

MINUTES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE OREGON STATE BAR FAMILY LAW SECTION

October 18, 2014 Meeting

Present: Lauren Saucy -- Chair

Members at large: Jennifer Brown, Marsha Buckley, Jennifer Currin, Debra Dority, Chris Eggert, Susan Grabe, , Murray Pettit, Kristin Sager-Kottre, Kimberly Quach, Laura Rufolo, , Anthony Wilson,

Absent: Caitlin Mitchel-Markley, Zach Fruchtengarten

Also Participating: John Hudson, Adoption Subcommittee, Ryan Carty, Legislative Subcommittee Melinda Thomas, Andy Ivers, Sarah Silberger, Stephanie Wilson

The meeting took place in person (except that Jennifer Currin participated telephonically).

Call to Order. The Chair began the meeting at 7:07 a.m. A quorum initially was not present, but as attendees were added, a quorum presented.

Approval of Minutes. The Committee unanimously approved the July 2014 meeting minutes.

Treasurer's Report. Marsha reported to the Committee, indicating that the Section has not made a lot of expenditures, totaling \$2,851 in September 2014, and \$22,491 for the first three quarters. The current fund contains \$144,394. Only \$2,706 had been spent on the Annual Meeting through the end of September 2014, and a great deal more will be incurred but will likely be offset by revenue.

The Committee unanimously approved the report.

2014 Annual Meeting. Kimberly, Lauren and Laura reported that the Annual Meeting seemed to be well-received thus far. There was some discussion that charging vendors solely for their table was inappropriate as they are also eating food provided for attendees. Next year, we will increase the charge for vendors.

Website. The website now contains a member directory, the minutes of Committee meetings, a legislative ideas section and some policies. In the past, there were issues with sustaining institutional memory as to what the Committee's policies were and how they came to be. The Committee also is considering adding historical Salishan materials (that are at least two years old so that we will not divert attendance at the Annual Meeting). This would provide further incentive to attract speakers. There was a desire to include experts on the page, but that did not occur yet.

Sarah Silberger and Andy Ivers have agreed to be on the website subcommittee, and the Committee unanimously approved their inclusion.

Future Contract Negotiations with Salishan. Salishan is increasing the rates for the Annual Meeting significantly. The Committee discussed moving the meeting with several potential venues.

Sunriver was very interested in hosting the annual meeting. It has a conference facility for 400 people. The sales staff was very motivated to please the Section. There is a main building and one overflow room. The latter is similar to Salishan's overflow rooms, but perhaps a bit larger. The main room for 400 can be arranged in table rounds or in rows. At the time that Lauren and Jennifer visited Sunriver, the groundbreaking for the conference facility had not taken place. The Committee is trying to be very firm about the room rates. The contract was forwarded to the Committee for consideration. The Committee members need to provide feedback about the Sunriver contract before the end of 2014 as we must finalize the contract by January 2015.

ACTION REQUIRED: The Committee must provide input about the Sunriver contract before the November 2014 meeting.

The principal concern about moving to Sunriver is that people will not want to travel that far to the meeting, as most attendees are from Portland. When we inquired, however, the bar indicated that less than 10% of attendees would attempt to drive in on Friday morning.

Although the Section used to host two meetings, there was insufficient attendance at both meetings to justify them. The Section therefore elected to host only one meeting per year. At the time this decision was made, Sunriver did not have a conference facility large enough to accommodate our annual meeting.

The Bar compared the CLE cost for the Family Law Section and concluded that our CLE credits cost about 50% of what is charged to other Section members.

There was discussion about having the meeting at Skamania, but the common view was that this would not be a good venue for lawyers from the south.

The Section is booked for the Annual Meeting in 2015 at Salishan.

The Committee originally looked into other venues in part to have leverage with Salishan. Our objective is to keep the price low for members at an enjoyable venue.

The average temperature for Bend during the Annual Meeting is 65. The state in-service day is booked out for several years. Several members mentioned that attendees to create a vacation from the Annual Meeting.

The Bar has noted that their revenue from conferences has declined because members are attending a lot of online conferences. The benefit to the Annual Meeting is primarily social. We want to make the Annual Meeting an event.

Professionalism Subcommittee. The objective is to vote on candidates for the Professionalism Award next year. The award has been given once to Ron Hergert. The Guideline for the professionalism award has been created and is available on the Section website. Tony is leaving the committee. Zach and Murray remain on the professionalism subcommittee. The Committee unanimously approved adding Melinda and Debra to the subcommittee.

