



Minutes of Meeting of Women and the Law Section
State Bar of Texas
November 18, 2020

Teresa Schiller, Chair, called the November board meeting of the Women and the Law Section to order at 12:00 P.M. after it was determined that a quorum was present.

Council members in attendance via telephone or video: Teresa Schiller, Betsy Johnson, Nikki Chargois-Allen, Leigh Goodson, Natasha Martinez, Laura Kugler, Jessica Mendez, Elizabeth Cantu, Cynthia Barela Graham, Kirby Drake, Judge Maria Salas-Mendoza, Susan Kelly, Judy Ney, Deborah Race, Denise Alex, Reagan Boyce.

Guests:

- a. Dori Kornfeld Goldman, Membership Committee Co-Chair
- b. Amy Welborn, State Bar Board Advisor

TREASURER'S REPORT

Natasha Martinez, our treasurer, presented her report, a copy of which was distributed to council members.

Starting balance \$112,455.71.

Ending Balance \$112,492.58 [\$37 increase due to bank interest]

State Bar of Texas auditors requested, and have been provided with, council meeting minutes for last year and this, as well as financial statements. Any additional information required by the auditors will come from the SBOT.

STATE BAR OF TEXAS AT-LARGE DIRECTOR NOMINATION – POTENTIAL ACTION

Brief discussion about the nomination of Deborah Race for State Bar at-large director in conjunction with the Affinity Section Group. Nominations are due on December 1.

The Affinity Section Group plans to issue a letter of recommendation in support of Deborah and letters of recommendation in support of two other candidates. For any of these candidates who is not appointed to the at-large position, the group plans to nominate and support them for other State Bar positions. Teresa Schiller is drafting the nomination statement, and Deborah is gathering additional letters of recommendation and other required application materials.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the council unanimously approved the section's nomination of Deborah Race and authorized Teresa Schiller, in her discretion, to prepare the nomination statement, finalize the packet of materials with Deborah, and submit the packet to the State Bar.

STATE BAR OF TEXAS TASK FORCE ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION – POTENTIAL ACTION

Teresa Schiller discussed a report provided by Leigh Goodson, section representative to the SBOT Task Force on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. Leigh could not attend the council meeting. A copy of the written report was distributed to council members.

The group brainstormed ideas for the task force, and also for the section, to improve diversity.

One idea was to design and offer a CLE program addressing implicit bias.

Nikki Allen discussed the potential for relevant law-related educational programs for the public. A program could be presented to target audiences, such as civic organizations and schools. SBOT and/or section members could volunteer to present the program across the state.

Judge Maria Salas-Mendoza commented that WAL has a unique voice as compared with other organizations focused on inclusion with respect to people of particular races, for example. The section council discussed the possibility of creating a section committee or task force to support female diversity.

The Texas Young Lawyers Association and TLAP may have resources in terms of content and contacts, respectively, that may be helpful. In addition, the Women in the Profession Committee has sponsored some high-profile initiatives and may have valuable contacts to share.

The SBOT Board has certain diversity-related mechanisms in place. The task force could look at whether these mechanisms are sufficient, or whether more needs to be done.

The coronavirus has had a particular negative impact on caregivers, many of whom are women. Work-life balance issues, therefore, are more time-sensitive.

SBOT has an ombudsman designated to receive complaints about sexual harassment, retaliation, and other inappropriate treatment. Perhaps publicity about this program could be increased, or additional resources could be made available.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

Teresa Schiller reported that the Business Development Workshops Committee has several more workshops planned for 2021. The first workshop went smoothly. Texas Bar College is advertising these workshops on its website. Please consider signing up and encouraging others to do so. The substance of the workshops is generally the same, but each one is targeted at a different geographic area in Texas, and locale-specific guidance is provided. The committee welcomes locale-specific ideas and presentational involvement from council members.

CLE COMMITTEE INITIATIVES

Kirby Drake and Reagan Boyce, our CLE Committee co-chairs, presented a report.

Tomorrow at noon, the committee will present a Fair Housing Act CLE program. Another CLE program regarding HIPAA in the pandemic is planned for December 9, 2020.

The committee is working on CLE programs for 2021. The Sections Department records the CLE programs and applies for on-demand CLE credit, and the programs are made available to members in the section's CLE video library.

TEXAS TRIBUTE TO JUSTICE RUTH BADER GINSBURG

Teresa Schiller reported that the Texas Tribute to Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg event had more than 200 attendees, with good feedback from the speakers about their experience.

The section and other co-sponsors issued a joint press release with a free link to the recorded program.

Texas Bar College publicized this program, and *Texas Bar Blog* reported on the event.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE INITIATIVES

Denise Alex, our Vice-Chair/Membership, and Dori Goldman, our Membership Committee co-chair, presented a report.

The committee set a 2020/2021 goal of increasing section membership by 300 members. Membership has increased by about 200 members to date.

The publication of membership initiatives in the section's newsletter is going well. However, members have not responded to one or more survey questions published in the newsletter.

The section's Website and Social Media Committee has been working on updating the website, which provides value to members.

The committee has been gathering names of section members interested in helping to plan Texas Bar CLE programs, in response to a request from the Texas Bar CLE organization.

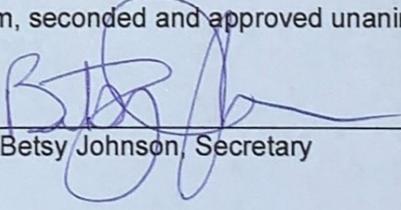
A potential project involving law firms is being tabled for now, pending SBOT approval.

OTHER BUSINESS (IF ANY)

None

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made at 1:02 pm, seconded and approved unanimously.



Betsy Johnson, Secretary