

WOMEN AND THE LAW SECTION COUNCIL MEETING

November 12, 2007

Telephonic Conference

Council members in attendance: Tonya Carter, Chair; Teri Danish, Chair-Elect; Carol Jendrzey, Vice-Chair Membership; Nicole Gonzalez, Vice-Chair Newsletter; Chantel Crews, Secretary; Ralph Brock, Treasurer; Alison McCall, Chronologist; Carmen Sameniego, Immediate Past Chair; Patricia Blackshear, Mara Blatt, Shannon Dacus, Melissa Dorman, Ronnie Harrison, Andrea Johnson, Hon. Carolyn Moore, and Board Advisor Michelle Cheng.

Council members absent: Hon. Deanie King, Hon. Judy Ney, Louise Raggio.

- I. Call to Order – Tonya Carter called the meeting to order 5:38 p.m.
- II. Approval of Minutes /Secretary’s Report – Chantel presented the minutes from the August 11, 2007 meeting, which had been e-mailed to the Council prior to the meeting. Carolyn Moore moved to approve the minutes, with a second by Shannon Dacus. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- III. Treasurer’s Report – Ralph Brock presented the Treasurer’s Report, which had been e-mailed to the Council prior to the meeting. Ralph stated our balance was \$16,359.42, which included approximately \$1,100 from dues. We are short ten people from last year’s membership. Carolyn moved to accept the Treasurer’s report with a second from Teri Danish. The report was accepted unanimously.
- IV. Committee Reports
 - A. Website – Tonya reported the website was up to date with pictures added from the roadshow and council members’ profiles. Tonya asked Nicole Gonzalez to send some samples of profiles to council members. She also asked for assistance from council members with the website. She said it was not a difficult job, but just needed someone to be able to spend some time with it. The issue was tabled.
 - B. Newsletter - Nicole reported she needed articles for the newsletter. She had received one article regarding the roadshow and was following up on that article. She had obtained a sample from 2005 and wanted to know if there were any other newsletters since then. Carol Jendrzey said there were two newsletters from last year, and Carolyn said she would forward them to Nicole. Carol will send Nicole the newsletter from January. Tonya requested a copy of the newsletter be put on the website. Nicole also asked whether the name of the newsletter, The Women’s Advocate, should be changed. After discussion, the newsletter name was not changed.

The next roadshow will likely be in Brownsville. Teri said it was taking longer than expected, but she hoped it would take place soon.

Carolyn offered to assist with typing up the council profiles.

Ralph noted the newsletters were not on website. Tonya said she would contact Eric to see what occurred.

Carol reminded the council that the State Bar of Texas will send the newsletter electronically. Nicole has a template, and Tonya said she wanted to use this template for the newsletter since it looks so good. Nicole will send an e-mail to remind members to send articles.

C. CLE

1. Use of SBOT CLE? This issue was again discussed, and the council decided not to use the SBOT for the roadshow since we have already done the legwork for the roadshow. If we utilize the SBOT for CLE, it would be for something other than the roadshow.
2. Possible Joint CLE with Women in the Profession - Tabled
3. Roadshow – Teri is working with Dr. Garcia in Brownsville for the roadshow and is looking towards January 2008 for the presentation of the roadshow. The Lubbock roadshow received good attendance and PR with 51 people attending and an article in the local bar publication.

D. Membership – Carol reported she sent an e-mail to Kathy Casarez regarding former section members who did not renew their membership for this year, but had not hear back from her. She did not know whether the reminder cards had been sent out, but said she would follow up with Cathy.

1. Induction Ceremony - The induction ceremony for new attorneys occurred today. Many WAL brochures were handed out, and we offered free memberships. We probably picked up about ten new members, and gave around 100 brochures. An idea regarding a letter to all new female attorneys as well as all WAL Section members was discussed.
2. Listserv – the listserv was briefly discussed.
3. New Member Introduction Letter - Carol discussed the welcome to section letter.

E. Chronology – Alison McCall discussed the chronology committee’s needs. Many historical items have either been lost or commingled with other things. We have put an ongoing notice in newsletter to serve as an “APB” regarding memorabilia for the Section.

