SCWLA Foundation. Liz said the \$800.00 (the foundation’s money) would then be “seed” money for the foundation itself. Liz’ motion was seconded and voted upon favorably. Liz went on to say that the initial board of the SCWLA Foundation had 5 members but that they were looking to gain additional board members (up to 15) from across the state and she asked regional representatives and/or any SCWLA members and community members - to let her know if they would like to serve on the board of the SCWLA Foundation.

**VII. Media/Communications Report.** Stephanie Nye reported that she and Sheila Bias were making the Facebook page look more active and she asked anyone that had anything to add to our page to please forward it to her. Sheila reported that she had done 11 posts since our last meeting and that we had 969 combined views of those posts. Laura Hart suggested that we remember to submit things like our involvement at the mock trial state finals that she, Jennifer and Sheila participated in, and President Ouzts urged board members to submit whatever would be of interest to our members. Stephanie also noted that we have our own YouTube channel (where we can post our own videos) now – with President Ouzts (the President’s Message) as our first entry – and she urged board members to send her whatever they felt would be appropriate. Stephanie said that logistically, it was tricky for her to make the videos herself, but that she had spoken with the SC Bar and they said that they would assist us – free of charge. Stephanie said that she had plans to do short interviews with members who had just received the Compleat Lawyer Award and with members who had recently been elected to the SC Judiciary. Stephanie said that she continued to assist regional representatives with posting their event news on the Google calendar at our website and that the regions had been doing a great job of getting the news out about their events.

**VIII. Committees.** President Ouzts passed around a “Committees 2013” list – asking board members to add their names to any committee they wished to serve on.

a. **Professional Development.** (Combined *Membership* – Stephanie Nye and Jennifer Rubin – *Career Development* – Kelly Jolley and *The Ladder Group* – Amie Clifford).

**(Mentoring.** Stephanie Nye reported on the limited success of the current mentoring program and the pros and cons of continuing to try and make it succeed. Stephanie said that the court “tours” and roundtable discussions and the more group-oriented activities had been well received. Stephanie said that moving the mentoring program into the Professional Development Committee and focusing on more of these group activities would probably realize more positive results. Stephanie said that she, Jennifer Rubin and Sheila Bias did want to help with mentoring but hoped it would be in a different context than the one-on-one pairing model. Flo Vinson suggested having events like “bring a young lawyer” to a SCWLA event. Jennifer Rubin said we needed to clearly define the scope and purpose of every committee to provide focus and prevent overlap. Stephanie went on to say that she would keep the mentoring applications available online because they were valuable when needed by certain individuals. Jennifer Rubin agreed with Stephanie’s assessment of the need to move mentoring into wider group oriented events – e.g. “So, you’re going to be a new mom...” and even though it would be a limited group it would be highly valuable to those involved. Jennifer went on to say that when events like this are successful in one region they can be moved around the state for maximum effect. Sheila Bias said she would welcome events where the focus was just meeting new colleagues and conversing with them. Ayesha Washington said that we should redesign the program in a way that would yield a real benefit to a significant number of members. Marguerite Willis suggested that we move the Mentoring Committee into the Professional Development Committee (while we do a

thoughtful consideration of how we restructure various committees), and continue to plan regional events that promote the overall purposes of mentoring. A motion was made to move "The Mentoring Committee" under Professional Development, and it was seconded and voted upon favorably. Immediate Past-President Matthews noted that any SCWLA member could serve on our committees, and she believed that involving non-board members would bring a fresh perspective and renewed energy that would help get things accomplished. Amanda Williams suggested that a brief description of what each committee does – be posted on the website so volunteers would know if a committee was a good fit. President Ouzts agreed and asked each Committee Chair to come up with a description of the scope of their committee's work before the next board meeting. President Ouzts noted that Tara Shurling had agreed to be Chair of "Awards and Nominating." Julie Moose volunteered to continue as Chair of "Bylaws." Liz Zeck and Amanda Williams agreed to Co-Chair "Community Outreach," with Marguerite Williams as point person for the Annual Silent Auction. Kelly Jolley agreed to Chair "Long Range Planning," because as Amie Clifford suggested, it would give her two years to plan for her year as President. Marguerite Willis agreed to provide Kelly with all the research and documentation she had produced as former Chair of this committee. Carolyn Matthews agreed to serve on this committee with Kelly and asked Kelly to consider the use of a facilitator to plan our next SCWLA Retreat in 2014. President Ouzts asked that the probable cost of the facilitator be ascertained so it could be figured into next year's budget. Former Chair, Marguerite Willis, said that based on her research for the Long Range Planning Committee – SCWLA was doing very well as compared with all the other US Women's Bars – in forwarding its goals as described in its mission statement. Stephanie Nye agreed to continue as Chair of "Media and Communications," and she said their work involved the SCWLA Website, the listserv, Facebook, and our new YouTube channel. President Ouzts was currently being featured on our YouTube channel and she asked Liz Zeck to let the regions know that we would love to post videos from all our regions. Liz Zeck and Kelly Jolley said they would continue to Co-Chair the "Regional Activities Liaison" Committee and they felt they were good as far as members because their function was simply to support communication between the regions and the board and the regions.

