

STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN
LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW SECTION

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING
February 8, 2021

A meeting of the State Bar of Michigan's Labor and Employment Law Section Council was held at 12:00 p.m. on Monday, February 8, 2021. Due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation, the meeting was conducted remotely using Zoom.

Present:

John Runyan, James Hermon, Ava Barbour, Mami Kato, Maria Dwyer, Colleen Carol, Tad Roumayah, Heidi Sharp, Mark Cousens, Marlo Johnson Roebuck, Ronda Tate Truvillion, Robin Wagner, Keith Brodie, Nedra Campbell, Shereef Akeel, Jennifer McManus

Absent: Michelle Crockett

1. **Approval of Agenda.** The Agenda (attached) was approved along with the Digest/Summary of the Annual Meeting of January 29, 2021 and the Council Meeting Minutes of December 17, 2020 (both attached).
2. **Welcome New Council Members.**

John Runyan started the meeting by welcoming the new members to the Council and asking them to introduce themselves.

- Ava Barbour - Legal Department at UAW
 - Colleen Carol -NLRB in GR, part of the Larger Region 7 Office in Detroit
 - Maria Dwyer - Managing Partner of Clark Hill Detroit office
 - Shereef Akeel - Excited to be here and grateful to John to be provided opportunity to help and learn
3. **Chair's Report.** John discussed the schedule of meetings for 2021 which will be continued by Zoom unless told otherwise. Also discussed were the committee assignments, which John sent prior to the meeting. John has not received any questions or concerns. After today, if anyone would like to request reassignment, speak up. Further, John provided updated on LawNotes and the resurrection of the E-Newsletter.

Lawnotes Discussion: John received a call from Stuart Israel, Editor of Lawnotes. John provided a history on Lawnotes and how Stuart took over from the prior editor and has been in that position for the past 20 years. Stuart will be stepping down from position but not washing his hands entirely of the publication. John spoke to Mark Cousens and Adam Forman about whether they would be willing to get into Lawnotes, shadowing Stuart for a month or so to see if they are

willing to take it on. If any other council members are interested, they are more than welcome to join Mark & Adam. Mark Cousens spoke regarding the process– there are big shoes to fill and a steep learning curve; very complicated but Stuart done it so well for so long, optimistic that they will be able to slide into process without too much difficulty.

Heidi asked if making LawNotes electronic was being considered, and Mark Cousens said it was being looked into. There was a discussion held regarding the expense of lawnotes, and how it is a substantial portion of the annual budget. While there is not currently a budget problem, a reduction in the expense is still being sought for long term savings.

E-News Letter: Tad spoke about the history of the E-Newsletter. The idea behind it is that we have Lawnotes, a substantive publication related to case law and other articles. The E-Newsletter is a quarterly news blast focused on comings/goings of the section, social events and provides a free way to inform members about upcoming events. When COVID-19 hit, stopped doing in person things and had less content to fill the newsletter so have not published it in sometime.

Considerations – do we want to start it back up? Will need recommendation of associates or young attorneys who would be interested in pulling it together. What would substance be? Do we want to provide recaps of things we have done via Zoom in the last year?

John said that if there are any other frustrated journalists out there like Mark and I, send them to Tad and they can be a part of the E-Newsletter. Finally, Jim Hermon mentioned a discussion was held last year on there being a collection of archived copies of the Lawnotes, which the council was considering storing electronically and making them accessible to other members. There was a discussion held regarding the possibility of putting the volumes online via the State Bar. Jim Hermon will reach out to Jennifer Hatter at the State Bar regarding the possibility and details on how that could be done. He will report back in March.

4. **Mid-Winter Meeting Recap.** Event was a little glitchy at the beginning, but otherwise it good event with a lot of positive feedback. LOTS of participants (300+ at beginning; averaged 220-250 throughout the event). Could use Zoom to allow remote participants in the future, possibly at a charge. Mami Kato will be MWM Chair for next year and looking at January 22, 2022, location will be discussed next meeting. Keith, Mami and Heidi will do a call/conference regarding their organization of the MWM and providing notes, spreadsheets and prior materials used to assist in planning in the future.
5. **Law Student Fellowship:** Michelle was not on the call yet, so this will be discussed at the next meeting.
6. **ICLE Labor and Employment Law Institute:** John Runyan presented an email exchange between he and Lisa Geherin regarding ICLE's request for \$3,000 from the section to again sponsor the Institute. This is \$500 less than what we had been asked to pay in the past for sponsorship. The sponsorship will also come with four tickets to the event for our council.

