

Trial Lawyers Section Executive Council Meeting

Tampa Marriott Waterside Hotel & Marina

700 South Florida Avenue

Tampa, FL 33602

Saturday, January 18, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.

MINUTES

Present: Bill Partridge, Wayne Helsby, Ted Eastmoore, Hector Moré, Bob Palmer, Vickie Sproat, John Williams, Pat Lowry, Basil Bain, Kim Ashby, Dennis O'Connor, Tom Edwards, Chris Knopik, Mindy McLaughlin, Joseph Kinman, David Roy, Sid Matthew, Thomas Bishop.

By Phone: Charlie Bartlett, Stuart Ratzan, Katherine Hunter, Cliff Higby, Sandy Sanborn, Kim Cook and Eugene Sherman.

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks – Ted Eastmoore
 - Call to order by Chair Ted Eastmoore.
2. Approval of Minutes – November 16, 2013
 - The minutes of November 16, 2013 meeting held at The Betsy, Miami Beach, Florida were approved.
3. Financial Reports
 - The financial reports were approved.
4. Committee Reports
 - A. Trial Lawyers Summit
 - Generally reported that the program was outstanding, a substantial savings was made with regard to the program, and that this was consistent with the budget.
 - B. Mock Trial – Charlie Bartlett
 - Charlie Bartlett reported that the program was widely praised by the coaches and participants. The only law school that did not participate was the University of Miami. Bartlett gave special recognition to Skooter Kinman and his assistant, as well as Kim Maxson, Wayne Helsby's assistant. Recognition was also given to the work of Hector Moré in recruiting judges, and Mindy McLaughlin in her hard work

behind the scenes and the recruiting of judges. The Chair also thanked Charlie Bartlett for his outstanding work on the program.

- Mindy McLaughlin moved that an appropriate Ipad be purchased for Kim Maxson for her extraordinarily hard work in logistics and organization for the Mock Trial. Hector Moré seconded, and the purchase of an appropriate gift in the amount of \$500 was approved unanimously.

C. Teachers Law School – Mindy McLaughlin

- Another great program took place this year. The feedback from teachers, faculty members, and representatives attending confirmed that the program continues to be highly praised and excellent. Vickie Sproat commented that it may be that another round of evaluations are needed to be sent out for those who did not send them in. McLaughlin noted that Courtney Grimm’s work was instrumental in the success of the program, as well as the work of Katherine Hunter and Vickie Sproat and David Roy. Hunter reported that some participants commented on the timing, and the time of year, and perhaps consideration of a summer date to maximize participation. Chair Elect Moré said it would be a good idea to consider the long term prospects, but that summer would be too difficult for teachers as it would interrupt their vacation time and bring them back from that. Chair Elect Moré also commented that the idea of keeping the Teachers Law School and the Mock Trial together as the Trial Lawyers Summit is the best way to proceed. It was decided that the Teachers Law School organizers for this year should have a call to discuss location and dates for next year. Tom Edwards suggested considering a journalist law school. Chris Knopik agreed to gather information on other efforts that have been made by the organizations to conduct such a course, and to report to the council at our next meeting.

D. Advanced Trial Advocacy – Tom Bishop/Bob Palmer

- The program is set for 13-17 May and outstanding faculty has been gathered, and all Council members are encouraged to consider sending members of their firms, or other trial lawyers from their circuit to ensure the course is fully subscribed.

E. By Laws – Stuart Ratzan

- The committee of the Board of Governors charged with approval of the By-Laws voted 6-0 to approve. They will now be presented at the general session of the Board of Governors.

- F. Civil Trial Certification – Bob Palmer
- The course is set, and is still looking for additional participants to ensure a full subscription.
- G. CLE – Tom Edwards
- The Medical Malpractice Seminar is set for March 14. It will be at the University of South Florida Center for Advanced Medical Research. Edwards reported that he has toured the facility, and that he has recruited a first rate group to teach the course. He predicted that the course will be unique, and an excellent product involving simulation and state of the art technology.
 - Edwards reported that a CLE program with the Admiralty Committee of the Bar would probably not come together this year, but that it could be considered in future years.
- H. Council of Sections
- No report.
- I. Discovery Handbook – John Williams
- John Williams reported that there is no update and nothing to report, the discovery handbook continues to be distributed on an as-needed basis.
- J. Leadership Academy – Vickie Sproat
- Vickie Sproat reported that the committee charged with ensuring appropriate selection of participants in the leadership academy met and discussed the process of selection. The thought in the past was that our section would have a role in selecting candidates. Unfortunately, of the seven that were sponsored previously, only one was selected for the academy. Consequently, this year no candidates were sponsored since that process appeared to be ineffective. Instead, it has been emphasized to the Bar that candidates for the Trial Lawyers Section will be eligible for funds as a scholarship. Sproat also talked with Ashley Green, last year's candidate who did attend the academy. She considered the experience to have been very valuable, and worthwhile. **Dennis O'Connor moved that an additional \$10,000 sponsorship be given to the leadership academy on the basis described by Sproat. Kim Ashby seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.**

K. Legislative - Tom Bishop

- A legislative day will take place in early February involving meeting with legislative leadership, key lobbyists on all sides of judicial and legal legislation, and the groundwork will be laid for advocacy concerning such legislation. Bishop reported that the legislative platform was being submitted to the Bar for approval. Legislative calls during the session will take place at 8:30 a.m. each Friday during the session, beginning the week before the session.

L. Long Range Planning – Wayne Helsby

- Past Chair Wayne Helsby provided the report on the work of the long range planning committee. The only issue for the committee at this time is the decision as to whether or not to continue to provide a \$75,000 contribution to the Florida Bar Foundation intended for legal aid from Section funds. **Kim Ashby moved that the amount be approved for this donation. John Williams seconded. Thereafter a discussion was held. The motion failed. Bob Palmer moved that a lesser amount, \$50,000, be approved for donation, with a revisitation of the subject of any additional monies being paid in the future at the summer meeting of the Council. Dennis O'Connor seconded. The motion passed.**

M. Professionalism Guidelines – Stuart Ratzan

- No report at this time.

N. Publications – Kim Ashby

- The Trial Lawyers Summit and Teachers Law School and Mock Trial will be featured in an article on the front page of the Bar News.

O. Special Projects

- No report.

P. Website

- No report.

Q. Liaison to Florida Bar Committees

- ABOTA will be providing \$5,000 for the Trial Lawyers Section for the Teachers Law School.

- R. Judicial Ethics Advisory – Pat Lowry
 - The Supreme Court is considering proposed amendments with regard to senior judges serving as mediators. The committee is considering merit retention judges campaigns, and the ability of the judges to campaign together. A course on judicial election ethics will be offered.
- S. Board of Governors Liaison – Jay Cohen
 - No report.
- T. Judicial Liaison – Hon. Amy Smith
 - No report.
- 5. Old Business
 - None.
- 6. Future Meetings – Ted Eastmoore
 - The next meeting will be at the Enchantment Resort in Sedona, Arizona on April 3 – 6, 2014.

Whereupon the meeting was adjourned.