

Council of the Women and the Law Section
State Bar of Texas
Austin – January 23, 2010

Meeting Minutes

Attending in person: Chair Andrea Johnson, Treasurer Ralph Brock, Immediate Past Chair Teri Danish, Hon. Carolyn Moore, Hon. Judy Ney, Ronnie Harrison, Mary Evelyn McNamara, State Bar representative Kristina de la Garza

Attending by telephone: Chair-Elect Carol Jendrzey, Alison Colvin

Absent: Secretary Chantel Crews, Patricia Blackshear, Mara Blatt, Tonya Carter-Clary, Deborah Cordova, Melissa Dorman, Cori Harbour, Yolanda Odom, Suzette Kinder Patton, Marlene Williams

I. Call to Order – Chair Andrea Johnson called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m. Andrea read the Section’s mission statement: To encourage and facilitate the active and effective participation of women in the legal profession and the community, and to address women’s current needs and the issues affecting them. The Council Members introduced themselves, and Andrea discussed the items in the notebooks for those attending the meeting in person. Mary Evelyn McNamara volunteered to take the minutes as substitute secretary.

II. Approval of the Minutes – The Minutes from the October 31, 2009 meeting, which Chantel Crews e-mailed to the Council before the meeting, were presented to the Council. Carolyn Moore moved to approve the minutes with a second from Judy Ney. The motion carried unanimously.

III. Treasurer’s Report – Ralph Brock presented the Treasurer’s Report, a copy of which he e-mailed to the Council before the meeting. The balance of the Section’s checking account is \$19,829.44. The Section saved money by moving its web hosting from Click-n-Connect, at \$400 per year, to GoDaddy.com, at \$200 for two years. Lily Hewgley of the State Bar handled the account change. Carolyn Moore moved to approve the report with a second from Judy Ney. The report was accepted unanimously.

A. Andrea Johnson discussed that the Section is a sponsor of the upcoming Texas Women Lawyers CLE on February 19, 2010, in Houston. Andrea distributed brochures for the CLE and encouraged people to attend and publicize the event.

IV. Short Report of the Chair from the State Bar Meeting – Andrea reported on the Council of Chairs meeting that took place on January 22. She also distributed a written summary. Highlights include:

A. On the morning of January 29, the State Bar Board will vote on the proposal to require that attorneys disclose if they do not carry professional liability insurance. Andrea has prepared a draft eblast to the Section members about the meeting, which she would like to send on January 25 or January 26. **Action item:** Andrea asks for Council approval by the afternoon of January 25.

- B. The Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct are in the process of being revised. The draft changes were posted in October. The Supreme Court is considering the approximately 300 comments received.
- C. Now is the time for sections to start thinking about legislation to propose for the 2011 legislative session. The deadline for submissions is July 6.
- D. The Texas Access to Justice Commission gives \$1,000 grants to assist sections in pro bono projects. One such project is by the Appellate Section, which coordinates pro bono attorneys to handle appeals for indigent appellants in cases pending in the Third Court of Appeals.
- E. The January 22 Council of Chairs meeting included a one-hour CLE about communicating electronically. Discussion of ways WAL can offer more to members through eblasts.
- F. The State Bar is in the planning stages of offering programs for unemployed and underemployed attorneys.
- G. Judy Ney reported that the Women in the Profession Committee is preparing a “Ten Minute Mentor” video for new women attorneys. WAL will join in the effort. Kristina de la Garza reported that the State Bar is always looking for new “Ten Minute Mentor” videos.

V. Committee Reports

- A. Website (presented by Andrea for Tonya C.): The new web site will go live on Monday, January 25, 2010. The new website was approved unanimously.
- B. Newsletter (presented by Andrea for Patricia B.) – The newsletter is a little behind. Andrea called for additional submissions due within a week.
- C. CLE (Carol J.) –
State Bar meeting – June 10-11, Fort Worth Convention Center, Omni Hotel

Carol J. is organizing the CLE. The WAL CLE will be on June 10 only.

