

MINUTES OF MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING
ORLANDO WORLD MARRIOTT, ORLANDO
JUNE 27, 2007

Meeting Called to order by Mark Sessums, Co-Chair at 2:10 pm

Committee Attendees:

Mark Sessums, Co-Chair	Robin Scher, Co-Chair
Caryn Green	Sheena Benjamin-Wise
Lawrence Datz	N. Diane Holmes
Doug Greenbaum, Incoming Chair	Ingrid Keller
Paul Bernardini	Allison Kapner
Frank Ziliaitis	Michelle Pivar
Catherine Eaton	Kim Rommel-Enright
Pat Kopko m- excused. in trial.	
Allyson Hughes, Incoming Section Chair, guest.	

A. Open Discussion - Brainstorming

1. Recruiting new members from areas such as the paralegal community, local and national minority bars associations, "Bridging the gap" CLE participants, and law student groups.
2. Encouraging return participation of former members.
3. Website should also be used to invite new members
4. Judges may be able to help direct practitioners to joining the section. Ethical conflicts may need to be reviewed.

B. Old Business - Recruitment Reports and Initiatives

1. Sheena Benjamin-Wise – For minority recruitment it is encouraged that the members of this section must attend the other meetings in order to invite more participation. The committee needs to identify the various local and minority bar member associations in their area. Learn the presidents and secretaries for contact information. The committee can divide the State into regions so that members of the committee can attend local and minority bar meetings on behalf of the section. The members can also coordinate calendars to attend various local and minority groups.
2. Frank Ziliaitis – Publications can provide local exposure through newsletters in local, inserting flyers in those papers. Since so many members are dabbling in family law so take advantage of those persons to encourage increased participation and professionalism. Ask EC members to assist with this kind of project. Each county may charge different fees, therefore a determination of costs of such publications may be necessary. Members may consider pro bono hours as an option to offset costs.

3. Robin Scher – Child advocacy initiative may go to the Children’s Issues, Adoption and Juvenile committees and in light of the overwhelming need for attorneys to represent children in family and dependency cases, as well as for the appointment of guardian ad litem. This is be will a part of the Sections’ service project for the 2007-2008 Bar year to meet the Chairwoman’s goal to increase participation in the appointment of guardians ad litem.

- In addition, Allyson Hughes, incoming Section Chair, advised that the Sections’ Pro Bono Mentoring Project, will be moved to an ad hoc committee and likely expanded to include mentoring for all in conjunction with YLD and Justice Cantero’s push for statewide mentoring. Our program was set up as a service to our members and is designed to facilitate effective representation of members of the lower income community. Unfortunately it has had low participation in the last couple of years. Pro Bono attorneys are desperately needed statewide. For those who are reluctant to take such cases, or are new to the practice, a mentor can be made available to that lawyer. The mentor lawyers’ assistance can be applied for pro bono credit for few hours which can double as a training program. This can be used to recruit new members.

4. Lawrence Datz – A means to increase membership of the affiliate members is to strengthen relationships by offering CLEs covering issues that are legal related and not readily available to the public or such professionals. The developing relationships with the affiliate members will be a mutual benefit and will increase membership. The litigation support committee has begun provide gathering information to specifically target this possible need of the affiliates to understand the legal process, such as subpoenas and other witness related information. Affiliates may not understand the benefit of joining the family law section of the Bar.

- Other considerations - The cost of the affiliate membership dues is higher than that of attorney membership. Frank Ziliaitis moved that the committee consider the affiliate membership dues. There was no second so the Motion was not discussed further.

5. Website will be discussed at the next meeting in September.

C. New Business

1. Doug Greenbaum, in-coming chair. Meetings will be held monthly. The in-coming chair needs demographic information on all members. A July meeting will determined at a later date via email.
2. Michelle Pivar – presented the invitation for the family law section. She advised that it is an application. The Michelle passed around an annotated copy of the Family Law Section application for membership for review.
 - Michelle Pivar moved that the language in the flyer “Become an actively involved member. Make a Difference” be deleted and add “How can the family law section

help you? Visit our website at www.familylawfla.org". Frank Ziliaitis seconded the motion. Discussion: The idea is positive. The members voted and the motion passed unanimously. Robin will bring the Committee Motion to the Executive Council for approval and action.

3. N. Diane Holmes – discussed the ABA Family Law Section efforts and challenges regarding membership and membership recruitment. The membership numbers are dropping. The ABA has found that the use of a Tool kit is helpful for recruitment. The ABA members use the tool kit to recruit law school students and other members of the legal communities. It helped in identifying and tracking new members. Examining the memberships will help the committee understand the goals and purpose of the Section. Robin Scher added that there is a need to increase the activity levels of the members. She developed an outline of a 'pitch package' years ago just to address this need and will provide it to Doug for future use. The idea is to provide those doing outreach with a specific set of materials/information to provide to prospective new members educating them on the benefits of membership in an effort to entice them to not only join, but become active members of the Section. .
4. Robin Scher – The Welcome efforts of the committee have historically been receptions and informal face to face talks with new members that are at the meetings. There is not much more designed for new members once they have joined. Considerations - An EC Member be assigned to new members at enrollment. There may be also be an orientation for new members or a table to be set-up to greet first time attendees.

D. Meeting adjourned 3:25pm

Reminder: Next telephonic meeting to be announced and in-person meeting to be held on September 5, 2007, in Tampa at the Airport Marriott