- b. **2013 Annual CLE in Greenville.** Jennifer Howe and Lynsey Kmetz. Jennifer passed out a rough draft of the CLE's Agenda. Jennifer reported that this event would be broken up into two days – Thursday, October 10<sup>th</sup> and Friday, October 11<sup>th</sup> in Greenville at the Westin Poinsett. Registration would start at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday and end at 2:00 p.m. on Friday. The Theme would be "Vision for Success." The Committee was working on securing Hillary Clinton as the keynote speaker – with the help of Secretary Riley – and they were still waiting for her response. The program would start with the Mayor of Greenville and we would also have opening remarks from Justice Toal. One speaker, Sean Carter (former securities lawyer, corporate vice-president and stand-up comedian) would be flown in to speak and he was reputed to be extremely funny and this was in line with the committee's efforts to keep this CLE light and entertaining. The committee was also considering having two women from "Café and Then Some" (a comedy club) as the keynote lunch speakers. The committee planned to pay these women to write a special program just for the women lawyers. The committee hoped to have an answer from Hillary Clinton by the end of the month because it needed to set a budget asap and having Hillary would require raising significant funds. Another person being considered as the keynote speaker was the new woman CEO of Facebook. Laura Hart asked Jennifer Howe to add the name of Marian Wright Edelman to her possible speakers' list and suggested that Dick Riley could also help us contact Ms. Edelman. One other confirmed speaker would be Catherine Templeton, Director of S.C. DHEC, out of Charleston. Marguerite Willis suggested that Jennifer consider inviting a woman who heads up a really big law firm in the US. Marguerite said she would send some names to Jennifer – because having someone like that would really tie in

with women lawyers' ideas of success. Jennifer also reported that Womble Carlyle (Sandy Miller) had offered to host the Bissell Reception at their building which was one block from the hotel and on the river and was one of the most beautiful sites in Greenville. Tara Shurling, who was in charge of the Bissell Reception – said she was trying to consider the possibility of a reception for Hillary on Thursday night (if she did speak on Thursday) – but knew it was getting late to be delaying venue choices. Tara said she still wanted to keep open the possibility of giving the “Portia” Award to Hillary on Thursday and moving the Bissell Reception to Friday. Jennifer reminded everyone that they should consider staying the whole weekend in Greenville when they came to the CLE because that weekend was “Fall for Greenville,” which was a fabulous time to stay in town with all the great events the city had planned. On a final note, Jennifer told the board that her committee had decided to combine all the money raised for the CLE and the Bissell – so that if you gave at all – it qualified you for recognition for both events and all the benefits that entailed. Jennifer did note that if Tara was able to secure complete funding for the Bissell from one large corporate sponsor – like Michelin or BMW – then that would eliminate the need to give donaters credit for both events. Immediate Past-President Matthews said there had been some concerns about our fundraising by the SC Bar – but Jennifer stated that she had had that discussion with Von Snelgrove and they had everything worked out. Tara asked that her deadline to find one corporate sponsor for the Bissell be moved up to April 5<sup>th</sup> and Jennifer agreed.

