

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION
SENIOR LAWYERS SECTION
MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
September 20, 2016

The meeting was called to order by Chair Carole Grayson. Present were Executive Committee members Al Armstrong, Steve DeForest, Brian Comstock, Jerry Jager, Scott Osbourne, Dudley Panchot, Morris Shore, John Bergmann, Karen Klein, Fred Frederickson, Ron Mattson, Don Haley, Ron Thompson, Julianne Unite of the WSBA, and Kevin Plachy of the WSBA (by Phone), and our outgoing BOG liaison, Brad Furlong (by phone). Not able to be present were Steve Crossland, Tom Wampold and Eleanor Doermann. Refreshments were provided by Scott.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

Carole informed the group that our outgoing BOG Liaison Brad, as well as Kevin Plachy of the WSBA, would be appearing by phone.

Carole announced that Kevin and our CLE subcommittee, (consisting of Ron M, Karen, Al, Brian, and Carole) had met several times by phone throughout the summer and had confirmed that next years' Senior Lawyers' CLE will be held on May 5, 2017 at our usual venue, the Sea-Tac Marriott. Brian agreed that the venue had been thoroughly discussed during the telephonic meetings. Carole indicated that other venues had been considered, including Mercer Island Community Center. Kevin confirmed that the Marriott has been reserved for May 5. Also discussed were possible CLE themes and potential speakers, reported Carole. An abiding concern was the cost at Marriott, but it was agreed that we should continue at the Marriott for at least another year.

The potential speakers included Governor Jay Inslee, Seattle University professor Lisa Brodoff, Executive Committee member Scott Osbourne, Bill Fitzharris, Sal Mungia, plus a panel of retired attorneys, possibly including Peter Greenfield and Steve Fredrickson. Scott indicated he may be available as long as he is provided sufficient notice.

FURTHER DISCUSSION ABOUT OUR 2017 CLE AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW-MEMBER OUTREACH:

It was noted that our Section may want to look at ways in which the cohort of baby boomers could be enticed to join our Section. Kevin confirmed that there are 14,751 baby boomer Bar members (40%) of the total. Brian urged that we actively court this age group, both as to Section membership and as CLE attendees noting that we need to enhance our CLE numbers above the 120 we hosted at our 2016 CLE. Steve asked "how would we do this". Karen again urged us to change our Section name, and Steve agreed. Kevin suggested that we offer some guidance to

creative retirement that would interest the baby boomers, such as volunteer activities (e.g. mentoring) and teaching. John indicated he felt our Section should continue to focus our attention on the concerns of our current Section members.

It was noted that only 7% of our Senior Lawyers Section members are under 60, and only 15% are under the age of 65.

Some themes were suggested: "Baby Boomer Delight" (by Carole) with Steve favoring "The Next Stage."

PHONE CONFERENCE WITH BRAD FURLONG:

Out-going BOG member (also our BOG Liaison) joined us for a telephone discussion, noting that "it has been a pleasure working with you." His successor, he said, has not yet been chosen. Brad indicated that his membership in the Board of Governors gave him the opportunity to appreciate the importance of interaction between the Bar membership and the general public. We must remember that we are servants of the public. We need to keep in mind the importance of the rule of law.

Brad noted that there is a low level of engagement between the Bar membership and the WSBA.

Brad, who will assume the role of president-elect of the WSBA, discussed issues raised by the prospect of retirement. He indicated, at 65, that he feels perfectly capable physically and mentally, and doesn't want to disappear from the world of practice completely. The question is: how can one stay relevant to the practice of law and still retire? "I love my job and I love my clients but I realize that I do not have an unlimited time left to do other things." He stressed that he doesn't want to just close his doors and walk away from the legal world when the time for retirement comes. In order to avoid completely closing one's doors at retirement, the prospective retiree may want to consider mentoring a young lawyer so as to groom him/her to take over the practice.

Brad described some changes to the BOG suggested by a committee formed in 2011 of attorneys throughout the state, such as enlarging the BOG to include members of the general public and representation from the LLLT community, as well as dropping the word "association" from our Bar title, in order to address concerns that the Bar's present name suggests a trade organization, not the regulatory agency that the Bar actually is. Work is being done at the moment to effect changes in the by-laws to reflect some of the suggested alterations. Such changes that are accepted are to be adopted later in September.

