



Minutes of July 28, 2020 Teleconference of  
Women and the Law Section Council

Teresa Schiller, Chair, called the July meeting of the Women and the Law Section Council to order at 12:00 P.M. Betsy Johnson, Secretary, called the roll and determined that a quorum was present. Teresa welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Council members in attendance via telephone: Teresa Schiller, Leigh Goodson, Denise Alex, Ellis Iverson, Betsy Johnson, Natasha Martinez, Laura Kugler, Jessica Mendez, Elizabeth Cantu, Lindsay Owens, Kirby Drake, Hon. Maria Salas-Mendoza, Susan Kelly and Deborah Race.

**MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the May 21, 2020 videoconference which had been previously emailed to the Council for review were presented. Laura Kugler moved to approve the minutes with a second by Liz Cantu. The minutes were approved as presented unanimously.

**BUDGET**

Teresa presented a proposed budget for 2020/2021. Teresa explained that the main expenditure planned for the 2020-2021 year will be Saturday Moving Events (Saturday Events) in up to six (6) Texas cities. She stated that she prepared the budget with Natasha Martinez, Treasurer, and Judy Ney, Former Treasurer. She further stated that State Bar Controller Sandra Carlson preliminarily approved the draft budget. Deborah Race moved to approve the budget with a second by Hon. Maria Salas-Mendoza. The budget was approved unanimously.

**INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROLS POLICY**

Teresa presented a proposed internal financial controls policy. She stated that the State Bar is requiring sections to establish this policy, and that the proposed version is consistent with State Bar requirements and past section practices. She further stated that Natasha and Judy reviewed the policy. She further stated that Sandra and Rhonda Bridges, the section's SBOT accountant, reviewed the policy, and that a minor edit from them has been incorporated. Laura Kugler moved to approve the Internal Financial Controls Policy with a second by Susan Kelly. The Policy was approved unanimously.

## **NEW COUNCIL MEMBER**

Teresa stated that Nadia Medrano, Council Member, resigned to pursue a judicial appointment. She nominated Cynthia Graham of Amarillo to fill the remaining year of Nadia's term. A motion to elect Cynthia Graham was made by Susan Kelly with a second by Laura Kugler. The appointment of Cynthia Graham passed unanimously.

## **SEVERAL SECTION'S LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS**

The proposal was made to "not oppose the legislative agenda" of other sections as offered. So moved by Lindsay Owens with a second by Liz Cantu. The motion carried unanimously. Teresa Schiller will contact other sections to communicate WAL consideration and approval of the proposal. WAL has not prepared a legislative proposal.

## **PLAN FOR THE YEAR**

**FOCUS ON MEANINGFUL SUPPORT** and help to practicing women attorneys. The theme of this support will be business and relationship development, generating more revenue, and gaining support from colleagues, along with legal and business skills.

**STREAMLINED NEWSLETTER** will be implemented and refreshed. Topics will include soft skills, legal skills, wellness (to be coordinated with TLAP), surveys of members and advertising for section events.

**SATURDAY EVENTS** will revolve around brunch, networking and business development for members and their guests in those cities to include Abilene, El Paso, Lubbock, McAllen, San Antonio and Tyler. We would meet early for breakfast in a hotel conference room and moderator for brainstorming ideas about the section and our members' practices.

**UPDATED WEBSITE** is to be done this year.

**OUTREACH TO POTENTIAL MEMBERS** is ongoing.

**CONTINUED RESPONSE TO HOTBUTTON ISSUES** including SBOT recent meetings concerning the State Bar President's comments.

**CONTINUED VIRTUAL CLE PROGRAMS** throughout the year.

**CONTINUED AWARD PROGRAM** for outstanding attorneys and law students.

## **STATE BAR BOARD'S DECISIONMAKING ON JULY 27 REGARDING PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS**

Several members attended the special meeting of the SBOT and Deborah Cordova attended as the WAL representative. Deborah reported on the SBOT motions made at the meeting: (1) working committee will be developed addressing concerns of the 67 comments and more than 1200 pages received by the Board. (2) motion to have SBOT legal counsel review whether SBOT can have President not make public comments and what is "protected" speech. (3) Implicit bias training will be implemented for the Board and attorneys by December 31, 2020. (4) MCLE committee review of favorable treatment of bias. (5) motion by former President Randy Sorrells requiring that President McDougal be given until September 2020 to submit a plan for bias training and response to the comments. (6) informed and improved vetting procedures for

candidates. (7) create a task force for diversity and inclusion. (8) consider the ABA Model Rule 8.04 allowing comments outside the court room. (9) consider special meeting in August to continue.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned.



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Betsy Johnson, Secretary