



# WOMEN AND THE LAW

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## STATE BAR OF TEXAS

Minutes of Meeting of Women and the Law Section  
State Bar of Texas  
March 17, 2021

Teresa Schiller, Chair, called the March meeting of the Women and the Law Section Council to order at 12:03 P.M. after it was determined that a quorum was present.

Council members in attendance via telephone or video: Teresa Schiller, Patricia Chapman, Lindsay Owens, Nikki Allen, Susan Kelly, Betsy Johnson, Maria Salas-Mendoza, Deborah Cordova, Laura Kugler, Judy Ney, Summer Olmos, Deborah Race, and Ellis Iverson.

### **MINUTES**

The council considered the minutes from the January 20, 2021 council meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Natasha Martinez, Treasurer, presented a treasurer's report for the months of December 2020 and January 2021. She reported that dues revenue was higher in these months than in the same months a year ago. There were no expenses in December and only \$95 in expenses for January.

### **AUDIT RESULTS**

Ms. Martinez reported on a recent State Bar of Texas ("SBOT") internal audit of sections' financial controls and processes. The auditors determined that the section has controls in place that are effective at mitigating risk with respect to all categories that they looked at: (a) policy compliance, (b) revenues, (c) expenditures, (d) bank reconciliations, (e) financial reporting, and (f) financial systems.

### **WEBSITE**

Ms. Schiller reported on the website. Following council and SBOT approval in January, the section hired Four Columns Marketing to upgrade the appearance of the website, and the work is underway. Our contact is named Grace Bryan. She is planning to send Ms.

Schiller a draft for review. Ms. Schiller thanked the Website and Social Media Committee for its work in updating the content on the site.

## **AWARDS**

Judge Maria Salas-Mendoza and Deborah Race, Awards Committee Members, presented a report on certain awards.

The committee reviewed law student essays and determined that the recipient of the Harriet E. Miers Writing Competition Award is Taylor Feldt, a student at SMU Dedman School of Law. The second-place winner is Brooke Lopez, a student at UNT Dallas College of Law. Patricia Chapman, Awards Committee Member, is working with Ms. Feldt and Ms. Lopez to citecheck and edit their submissions prior to publication. Ms. Schiller plans to ask Ms. Miers to attend the annual section members' meeting, where these winners will be introduced.

Judge Salas-Mendoza and Ms. Race reported on the process for soliciting nominations and selecting honorees for the (a) Sarah T. Hughes Women Lawyers of Achievement Award, and (b) Louise B. Raggio Award. The deadline for nominations is April 23, 2021.

## **STATE BAR OF TEXAS BOARD POSITIONS**

Ms. Schiller presented a report on SBOT board positions. She discussed the status of Deborah Race's candidacy for an at-large position. With the support of the Affinity Section Group, the section nominated Ms. Race for the position. Ms. Schiller received information about 10 additional SBOT board positions that subsequently were available. She attempted to send an eblast to section members about the positions, but there was not enough time. Ms. Schiller shared information about the positions and her draft communication, recommending that section leaders keep this opportunity in mind each year in February, when vacancies in board positions are announced. She sent the information, along with an annual calendar notice, to Affinity Section Group members.

Ms. Ney shared information about positions on the SBOT board that are available to small, medium, and large section representatives. Deborah Cordova currently is representing our section and other sections as a medium section representative to the board. Ms. Ney said that sometimes there are not many candidates for large section representative positions, so these positions may provide relatively easy paths to board involvement.

## **TEXAS BAR JOURNAL ISSUE RE: WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH**

Ms. Schiller presented a report on the March 2021 issue of *Texas Bar Journal*, most of which was dedicated to Women's History Month. Articles in the issue covered the following topics:

- (a) SBOT Women in the Profession Committee's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary;

- (b) Tribute to U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg;
- (c) The four female Texas Supreme Court justices;
- (d) Louise Raggio, for whom one of our awards is named;
- (e) An illustrated timeline showing Texas women lawyers who have broken barriers during the SBOT's existence;
- (f) Carolyn Wright, a former chief justice of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit; and
- (g) Comments by SBOT' executive director and the Texas Young Lawyers Association's executive director.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 12:56 pm the motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and carried unanimously.



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Betsy Johnson, Secretary