In the morning of June 10, the section will co-sponsor the Diversity Forum. Andrea has been involved with coordinating this for several years and invites others to take on the project.

In the afternoon of June 10, WAL will have its business meeting, presentation of Sarah T. Hughes Award and Ma’at Justice Award, and CLE featuring the virtual office. The speaker for the CLE will be Linda Bray Chanow, new executive director of the Center for Women in Law at the University of Texas School of Law. Andrea circulated a draft one-page flyer for the CLE.

Action item: Ronnie suggested incorporating ethics into the CLE.

Discussion held about whether to reimburse speakers for travel expenses. It was decided two years ago not to reimburse the speaker because she was promoting a book. Carol will find out whether Linda Bray Chanow has a book to publicize or was already planning to attend the annual meeting.

Decision made that WAL will host a joint reception with the General Practice, Solo, and Small Firm Section. Discussion held about holding reception where other receptions will be held, in a better location than at the 2009 annual meeting.

Action item: Sarah T. Hughes and Ma'at Justice Awards: Call for Nominations:

Teri Danish volunteered to join the nominations committee.

--Andrea discussed plans to send eblast to members and Council of Chairs calling for nominations. May also place ad in *Texas Bar Journal* calling for nominations.

--Deadline for nominations will be March 15. Deadline for award decisions will be April 15.

--Plan to use WAL free quarter-page ad to announce 2010 award recipients in the June 2010 *Texas Bar Journal*.

--Plaque of Sarah T. Hughes award recipients has not been updated since 2003. Andrea learned from Tracy Nuckols of the State Bar that we will need a second plaque to accommodate additional recipients. Cost will be \$285 for additional plaque and \$60 to add names since 2003. Andrea made a motion to approve expenditure of \$340-350 to get new plaque and update plaque. Carolyn Moore seconded. The motion carried unanimously. **Action item:** Ralph Brock will call Tracy Nuckols to arrange getting a new plaque and adding updates. Ronnie suggests having a blowup of the plaque at the CLE in June. **Action item:** Andrea will check with Chantel about ordering the awards.

Andrea discussed idea of webcast of CLE. Working with Teri Danish and Marlene Williams.

D. Membership –Teri Danish suggested that Council members need to be able to articulate quickly what the Section has to offer. **Action item:** Andrea will follow up on updating the brochure about WAL membership. **Action item:** Work with the State Bar to send an eblast to new women lawyers about joining WAL.

E. Chronology (Ronnie H.) – Ronnie reported that the purpose of the Chronology project is to preserve the history of women lawyers. She will interview Iris Robinson, a founder of the WAL section, within the next couple of weeks. **Action item:** Discussion about taping the interview and posting it on the WAL website as a podcast within 30 days after the interview is completed. **Action item:** Ronnie will check with Shannon Dacus about where the section boxes are.

VI. New Business

A. Access to Justice Commission Gala – will be in Austin on May 4, 2010. WAL sponsored a table in 2009. The emphasis of the 2010 Gala will be on helping

veterans. Joe Jamail will be the keynote speaker. **Action item:** Teri Danish will look into the details concerning the price of a table and the location of the gala.

- B. Texas Forum on Self-Represented Litigants and the Courts: April 8-9 at the Belo Mansion in Dallas. Carolyn Moore proposed to send a member from Dallas to attend the event and write an article for the newsletter. **Action item:** Andrea will contact Melissa Dorman to see if she can attend.

VII. Next Meetings

Saturday, March 6, 2010, Austin – in person or telephone

Monday, May 3, 2010, by phone only

Council members discussed whether another day of the week besides Saturday would be better for an in-person meeting. It was decided to keep the next meeting on Saturday, March 6.

VIII. Adjournment – Andrea adjourned the meeting at 1:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Evelyn McNamara
Substitute Secretary