



**Paralegal/Legal Assistant Section
State Bar of Michigan
Council Meeting Minutes
Saturday, January 14, 2017
Telephonic
10:06A.M. to 11:45 A.M.**

The following Council members participated: Melvenna Fant-Jones, Denise Gau, Teresa Duddles, Jean Mitchell-Walster, Marianne Delaney, Renee Jent, Lindsay Williams, and Esther Simon.

Absent: KathyAnn Blunck , Linda Jevahirian, Jennifer Petty, and Marissa Bohde.

Gau moved, seconded by Simon, to approve Minutes of the November 12, 2016. Motion unanimously passed.

Duddles reported that the State Bar of Michigan approved the contract with the Hayworth Inn & Conference Center for the Annual Day of Education. The committee chair may sign the contract on behalf of the section. Costs are project between \$800 and \$912. The price will be reduced if less than 50 people attend. The conference room cost is \$600. Our event must conclude by 3:00 P.M. due to unrelated events at the venue. Lodgers receive a \$7 credit toward breakfast. Williams will develop ideas, with Blunck, for educational tracks at the Annual Day of Education. Concurrent classes are expected for the three breakout rooms. The committee is projecting 50 to 100 attendees. A council meeting might occur Thursday, May 18, 2017. Discussion of a possible reception, theme, and topics for legal education ensued. A motion was made by Williams, seconded by Fant-Jones, to authorize the committee to enter into the contract and work within the projected budget up to \$4,000 for the event. Motion unanimously approved.

Fant-Jones reminded everyone of the next Meet & Greet on January 25, 2107 at Granite City in Ferndale. It will start at 6:00 P.M.

Williams questioned the status of the scholarship preparations. Communications with Petty are in process. Gau has a list of programs and directors to share with Williams. Clarification of chairs for the Scholarship, WebSite, and Social Media committees were discussed.



Duddles proposed modification to our section's membership application was reviewed. Motion by Gau, seconded by Williams, to add, "which work, for the most part, requires a sufficient knowledge of legal concepts such that, absent that legal assistant, the attorney would perform the task, and which work is not primarily clerical or secretarial in nature" to the paralegal definition. Discussion centered on how this change would better reflect the definition of a legal assistant under our section bylaws adopted by the State Bar of Michigan. Motion unanimously passed.

Delaney offered the Treasurer's Guidelines as a section informational tool for consistency in handling financial business by the council. The four page document covers Reimbursement of Expenses, Reimbursement Policies, Check Requests, Invoices, Charitable Contributions, and Scholarships. It also recaps the State Bar of Michigan Section Expense Reimbursement Policies and Procedures. Discussion involved past practices of saving expenses by sharing lodging among council members/attendees. Social events for business purposes may be added to the guidelines. The full mileage, lodging, and other expenses for business purposes of the council to attend State Bar of Michigan sponsored events and meetings were distinguished from other events. Council members seeking reimbursement of expenses for participation in events not sponsored by the State Bar of Michigan should present a budget to the council for pre-approval on a case-by-case basis. The council voted, on Delaney's motion supported by Jent, to adopt the Treasurer's Guidelines. Motion unanimously passed. By attached copy the Treasurer's Guidelines of January 4, 2017 are incorporated with these Minutes.

Duddles left the meeting at 11:01 A.M.

The Treasurer's Report was accepted. It contained budgets of 2016/17 and 2015/16 for the council's comparison of actual expenses. Delaney provided a monthly breakdown of income and expenses through the State Bar of Michigan. Delaney gave the council account numbers and descriptions for recording expenses and uniform record-keeping.

Williams asked about section affiliation with other professional organizations. The council also discussed voluntary certification of paralegals. Jent reminded the council of her past investigation, report, and recommendations to the section on this issue. Assessment of costs and benefits to the section resulted in the decision not to seek affiliation at that time.



The next Council meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2017. Council members who are able to do so should plan to appear in person for the next meeting. The meeting is set to begin at 10:00 A.M. and end at 12:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee J. Jent, Secretary