

Meeting of Trial Lawyers' Executive Council

Miami Hyatt

January 16, 2009

The Florida Bar Trial Lawyers' Executive Council met on Friday, January 16, 2009, at the Hyatt Miami. Chair Frank Bedell called the meeting to order at 9am. The minutes were taken by Bob Mansbach.

1. **Roll Call:** The following members were present: Robert Palmer, Frank Bedell, Bob Mansbach, Kim Cook, Cliff Higby, Eileen Moss, Stuart Ratzan, Craig Gibbs, Jon Lynn, Norm Vaughn-Birch, Wayne Helsby, Kim Ashby, Cal Warriner, Ted Eastmoore, Hector More, Glenn Burton (attending judicial funding workshop).

The following members were absent: Tim Sullivan, John Williams, Chris Knopik, Courtney Grimm, Sandy Sanborn, Lou Prats. W. Paige Graham, who had another meeting, appeared at the close of the meeting.

2. **Minutes:** The minutes of the September 12, 2008 meeting in Tampa were read and unanimously approved.

3. **Financial Report:** A financial report as of was presented and approved. The fund balance budgeted for June 30, 2010 is \$448,718, with an actual of \$364,429 at the end of 2007-2008. The budget for 2009-2010 was approved, with total operating expenses of \$226,353. It was moved we fund the judicial luncheon for \$1000, and approved.

4. **Trial Lawyers' Luncheon/Bedell Foundation.** Frank reported that Martin Dyckman (author of *Disorder in the Court*) has been invited and accepted. It was discussed that we combine (as we did until 10 years ago) the lunch with the criminal law section, and perhaps increase attendance. (Note: Frank has informed me that the Criminal Law Section approved a joint luncheon, so we will pursue that in the future).

5. **CLE Committee Report:** Bob Mansbach reported on the overall state of the CLE programs, and the upcoming CLE certification review and Trial Advocacy in May. Ed Cheffy reported to Bob as to the status of an honored guest at the seminar, celebrating the 25th anniversary of certification. Bob Palmer reported as to the Trial Advocacy seminar in May. He also discussed the potential of a "medicine for lawyers" seminar, perhaps in 3-4 locations, aimed at the younger PI lawyers.

6. **Legislative Committee report:** Bob Harris reported telephonically as to the status of legislation. Most of the focus of our involvement has dealt with court funding. Bob has spoken to Steve Metz and other lobbyists as to how to deal with this problem. Courts were cut another 1.25%. Victor Crist admitted he wanted to keep the doors to the prison shut and the courthouse doors open, and was consistent in the process. He discussed the court funding through fees approach and what various counties do in that regard. Eileen, Kim, Cal, Palmer and Stuart volunteered to form the Legislative Committee. We will

start our Friday calls again in mid February. Judicial Funding: Burton is attending the workshop and will report back to the council.

7. **Membership Committee**/Facebook: Courtney Grimm sent to Mansbach a copy of the facebook, which is missing numerous pictures.

8. **The Advocate**: it was expressed by Frank and the Council that we need to be careful in future editions not to have a one sided approach, given the healthy response from Florida ABOTA.

9. **ECR**: A letter came to Frank from an Ocala lawyer concerning potential violation of the attorney client privilege as to taping of trials in Marion, Brevard, and other counties (Dade in Family Court). Do we need to look at this? Perhaps publish on the website? Frank can write about it in The Advocate.

10. **Mock Trial competition**: Jon, Kim and Eileen are still heading up this program, with the hope of all Florida law schools participating. Last night's competition was quite successful. It is being moved to Orlando. Wayne Helsby volunteered to get the 120+ people involved to judge the competition, including 30 judges. Kim, Eileen and Jon will assist Wayne, who by the end of the discussion was in charge of the program. Jon is still taking care of the problem, and Kim and Eileen have the framework/procedure down, as evidenced by the excellent results of the competition. This was the first year all 10 Florida law schools attended.

11. **By-law revisions**: Mansbach, chair of the sub committee on which Kim Cook and Norm Vaughn-Birch also serve, reported they group has met twice, and will be submitting revised by-laws to study, hopefully in March.

12. **Meetings**: We are set for Sarasota/Lido Beach March 6-8, and we will go to Bermuda in late April (beginning Thursday April 30) at the Elbow Beach Club (run by Mandarin Oriental).

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 am.

Submitted by Bob Mansbach, Secretary/Treasurer