



Minutes of January Meeting of Women and the Law Section  
State Bar of Texas  
January 16, 2020  
Teleconference

Nikki Chargois-Allen, Chair, called the January 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, Deborah Cordova, Denise Alex, Betsy Johnson, Kirby Drake, Deborah Race, Leigh Hunt Goodson, Nicole Voyles, Ellis Iverson, Teresa Schiller, and Natasha Martinez.

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

The minutes of the December 19, 2019 teleconference were tabled until the February meeting.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Judy Ney was not present for the meeting, but there was no change in Financials from December. Deborah Race moved to accept the Treasurer's Report with a second by Denise Alex. The Treasurer's report was approved unanimously.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Membership.** Deborah Race reported no update for memberships. The new list of renewing, new and non-renewing members will be circulated for review once it is received from Lyndsay Smith.

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 goes out this month – Danae has lots of material for this issue. Kirby Drake will forward information from yesterday's CLE. Deborah Race will send information on awards to Danae. Award nominations are sent to WAL email address. Substantive articles are also needed for the upcoming newsletters.

**CLE Report.** The first one of 2020 was January 15<sup>th</sup> on the gender pay gap. Attendance was good and the information was well received. Speakers and topics of discussion for future telephonic CLE's are needed – most urgently for February. Nicole Voyles volunteered to speak on family law

issues. The speakers or topics do not need to be on any specific area of law. Deborah Race discussed burgeoning issues with elder divorce and capacity issues.

**Social Media.** Itzel Martinez was not present for the meeting. The Instagram page has 146 followers.

**Scholarship Program.** Teresa Schiller reports one submission to date from a student who participated last year. 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. Teresa will email Itzel and copy Nikki.

**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

**Ideas for Annual 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.

Discussion was held regarding a Houston Social CLE. Deborah Cordova recommended a female attorney who is a NASA astronaut. She is going to reach out to the Houston Women's Section.

The reception at the Annual Meeting will be from 5:00-7:00 P.M. It was noted that a DJ would create a fun atmosphere. Members were encouraged to share ideas for the reception and how to get the word out with Nikki or Liz.

**Awards Committee.** Deborah Race sent descriptions of awards to Council members. Members are encouraged to nominate candidates. Deborah recommended rolling over award nominations year to year. Award and nomination information will also be put on social media accounts. Deborah will add information to publication and change pronouns to be gender neutral.

**Pro Bono Workgroup.** No report.

**Upcoming Meeting Dates and Events.** The next meeting will be held on February 13, 2020 via teleconference.

**Old Business.** There is one vacant spot on council. Members are asked to submit nominations.

**New Business.** Letter in support of a female appointment in the 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit, no female appointments in 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit. It was agreed that a letter supporting a female appointment but not a specific female would be ok.

No further business was declared.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:04 P.M.