Hardship Policy. Murray discussed the form that was circulated to the Committee. Lauren provided a history of the policy for the benefit of the new Committee members. The Committee had fielded a number of requests for reductions/waivers in registration fees for the Annual Meeting. Murray and Zach reviewed various Oregon and extra-jurisdictional Bar hardship policies. They recommended a very general policy based essentially on an honor system concerning the applicant's financial circumstances. Any applicant would not be provided with year-on-year reductions/waivers of fees. It was decided that the hardship policy would allow an attendee to pay the same cost as a new lawyer for registration only. The decision concerning the number of hardship reductions would be based on the Annual Meeting revenue from the year prior.

Debra emphasized that confidentiality is important with review of hardship applicants.

The deadline for applying for the hardship reduction will be August 31st of each year because the brochure is scheduled to go out by mid-August. The Committee will need to act quickly due to the potential for many applications.

The Guidelines for granting the reduction in fees will be that the applicant be a current member of the Bar's Family Law Section, demonstrated financial need, and an interest in the Annual Meeting. Debra suggested that the priority should be for lawyers who have not previously attended meetings. The

applicant will need to provide his/her attendance history at the last five Annual Meetings.

Salishan 2015. The Section is committed to having the Annual Meeting at Salishan in 2015. The new Planning Chair is Stephanie, with great thanks from the Committee. The planning committee will include Lauren and Laura.

Lauren indicated we should tell Salishan that most of the attendees eating breakfast eat in the main room. We should divert some of the breakfast offerings to that room to ensure we can accommodate all attendees. Some feedback is that the programs should be at least 45 minutes each rather than 30 minutes each. Jennifer Currin has committed to Chairing the Planning Committee in 2016.

Non-Lawyer Professionals. Several non-lawyer attendees, including, among others, mediators, custody evaluators, and others, have requested a non-lawyer registration price for the Annual Meeting. The Committee is asked to consider whether or not such a registration price should be offered.

Lauren noted that reducing the registration fee would essentially subsidize the non-lawyer's cost to the Section. There are essentially seven different eating events (including breakfast, lunch and snacks) that the Section provides. The Committee noted that there is a risk that the meeting could reach its maximum attendees. The theoretical maximum is 410 attendees. In Lauren's year 480 people registered.

The Annual Meeting barely breaks even every year in terms of cost to revenue. The revenues should be used to support the Section lawyers. It is not possible for the Section to subsidize everyone. This year we increased the registration fee by \$25 per attendee. The value is amazing.

The Committee unanimously rejected a proposal to reduce registration fees for non-lawyer professionals.

Two Donations. The Committee has never donated to either proposed target. The Section does not have excess revenues. One Committee member indicates that many attorneys already contribute to these targets individually. There are already questions about whether or not there are sufficient revenues to justify charitable contributions. The Section needs to protect its reserves. The letters sent to do not require a response.

The Committee unanimously rejected the proposal to provide contributions to these target.

Budget. The Family Law Section currently has 1082 members. The 2015 estimate for membership is 1090. The fee for inclusion in the Section is \$25 per

person. Conference expenditures are expected to remain static. The website and newsletter expenses also should remain the same. If the Section remains on this trajectory, it is expected that the Section will have \$64 in revenues. The long range plan for the Bar requires that no Section have less than \$30,000 at any point in time. The Section budget is due in December 2014.

The Committee unanimously approved the Budget.

Debra inquired about why we have so much in reserve currently. It was noted that we normally spend about \$90,000 for the Annual Meeting/Conference combined yearly.

Laura noted that the Bar determines how expenses for the Annual Meeting are allocated. The rationale is unknown. The actual cost does not include just the line item for the Annual Meeting.

Adoption Subcommittee. John indicated that there are really great attorneys on the adoption subcommittee. Robin Pope wrote an article for PLF concerning the new adoption law. The subcommittee recommended a legislative fix. The subcommittee also worked on changes to its by-laws, which were considered over an 18 month period. DHS is soliciting comments on proposed rules that relate to adoption from the subcommittee, and it was seeking authority to do so. There is now a new by-law provision allowing the subcommittee to vote by email. In addition, there is a new subject area – reproductive technologies – added to the list of topics to be addressed by the subcommittee. John will attend the November 20, 2014 meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:51 a.m.

These minutes were prepared by Kimberly Quach, 2014 Secretary to the Oregon State Bar Family Law Section Executive Committee.

/s/

Kimberly A. Quach

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The next meeting is scheduled for October 18, 2014 at 3:00 p.m.