- c. **DC TRIP for 2014** - Amie Clifford had agreed to Chair.
- d. **Other CLEs** Amie Clifford.
- e. **Awards and Nominating Committee.** Bissell Award and Portia Award. Tara Shurling. Tara was working on selecting a venue for the Bissell Award in Greenville and on getting a single corporate sponsor for the reception. Tara noted that if we did have the opportunity to give out the “Portia” Award (to Hillary if she committed to speak) – that she needed to get going on selecting or designing an award. Tara thought that having a statue or sculpture that combined a Palmetto tree and a Lady Justice would be appropriate. Tara also thought that an original oil painting of a Palmetto tree might also be appropriate. Laura Hart suggested that we use the same vendor that we use for the Bissell to select an appropriate crystal piece to engrave. President Ouzts said the discussion was moot until we knew that we had Hillary as our speaker. Marguerite said that when you give an award to someone famous – they already have a zillion awards and it would be nice to give them something more memorable and useful. The board all agreed that jewelry might be an appropriate choice.
- f. **Bylaws.** Julie Moose. No changes had been requested.
- g. **Community Outreach.** Future Chairs would be: Liz Zeck & Amanda Williams. Silent Auction -Tara Shurling and Marguerite Willis. The Silent Auction was in the process of being organized with Marguerite now in charge. The Greenville Regional Representatives were looking into selecting an appropriate recipient for the funds that the auction would bring in.
- h. **Long Range Planning.** Future Chair would be Kelly Jolley. Current Chair Marguerite Willis reported that her detailed report was still something significant to work with.

**IX. Old Business.** President Ouzts reported that we voted last year to contribute a \$1,000.00 to the symposium that the Charleston School of Law does every year, and this year the symposium would feature retired Justice Sandra Day O’Connor. There would be a VIP reception for her on

Sunday, the 14<sup>th</sup> and she would be a keynote speaker on Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup>. As a sponsor, we received 4 tickets to the reception on Sunday and 2 tickets to the symposium on Monday. President Ouzts said that she, Carolyn Matthews, Molly Cherry, Amanda Williams planned to go to the reception on Sunday and on Monday President Ouzts said that she and Abigail Williams would be attending the symposium.

- X. **New Business.** (Special Projects funds) President Ouzts reported that Alice Paylor would be sworn in as President of the SC Bar on May 16<sup>th</sup> and we decided at the last meeting that we wanted to contribute to the reception but did not decide how much. Liz Zeck suggested that we treat Alice's Presidency as another statewide office and give the same amount we would give to a newly elected appellate court judge which would be \$500.00. Flo Vinson made a motion that we contribute \$500.00 to Alice Paylor's reception and it was seconded and voted upon favorably.

Sustaining Member Amount. President Ouzts said that it made no sense for Sustaining Members to pay different amounts. Those who paid \$35 in dues had been paying \$65 to become a Sustaining Member and those who paid \$65 in dues had been paying only \$35 to become a Sustaining Member. Liz Zeck made a motion that anyone wishing to be a Sustaining Member – pay an additional \$100.00 and this motion was seconded and voted upon favorably. Recognition of Sustaining Membership would be received through signage at major events and notice on the website. Tara Shurling suggested that special ribbons also be attached to Sustaining Members' nametags and everyone agreed. President Ouzts noted that this changed rate would only start on March 14<sup>th</sup> – and anyone who had already paid less would be grandfathered in. Currently, then, we had 6 Sustaining Members: Cindy Ouzts, Marguerite Willis, Liz Zeck, Julie Moose, Flo Vinson, and Cheryl Bullard. Marguerite Willis suggested a change in the name from Sustaining – to something like "Diva."