- F. Legislative – Alison volunteered to help with this committee, but not chair it. No updates were given.

V. Business

- A. Reaching out to our members/member contact - We already touched on this issue previously in the meeting, but we are trying to bridge disconnect between the council and WAL members. Other SBOT Sections are having the same trouble and losing members. Loss of members may be due to a combination of not reach members and members not finding value in membership. Members need to be contacted and informed as to what is happening in the section. New members need to be contacted, given some orientation, receive newsletters. Andrea suggested offering small task forces for new member participation. Tonya noted that even just contacting someone does a lot – shows we are at least trying to reach out and contact our members. Mara pointed out the reason the website was “amped up” was for use as a networking tool. Tonya would like for a personal letter to be sent to all members from membership committee welcoming them to the new year, etc. Patricia asked whether it would be worth the time or effort to get feedback as to what members would like to see in newsletter. Mara suggested a hotlink in newsletter to website. Also a “Contact Us” button on website would be beneficial. It would be interesting to know who is logging on to our website. We do not currently have a “Contact Us” button, but Tonya will check with Eric in order to get one. We would also like to see if the SBOT website could link to WAL website or provide contact links or information. Ralph thinks it could be added. The council then discussed the SBOT website.
- B. Bios/Photos – Already discussed, but Tonya said she needed Mara’s picture for the website.
- C. TMCP Table – Andrea attended the Texas Minority Counsel event, but did not have WAL supplies to distribute. Carmen, Tonya, and Alison have the brochures, and we need to be sure to have them available for the next event (which will most likely be the roadshow in Brownsville).
- D. Council Retreat - Patricia said that she currently had more questions than answers regarding the retreat. She confirmed the dates being considered were for the weekend of 1/19. She also asked whether this would be just a Council retreat and what was the goal for the retreat. Tonya said there was no real goal other than trying to get to know each other better. Locations for the retreat discussed were: Moon River Ranch – Waco; Rough Creek Lodge – outside Dallas; new Hyatt Lost Pines Resort; Houstonian. Patricia said she would send an e-mail giving the choices of location after she had a chance to research them.
- E. Annual Meeting 2008/Houston – Teri reported plans for the annual meeting were going well. She has spoken to Judy Craig, partner in a life coach company called Atticus, who is excited about speaking and has already blocked off the dates with understanding that her requested topic will be forthcoming. Do we want to be

part of diversity forum this year? SBOT has tapped Andrea to head up the diversity forum again. It is no cost to us to participate, and would be free exposure. If we participate in the diversity forum, do we also use Judi Craig? We would need to have our own separate program. Having her speak at the awards ceremony seemed like it might be too much. Ms. Craig gives presentations at executive retreats, but Teri does not have her rate sheet yet. Andrea suggested a discussion about work/life balance and time management. We could put together a panel, especially since the WAL Section Council put together the most speakers for the forum last year. This would be a little different angle on the issue of diversity. The Council recognized SBOT involvement helps with publicity and getting better turnout. Also, the unanimous request from the Council was to have the Section meeting in the afternoon this year.

Teri encouraged everyone to start thinking about recipients for our awards. Shannon Dacus will chair the committee, and Teri, Carolyn, and Judy Ney will be on the committee. The book sale will also take place at the annual meeting.

- F. Reimbursements for Meetings – Ralph requested reimbursements for meetings be sent to him as soon as possible.

Ronnie Harrison then raised a question regarding the Treasurer's report as to the donation to Texas Advocacy Project. She said \$2,000 was donated to the Project. She also requested to make changes to the minutes from the last meeting. The minutes could not be changed since the Council had already voted and unanimously approved them earlier in the meeting. However, Ronnie requested her changes be noted in the minutes. She said the SBOT staff did help with book sale, and requested "small amount of profit" in section V.A.3. be changed to "small percentage of profit."

- G. Council of Chairs Meeting 4/11/08 – Tonya requested Teri go in her place.

VI. Next Council Meetings:

1/19/08 – 1/20/08 (if retreat planned) – Friday evening

1/28/08 (Telephone conference)

4/12/08 in person **CHANGED TO 4/19/08**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 CT.

Respectfully submitted,
Chantel Crews, Secretary