



Minutes of January Meeting of Women and the Law Section  
State Bar of Texas  
February 13, 2020  
Teleconference

Nikki Chargois-Allen, Chair, called the February board meeting of the Women and the Law Section to order at 12:04 P.M. after it was determined that a quorum was present.

Council members in attendance via telephone: Nikki Chargois-Allen, Kirby Drake, Deborah Race, Leigh Hunt Goodson, Summer Olmos, Judy Ney, Natasha Martinez, Denise Alex, Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Cantu, Ellis Iverson, Tuhina Sharma, and Sharon Hemphill.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES/SECRETARY'S REPORT**

The minutes of the December 19, 2019 teleconference which had been previously emailed to the Council for review were presented. Denise Alex moved to approve the minutes with the correction of including Teresa Schiller as in attendance, with a second by Deborah Race. The minutes were approved as presented unanimously.

The minutes of the January 16, 2020 teleconference which had been previously emailed to the Council for review were presented. Deborah Race moved to approve the minutes as presented, with a second by Natasha Martinez. The minutes were approved as presented unanimously.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Judy Ney was not present for this portion of the meeting, but there was no change in Financials from January. Sharon Hemphill moved to accept the Treasurer's Report with a second by Deborah Race. The Treasurer's report was approved unanimously.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Membership.** Deborah Race reported WAL has 1,300 members, 443 non-renewals and 324 brand new memberships.

Further discussion was held regarding ideas to increase member participation and benefits. Nikki encouraged Council members to reach out to new attorneys and associates. Also recommended an email blast to new attorneys.

**Newsletter/Website.** Danae Benton was not present at the meeting. The newsletter did not go out in January. Nikki will reach out the Danae to find out if the newsletter can go out. Nikki encourages members to continue to send information to be included in the newsletters in an email to Danae with her copied.

**CLE Report.** Kirby Drake reported that the January CLE went well. The next CLE is scheduled February 26<sup>th</sup> and is on track. The CLE will discuss premarital and post marital agreements. The March CLE is being planned with Nicole Freeman to discuss Personal Branding in the Workplace.

Nikki encourages members to send Kirby ideas and speaker suggestions for future CLEs. She also notes that this is a great opportunity for new attorneys to present and provide information with less pressure.

**Social Media.** Itzel Martinez was not present for the meeting. The Instagram page has 151 followers. Nikki reminded members of Itzel's new email address and said she will resend it to members. She also reminded members to continue submitting women to be included in the Women Crush Wednesday posts on social media.

Nikki noted that Itzel would like to start a new section called "Woman to Woman". This will include weekly practice tips, tips on how to handle yourself as a lawyer, and other information and insight relevant to being a female attorney.

**Scholarship Program.** Deborah reports two submissions to date. Deborah has contacted schools and has received positive responses. She asks for any ideas on how to boost submissions before the due date. Submissions are due February 28. The committee will meet to select the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place winners.

Nikki recommended a reminder be posted to Instagram and Facebook. She will also post on the Hidalgo County page for any attorneys that have children in law school. She will send everyone the scholarship information so that members can advertise the scholarship too.

**Fall/Spring Networking.** Discussion was held regarding the Texas Women Lawyers Annual Meeting at the Casa del Palmas Wyndham Hotel on Friday February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020 in McAllen. The networking event is from 5:00 P.M.- 6:30 P.M. Deborah Cordova reports a great lineup of speakers. \$195 CLE which includes TWL membership. For hosting the reception, WAL received two tickets to attend the CLE. There is one more available, and anyone interested should email Nikki after the meeting.

There is a networking and CLE event being planned in the Houston area. More details will be given when available.

**Ideas for Annual CLE.** The annual meeting will be held on a Thursday afternoon and end at 4:30. The meeting will be first and then the CLE. The topics discussed for potential topics were From Right to Own Property to the Right to Control Body and Fertility and Erin Smith to talk about the Right to Vote and her new book.

She will have her book printed and at the CLE a local bookstore has also agreed to be on-site to sell the books. Wi-Fi will just need to be supplied for credit card transactions. A few of the books will also be given away after the CLE.

This year the reception will not be right after the CLE, but instead will begin at 6. Nikki will contact Liz to discuss reception ideas and budget, but encourages all members to share ideas they have.

**Awards Committee.** Deborah Race sent descriptions of awards to Council members. Members are encouraged to nominate candidates. Deborah has no report because she has not been sent any nominations to date. She says it needs to be promoted, Nikki will send the information to Danae to have it put in the newsletter.

**Pro Bono Workgroup.** No report.

**Upcoming Meeting Dates and Events.** The next meeting will be held on March 26, 2020 via teleconference.

**Old Business.** Nikki noted that a female attorney, Michelle Larson, was appointed to the Northern District of Texas Bankruptcy Bench.

**New Business.** No new business.

No further business was declared and the meeting was adjourned at 12:41 P.M.