Carole mentioned that she was concerned about personal liability of our Executive Committee members in the event of a financial loss on our CLE exceeding our reserves. She also wanted to know if an inactive attorney can be a member of an executive committee. Julianne indicated she thought that participation in an

executive committee by an inactive attorney would be up to the particular executive committee, at least with respect to granting such attorney non-voting status.

Carole suggested that perhaps Brad could be a speaker at our CLE. Carole also elicited a promise from Brad to join our Section in the future.

COMMENTS ABOUT WORKGROUP AND PROPOSED CHANGES:

Steve mentioned that he was glad the Workgroup decided not to take the sections' reserves away. Carole stated that she felt that section-representatives performed well in the Workgroup, and that she was surprised that those representatives could maintain an active practice given all the work they did.

CAROLE'S RETIREMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

Carole informed the Committee that she was going to retire from her position at the University of Washington at the end of the 2016-2017 school year. Ideally, she wishes to hire an attorney part time as well as a replacement for her to continue her work with the school. In her position, she has worked with many attorneys-to-be, and would look forward to mentoring some of these. In fact, she suggested that a specific one of these attorneys be appointed to our Executive Committee. In her retirement, she feels she may want to work in both program and area design.

FURTHER DISCUSSION ABOUT OUR SECTION'S GOALS AND EFFORTS TO INCREASE MEMBERSHIP AND CLE ATTENDANCE.

John indicated that recently both he and Fred passed the 50-year membership mark. He stated that we should not be disappointed at our 120 attendance figure at the 2016 CLE. He reminded the Committee that initially the reason for its very existence was to promote fellowship with fellow attorneys and to maintain those ties that connected long-time members. (Jerry also added that our group initially was not connected to the Bar at all but was formed to promote these goals). John emphasized how indispensable the idea of personal integrity is—in the practice of law, your “word is on the line.” “I could not be a good lawyer if others can't trust me.”

Jerry suggested that we rename our Section “The Over-Fifty Five” Section, but others indicated that the Bar's “anti-ageist” scruples would militate against such a change. Jerry indicated just what he thought of that. Fred opined that a mere change of name wouldn't help.

Don suggested that we raise our Section dues.

Carole argued in favor of a tag-line for our next CLE: “Those Over Forty Who Fail to Attend do so at Their Own Peril.”

TREASURER'S REPORT AND APPROVAL THEREOF, AND FY 2017 BUDGET REQUEST:

Ron distributed our FY 2017 Budget Request. [This was approved by the Bar in late September-Ed.] The Budget Request assumes a net loss for FY 2017 of \$ 3,249. Our projected fund balance as of 9/30/2017 is \$ 5,772.21, assuming that our loss for 2017 is indeed \$3,249. Ron stated that we need to stop losing money.

The Treasurer's Report reflects a section balance, as of 7/31/16, of \$9,398.36, following a net loss for May, June and July 2016 of \$227.64.

Ron noted that our Section membership now totals 295; the Bar's figure is 305, but even the latter number is down from prior years.

The Treasurer's Report was approved by Motion.

LIFE BEGINS

Ron M. indicated he is awaiting Al's CLE recap. Al said that the recap is coming soon.

MINUTES OF JUNE 21, 2016 MEETING AND APPROVAL THEREOF:

The Minutes of our last meeting were approved by Motion.

IDEAS ABOUT OUR MAY 5, 2017 CLE:

Karen stated that Governor Inslee expressed interest in speaking, but she had also learned that a formal request had to be made through regular channels, and the Governor's answer may not be received until 6 or 8 weeks prior to our event. Karen and Kevin did make the formal request.

Carole suggested State of Washington Supreme Court Justice Owens of the Washington State Supreme Court as a speaker, but Morrie wondered if a talk about planning for the future would generate more interest.

Scott noted that 25% of attorneys work for government, and is there something we could offer them? It was suggested that we address the issue of selling a law practice. Dudley suggested that we ask Brad Furlong to speak. Karen noted that the list-serve could be utilized to promote our event.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 12:00 noon.

The next meeting of the Senior Lawyers' Executive Committee will be at 10:30 am on October 18, 2016.