

State Bar of Michigan
Military and Veteran's Law Section
Quarterly Board Meeting
Friday, April 24, 2015 - 12:30-2:00 PM
WMU Cooley Law School, Lansing Campus, Room 825

Minutes

1. Called to order, 12:35 PM

In attendance: Heather Spielmaker - Secretary, Jeremy Henner - Acting Vice Chair, Mike McDaniel - Education Committee Chair, Steve Schultz - Newsletter Editor

Participating by conference call: Peggy Costello - Pro Bono Committee Chair, Hon. Jodi Switalski - VTC Committee Chair, Mike Viterna - Treasurer

2. Mike McDaniel's update:

- A. VTC handbook is ready for publication. Law students supervised by McDaniel and Spielmaker interviewed VTC judges to collect "best practices" for this guide. It will be distributed to judges who are interested in starting VTCs. MVAA and SCAO involvement. Endorsements from Governor and Chief Justice on MI Supreme Court are pending.
- B. Homeland Security Law Review is an online law review supervised by McDaniel, published three times per year. One issue per year is dedicated to veteran's issues. Mike would love to have articles related to VTCs submitted for the November edition. Ideally, one each from a VTC judge, prosecutor, and practitioner. **Please contact Mike if you are interested.**
- C. Army One Source contracts with a group that offers a 6-hour CLE training on legal issues affecting military members and their families. Mike is getting in touch with that group to see if they will present for our membership. When he gets an outline of their curriculum, he will work with Peggy to see what portion she might like to lead, and have the Army One Source contractor handle the rest. This would be an event held in Lansing or Auburn Hills at Cooley, free to section members in exchange (perhaps) for a commitment to take a pro bono case or two, either civil or benefits.

3. Heather Spielmaker's update:

- A. Leadership update: This annual meeting will include elections. Our by-laws structure leadership to allow for vice chair to move up to chair, secretary to move up to chair, and a new secretary to be recruited. These promotions must be confirmed by voting. Treasurer is encouraged to maintain the office or to be considered for other vacant positions. Because our Vice Chair (Tom Hetchler) had to step down due to a conflict, the Secretary (Heather) will move up to in-coming chair consideration.

Tom Hetchler recruited Jeremy Henner to be acting vice chair, and to be considered for that slot in the elections. Mike Viterna states he is willing to maintain his role as Treasurer. Candidate(s) for Secretary must be recruited. Hon. Jodi Switalski suggests John Walus, and has sent an email of introduction so he can find out more about the position. Heather suggests Steve Schultz for the position, pending bar passage. Steve is a recent graduate getting bar results in two weeks. **Other nominees should be shared with John Wojcik and Heather Spielmaker.**

- B. Heather led discussion regarding the annual meeting plans for our group (set for 10am - 12pm October 7th). Heather suggested bringing in a speaker from Colorado who led a class action for veterans who had been denied TSGLI claims. He would familiarize our members with TSGLI claims through a 45-60 minute presentation and indicated he would do so for only travel expenses. The group supported the idea. We would like to advertise this event to insurance law section members to help recruit new members. Additionally, the group would like to have a networking breakfast that includes a brief update on VTCs. This requires getting more time in our room allotted by the SBM. We would like to advertise the networking and VTC event to the criminal law section to help recruit new members.

Update: (1) We now have the room from 8:30 am to 12 pm on October 7th. Will have ordered full American breakfast for 50 people. The cost will be \$750. (2) Also, the speaker, L. Dan Rector, has agreed to speak. Details on the topic and travel arrangements will be worked out next week. (3) Judge Jordon, one of our group's founders, would like to handle the VTC updates during the networking breakfast.

Our group wants a good turnout for the annual meeting. To that end, Judge Switalski is getting quotes for running an ad in a relevant legal publication, and Heather and Jeremy are getting quotes for printed material to send to members in August, inviting them to the event and asking them to save the date for our other planned events.

Update: Heather learned that a refrigerator magnet can be printed with our event details for roughly \$1 each. These would be sent to our 306 members.

Peggy suggested that we have the SBM help us create a Survey Monkey to find out what degree of experience and exposure to military and veteran's matters our members have, and what their interests are for training, projects, etc. Peggy agreed to work on the questions and submit a draft to the leadership group by July 1. The survey will be administered in September, and the results shared at the annual meeting. The survey will be distributed to our members, and will close with an invitation and reminder to join us at the annual meeting.

4. Mike Viterna's financial update:

Our treasury stands at \$4872.53, with 306 total members (including attorneys, students, and Master's).

5. Newsletter discussion:

We agreed that we should do a quarterly eNewsletter and that there should be a newsletter editor. We voted to put Steve Schultz in that position, and there was unanimous support. Newsletters will be distributed two weeks after each quarterly board meeting, generally meaning late March, June, September, and December. Each edition will include: (1) a letter from a selected leadership member, (2) an update on the activities of one of our committees, (3) a calendar of upcoming events, (4) announcements, and (5) links to any relevant articles submitted by members. We will format the newsletter with the help of SBM webmaster Sandy and use her services for distribution. The total cost will be approximately \$120 per edition. Heather will find out whether a firm or interested party can sponsor editions of the eNewsletter.

6. Updates from board members:

- A. Judge Switalski announced her appointment to the State Drug Treatment Court Advisory Committee, which will develop recommendations for our state legislators. She has been placed on the VTC and marijuana subcommittees and will work on improvements for MCL 600.1201. She has also been asked to participate on a federal bar panel on veteran's issues.
- B. Judge Switalski also advised that a video project from MSU on PTSD will be released soon, and that she will be keynote speaker at the Nat'l Association of Drug Courts event.
- C. Heather Spielmaker announced that she will begin working at Dickinson Wright this summer, and hopefully launch a long term career with them after the summer program.

7. Meeting adjourns at 1:45 PM

Working Timeline

April 28 - Draft annual meeting agenda due to leadership members **(Heather)**
April 30 - Corrections to annual meeting agenda due to Heather
May 1 - Final annual meeting agenda due to SBM **(Jeremy)**
May 8 - eNewsletter due out **(Steve Schultz)**
May 15 - Quotes for ads and printed materials due **(Jodi, Jeremy, Heather)**
June 19 - Board Meeting - Cooley Room 835, 12:30-2 PM
July 1 - Draft of Survey Monkey Questions due to board members **(Peggy)**
July 3 - eNewsletter due out **(Steve Schultz)**
July 15 - Survey draft feedback due to Peggy
Early August - Mail printed materials re: annual meeting events to members
Early September - Distribute Survey Monkey to members
Mid September - eNewsletter **(Steve)**

Mid September - Ad runs announcing annual meeting event schedule (budget-permitting)

October 2 - Annual meeting reminder (**Terry**)

October 7 - Annual networking breakfast, biz meeting/elections, and special presentation (8:30am-12pm)

October 13 - follow-up with annual meeting attendees (**Jeremy**)