New Directions:

President Ouzts remarked that since we were a non-profit – we needed to "spend" some of our money on worthy professional causes and endeavors. Tara Shurling suggested that we consider developing some way to track members who had unique needs because even if SCWLA itself did not respond – other members who became aware might be happy to assist. Jennifer Rubin said that Sheila Bias' remark about wanting to have opportunities to simply connect with other members triggered in her a desire to create something along the lines of a "good welfare fellowship committee." Jennifer said she was not sure exactly what that would involve, but in the course of her always busy days she felt it was really valuable to actually get to know each other and she hoped that we could find ways to have events where we could just "talk," about our work, our lives and our concerns. Jennifer said that her idea didn't fit into any traditional "box," but that it was the kind of thing that would be valuable to all our members at every level. President Ouzts said it would be good for the Long Range Planning Committee to find a way to implement such an idea. Flo Vinson mentioned that the SC Bar under the "Lawyers Helping Lawyers" umbrella was starting to encourage members to call the Bar when they had health issues, etc. and those individuals could say that they would be available to talk with someone who had similar issues. Tara said she just thought there might be a way to post on the website – news about members dealing with difficult circumstances so that interested fellow members might take the opportunity to express their caring and concern. Liz Zeck suggested that Facebook might be the place where SCWLA members could inform fellow members about their concerns. Kelly Jolley said that this might be an opportunity for the regions to stay aware of their members and keep all their members informed about significant needs. Ayesha Washington said that Natalie Bluestein (Low Country Regional representative) sent little "e-bytes" to her region's members to let them know about situations affecting an individual member, and at the end of the message she asked that anyone who had meetings or depositions scheduled with that particular lawyer – to please call their office to re-schedule. Liz Zeck said she would contact Natalie to get more info on this and then would definitely share this idea with

other regions. President Ouzts said all this would be considered by the Long Range Planning Committee.

Transition Task Force: President Ouzts reported that Alice Paylor was in the process of forming a transition task force. The Chair of that committee was Catherine DeAngelo. Alice was concerned about women who dropped out of the practice of law, what's happening to the practice of law, why women are leaving, and balancing work/life needs, etc. – and if anyone on the board was interested – Alice wanted them to consider serving on this task force. Flo Vinson said she was already on it but that she would also serve for us and Julie Moose said that she had already told Alice that she would serve and Tara Shurling also volunteered. President Ouzts said that they would meet quarterly and that it looked like it would be a great opportunity to address some important issues.

Bissell Photo Display - Change to Digital. Mikki Lindler had ably assisted everyone during the 2012 Bissell Reception and she believed it was time to lose all the photo frames and digitize a presentation of all the past recipients. President Ouzts said it could be as simple as using a jump drive and a monitor and the only question would be the cost and there might be sufficient Bissell funds to do that or we might use some of the “Special Projects’ Fund.” Mikki said we could use a flat screen TV and load it with a card. President Ouzts received numerous suggestions on how we should present the display and she asked for someone to volunteer to come up with a plan and a cost. Sheila Bias volunteered and Stephanie Nye volunteered the Media and Communications Committee to accomplish the task.

League of Women Voters and Judicial Reform. Sarah Leverette said that she was working with Constance Anastopoulo on specific points regarding judicial reform that they wanted to see put into legislation – as a result of the League’s two year effort of working on judicial reform. The legislation would have specific goals that would involve diversity and the makeup of the JMSC.

**XI. Member News.**

**XII. Next Board Meetings:** May 16 at 11:00 a.m. at Sticky Fingers in Mt. Pleasant (afterwards we will attend Alice Paylor’s reception); August 15 at 1:00 p.m. at McNair in Columbia, and October 10<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 p.m. in Greenville at McNair. The Executive Committee would plan to meet on Monday prior to each of these meetings.

President Ouzts said that the meeting on May 16<sup>th</sup> would have to be held somewhere near Sullivan’s Island because that’s where Alice Paylor would be inducted as President of the SC Bar. The House of Delegates meeting would be starting around 1:30 and President Ouzts said she hoped that the SCWLA Board Meeting could be held around noon because several board members were also members of the House of Delegates. President Ouzts wanted a location that would allow everyone to attend our board meeting and then let everyone go across the causeway to Sullivan’s Island to attend the House of Delegates Meeting. Someone had suggested “Sticky Fingers” restaurant as a venue because they did have a private room and were located close enough. Alice’s swearing-in ceremony would probably be about 4:00 p.m. with the reception to follow. Flo Vinson said that everyone would be welcome at the reception and probably everyone could stand at the back of the room when Alice was sworn in. Everyone agreed that we should meet at 11:00 a.m. at Sticky Fingers and simply eat during the meeting so there would be plenty of time for the meeting and travel time for those going to the House of Delegates meeting.

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