

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OREGON STATE BAR FAMILY LAW SECTION
APRIL 6, 2023 MINUTES**

Present: Hon. Erin Fennerty, Chair
Keri Smith, Chair-Elect
Shallon Halttunen, Secretary
Samantha Benton, Treasurer

Members at Large: Shala Kudlac, Kacie Bitzenburg, Amanda Thorpe,
Alexander Jones, Kayla Steindorf, Patrick Melendy, Zachary Gottlieb,
Annelisa Smith

Also Participating: Susan Grabe, OSB
Laura Eckstein

Absent: Brittany Berkey, Adam Shelton, Kristi Skalman

Call to Order. The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:03 pm. The meeting took place via Zoom. A quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the Family Law Section Executive Committee (FLEC) meeting held March, 2023, were circulated in advance of the meeting. Patrick Melendy moved to approve the Minutes; Keri Smith seconded. Discussion regarding correcting minutes to add Annelisa Smith to members in attendance for last meeting. Hon. Erin Fennerty moved to approve the Minutes corrected to reflect Annelisa attended late; Keri seconded. Amended Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: The report was presented by Samantha Benton. Membership is 871 (as of February 2023); down from 898. Discussed downward membership of the Family Law Bar. There is a general downward trend of membership across the Bar. Overall, the Family Law Section does well and is one of the larger Bar sections.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

- **Annual Conference Subcommittee.** Committee members are: Alex Jones, Keri Smith, Pat Melendy, Kayla Steindorf, Samantha Benton, Zach Gottlieb.
 - *Alex Jones reports:*
 - Schedule lined out except emcee.
 - Largely the same setup as last year
 - Announcement will go out soon with dates.
 - Confirmed a block of rooms-Kayla Steindorf will schedule rooms

- We have some sponsors are already on board.
 - Tee times (40 approx.) for golf event set for Saturday-will need numbers in June.
 - Keri and Samantha working on Thursday trivia night.
- **Awards Subcommittee.** Committee members are: Brittany Berkey, Kristi Skalman, Adam Shelton. Chair: Brittany Berkey.
 - No applications for the professionalism award. The Board was encouraged to select.
- **Legislative Subcommittee.**
 - *Amanda Thorpe reports:*
 - 1 request to look at the Parental Abduction Act and possibly codify uniform rules for Oregon – would be for the next legislative session.
 - FLEC has not typically taken an active role in legislation.

DISCUSSION:

- No discussion from the subcommittee about weighing in on current Bills, there has been some email discussion with various members.
 - We are late in the current cycle, but not actively pursuing taking a position on current bills.
 - Continue to disseminate information to the Family Law Section.
 - The issue of FLEC's role in taking a position is in flux.
 - Susan Grabe reports the Section has been more reactive the last number of cycles however, that doesn't preclude FLEC from actively reviewing. At this time, we are looking more at 2025 involvement.
 - The Bar's deadline is April 1, 2024 for the next session.
 - SFLAC has taken the position that they cannot take a position on legislation.
 - Bylaws allow for subcommittee or sub-subcommittee that are not FLEC Members
 - May want to add Members at Large.
 - Since SFLAC cannot take a position, it may be appropriate for FLEC to be more involved in taking a position and weighing in on legislation.
 - We just passed the first member deadline. Some may not be moving forward. We need to update the list of Bills.
 - Will take up refining list and look at timelines to determine whether there are any opportunities coming up. Possible announcement.
 - Discussed soliciting membership for interest in serving on committee.
- **Family Law Newsletter.** Editor in chief job description has been distributed.
 - *Samantha Benton and Amanda Thorpe:*
 - No applications received yet. Will re-send with a new due date, but we may need to personally reach out to potential candidates. To date, unsuccessful in recruiting editor.

- Discussed possibly spreading the workload out via committee; discontinuing the newsletter or reducing frequency. (Historically bi-monthly but could be less frequent.)
- **Filling Vacancy on FLEC.**
 - Laura Eckstein was introduced. (25 years as an attorney). Moved to Oregon in 2010 and has been licensed since 2018. (Currently practicing in La Grande.) Experience as a Municipal Court Judge and JAG officer; serves on solo/small firm committee.
 - Hon. Fennerty moved to appoint the vacancy. Shallon Halttunen seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.
 - Laura Eckstein volunteered to serve on the legislative subcommittee and was appointed by Hon. Erin Fennerty.
- **International Law Section CLE Co-Sponsorship.**
 - Hon Fennerty
 - Abuse reporting CLE (1 credit)
 - Our \$500 contribution will be used to pay for video recording.
 - CLE will be available to the Family Law Section online.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Venue**
 - Discussed pros and cons of continuing at Salishan and Sun River, and exploring other venues. Sun River has already reached out. If we are transitioning to remote, then need to look at cheaper options. If we are interested in changing venues, we should begin the search soon.
 - Annelisa Smith moved to begin an exploratory committee for the purpose of determining other possible venues.
 - CONFERENCE LOCATION COMMITTEE members: Alex Jones, Pat Melendey, Amanda Thorpe, Shala Kudlack, and Kacie Bitzenburg. Ms. Bitzenburg will serve as chair (with Amanda's support).

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 pm.

Next Meeting: May 4, 2023, at 12:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Minutes prepared by Shallon Halttunen, Secretary to the Oregon State Bar Family Law Section Executive Committee.