

**MINUTES OF THE APRIL 3, 2004 MEETING OF THE  
WOMEN AND THE LAW SECTION COUNCIL  
OF THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS**

**Call to Order**

Judy L. Ney of Houston, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m. in Austin, Texas at the State Bar Building, welcomed those attending, and determined that a quorum was present. Teresa Oxford of San Antonio, Chair-elect; D'Metria Benson of Dallas, Vice-chair/Membership; and council members Ralph H. Brock of Lubbock; Kathy Cannon of Austin; Ronnie E.G. Harrison of Houston; Carolyn F. Moore of Lubbock; Deborah Ingraham, emeritus voting member; and Linda Butter, State Bar Board Advisor attended in person. Council members Avo Stevens Butler of Sherman and Carmen Samaniego of San Antonio attended by telephone conference call. Victoria Corcoran, Development Director for Women's Advocacy Project and Beryl P. Crowley, Executive Director of Texas Center for Legal Ethics and Professionalism were guests at the meeting.

Ney explained that the following people sent in reasons for not being able to attend the meeting: Lisa Smith of San Antonio, Vice-chair/Newsletter; Mara Blatt of El Paso, Secretary; Lisa Hernandez of Plano, Treasurer; Suzanne Mann Duvall of Dallas, Chronologist; Misty Ventura of Dallas, Immediate Past Chair; Georgina Benavides of McAllen, council member. Benson moved, with a second from Oxford that the members be given an excused absence. The motion passed.

**Announcements from Ney:**

-Ney said that Moore would act as secretary during the meeting.

-Jennifer Rustay of Houston, council member whose term expires in June of 2004, and who has worked very hard for the Section, has resigned from the board because of conflicts with her work.

-President-Elect Kelly Frels published a one and one fourth page Update on State Bar Activities.

-The International Human Rights Section may become a section of the State Bar.

-The New Mexico Bar's Women and the Legal Profession Committee sent Ney written materials on their series, "Ask Pat," which has been published in the New Mexico Bar Journal for five years. The series, in the form of questions and answers, is a continuing project of the committee to educate lawyers on such issues as gender discrimination, gender bias, and pay equity.

**Secretary's Report**

Brock moved, with a second from Benson, to approve the Minutes of the Section's November 24, 2003 Meeting, as corrected to show that Benson attended. The motion passed.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Ney stated that the Section's balance as of April 1, 2004, according to Treasurer Hernandez, is \$2170.83.

### **Annual Meeting**

Moore moved, with a second by Benson, that Ney be the Section's delegate to the State Bar Annual Meeting's Resolution Committee in San Antonio and that Oxford be the alternate delegate. The motion passed.

Harrison explained that she would again have bags and books to sell to attendees at the State Bar's Annual Meeting. Leo Ney will help with sales, which will be in a booth in an area designated for sections. Proceeds of the sales will go to Women's Advocacy Project. Officers and council members commended Harrison for her past accomplishments in fund raising and agreed that she would have complete control of this year's pro bono project during the State Bar Annual Meeting.

Oxford reported that:

-Charlye O. Farris and the Honorable Pamela Mathy will speak on Women and the Law: Today's Issues, Today's Struggles at the Section's Annual Meeting in San Antonio on June 24, 2004, from 10 a.m. until noon. Oxford has applied for one hour of continuing legal education credit for meeting;

-the Bexar County Women's Bar Association has donated \$500.00 and Esquire Deposition Services has donated \$250.00 for the meeting. In addition, Esquire Deposition Services will give a flower to and take a picture of each leader of a local women's bar association who attends the Section's annual meeting;

-flyers concerning the Section's annual meeting will be mailed to lawyers in the next two weeks;

-both the Ma'at Justice Award and the Sarah T. Hughes Award will be presented at the Section's annual meeting; and

-election of officers and council members will take place at the Section's annual meeting.

### **Slate of Officers**

Ingraham stated that she would like to continue as an emeritus voting member, explaining that she wanted to be a resource for the section, perhaps working on the web site and with the Women's Advocacy Project.

Ney asked that Ingraham step out of the room while the rest of the officers and council members discussed the issue raised by Ingraham. After a short discussion, officers and council members agreed that the section's bylaws should be reviewed to determine what, if any, clarifications need to be made concerning emeritus members and that any needed changes should be proposed at a later time. As an example, Oxford said that perhaps the

bylaws should be changed to include past chairs as ex officio members. In addition, officers and council members agreed that until the bylaws are reviewed, Louise Raggio would be the only person to be given an emeritus title.

Oxford moved that the Nominating Committees Slate of Officers be approved. The motion was approved.

The Slate of Officers is as follows:

**Officers**

Chair	Teresa A. Oxford (San Antonio)
Chair-Elect	Mara Blatt (El Paso)
Vice-Chair of Membership	D'Metria Benson (Dallas)
Vice-Chair of Newsletter	Lisa Smith (San Antonio)
Secretary	Avo Stevens Butler (Sherman)
Treasurer	Ralph H. Brock (Lubbock)
Chronologist	Suzanne Duvall (Dallas)
Immediate Past Chair	Judy Ney (Houston)
Emeritus Voting Member	Louise Raggio (Dallas)

**Council Positions Expiring 2005**

Georgina Benavides (McAllen)  
Kathy Cannon (Austin)  
Ronnie Harrison (Houston)  
Carolyn Moore (Lubbock)  
Carmen Samaniego (San Antonio)

**Council Positions Expiring 2006**

Lisa Hernandez (Dallas)  
Sherry Wetch (Houston)  
Tonya Carter (Houston)  
Laura Benitex Geisler (Dallas)

Officers who will be voted on include the chair-elect, vice-chairs, secretary, treasurer, chronologist, and all council members whose terms will expire in 2006. Other officers and council members have already been elected.

When Ney asked Ingraham to return to the meeting room, she explained to Ingraham that Ingraham would continue as an emeritus voting member for the remainder of this year, but that her name would not be on the slate of officers for 2004-2005. Ney explained that once the Section's bylaws were reviewed and perhaps changed, Ingraham and other past chairs might be listed as emeritus members.

### **Newsletter/Mailing**

Oxford said that our newsletter editor needs articles for the Section's next newsletter by April 9, 2004. She also said that the Section could save a lot of money by having the newsletter available on line rather than mailing a hard copy of the newsletter to all members.

Oxford moved, with a second from Ingraham, that the Section pay the fee necessary to the State Bar to have the Section on a list serve that will be able to do such things as notify members that our newsletter is available on line. She explained that the fee is \$15.00 a month. The motion passed.

### **Pro Bono Report**

Harrison introduced Victoria Corcoran to speak about Women's Advocacy Project. Ms. Corcoran thanked the Section for donating funds to the project for many years. She explained the history of the project and discussed some current programs. She volunteered to help Harrison and Ney while they sell books in San Antonio at the Annual Meeting.

### **Membership Report**

Cannon said that she would probably be able to help distribute information about the section to newly licensed lawyers at the induction ceremony in Austin on May 24, 2004.

Benson will ask Kathy Casarez at the State Bar to send e-mails to all women lawyers in Texas encouraging them to join this section in 2004-2005.

### **Chronologist's Report**

Ney stated that Duvall would interview federal judge Barbara Lind and Rhonda Hunter, first president of the Dallas Women's Bar, as part of the chronology project of the section.

Ney will ask Duvall to publish a list of all lawyers who have already been interviewed and to list what materials of the Section are located in the archives at The University of Texas at San Antonio.

### **Old Business**

Moore said that the TWL conference in El Paso in February was a success.

Ingraham said she will update the section's web cite and she will determine if it is time to renew the domain name. She will renew it for one year if it is about to expire.

### **New Business**

#### **Sandra Day O'Connor Award**

-Beryl Crowley said that the O'Connor award, created this year and sponsored by the Texas Center for Legal Ethics and Professionalism, was never intended to be in competition with the section's Sarah T. Hughes Award. She said that the steering

committee did not perform due diligence when it created the new award and apologized to the section that the new award is so similar to the Hughes award. She commented that perhaps some day the Texas Center and this section could combine forces concerning the two awards.

-Crowley said that she received this section's nomination of Louise Raggio to be the first recipient of the award; she has also received other nominations.

-Crowley said that she believes that this section can have a representative on the steering committee for the O'Connor award. She also agreed that Ney could attend this year's award luncheon without charge.

-Ney said that the section welcomes the opportunity to have a representative on the steering committee for the O'Connor award and said that she hopes to attend the award luncheon on May 14, 2004 in Austin.

### **Washington Summit**

-Samaniego will represent both the Bexar County Women Lawyers and this section at the Washington Summit. She wants to challenge attendees to sign up as organ donors.

-Butler moved, with a second from Oxford, that Samaniego take action necessary to set up an organ donation booth sponsored by this section at the Washington Summit. The motion passed.

### **National Conference on Women's Bar Associations**

-Ingraham moved, with a second by Brock, that the section renew its membership in the National Conference of Women's Bar Associations. The motion passed.

### **Announcements**

-Next meeting will be on June 24, 2004, 10 a.m. until noon. This will be the section's annual meeting and continuing legal education event.

-Ney will attend the State Bar's Council of Chairs meeting on Friday, April 9, 2004.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn F. Moore  
Acting on behalf of Myra Blatt, Secretary  
(Original signature on file)