Moved by Jim Hermon, Seconded by Mark Cousens No further discussion, the motion carried with no opposition.

7. **Mentorship Pilot Project:** A conference was held for the first mentors and mentees. John Runyan will keep updating the council on how it is going. Jen McManus, Kathy Bogas, Shel Stark, Tim Howlett (all former chairs of section), John Runyan and more have all volunteered to be mentors. Maria Dwyer asked for more information regarding the program and who would be a mentee. Mentees must be practicing L&E for 5 years or less. Modeled after a program from Georgia. Application completed by both mentors and mentees to join the program.

John said that as soon as the E-blast which announced the program was published, he received a lot of emails, lots of them from attorneys who had been practicing on their own in L&E and were seeking mentors.

Shereef also volunteered that he is willing to be a mentor, especially on the plaintiff's side, if there was someone seeking a mentor. John Runyan said that he had someone in mind who was seeking a mentor from Jen Salvatore's office who he would set him up with.

8. **Strategic Planning:** John Runyan provided a background on the prior strategic plan which was prepared. In 2015 when John was just going off council, Dan Swanson at that time got the council involved in strategic planning. The council worked close to a year on developing a strategic plan which was implemented. Keith is going to chair a committee to review the strategic plan, process, and if it needs to be updated. New committee composed of Keith, Ava and Tad. Keith said it has been about 5 years since strategic plan was updated, will look at where have been successful, where falling short, new things to add or consider or if doing well and have met the mark. Ask everyone from the council to review in detail the strategic plan initiatives and goals set forth to achieve those initiatives. Will welcome feedback from this contingency and possibly a survey in the future to the section.

In materials forwarded with the Agenda, John also set a section regarding demographics of the Section. Have about 2100 members - John provided summary called "Who we Are".

9. **Zoominars:** Ronda asked to chair this committee, have a program teed up for her. Charlie Ammeson contacted us regarding a program that a group of arbitrators would like to put on - Preparing for your First Zoom Arbitration. Tentatively set up for May 13, 2021. Already have a program worked out. John asked Ronda's committee to come up with other ideas for Zoominars in the near future and suggested recent NLRB activity would be a good topic. Ronda will move forward with new ideas and get the May event setup.
10. **Spring/Summer Board** - John hoping to have a live/in person event this year. In the past held at The Reserve next to Big Rock Chophouse. Will still see if we can get a date in June

or July for that event. Normally have networking part outside, if impossible or unwise to do the substantive part indoors, may be possible to have just an outside networking event. Want to reserve a date with fluidity - inside or outside will depend on governors' restrictions at that time. Nedra: Not too ambitious to plan for June/July outside. Mark: contract should be subject to cancellation if pandemic has not substantially resolved by then.

11. **August Tigers Game:** John had the idea to give Section members a Tigers game free of charge, as a way to repay them for the lack of programming during 2020, since all members paid a year of dues but got less programming than in years past.
12. **Fall/Outstate Event:** There was no event held this past fall with the cancellation of the State Bar Annual meeting. Would like to come up with an idea for a fall event that would traditionally take place somewhere out state, to provide to members who are located out state.

Keith is going to chair the Fall/Outstate Event Committee and will work on an event, possibly to be held at Bells Brewing in Kalamazoo. Keith noted that one of the things lost during pandemic is collegiality and getting together. Keith started some discussions with Bells. They indicated would be willing to work with us on such an event. It was brought up that there were past discussions on using buses to get members to an event, and that will be explored again.

13. **Holiday Party:** Marlo will lead the committee. Previously held at Birmingham Country Club. Can be held at any other location, but John suggested that after long pandemic, section members will likely want a return to normalcy. A date at the BCC has already been reserved - December 9, 2021. Tad will fill Marlo in on past planning details. Everyone hopes to be able to hold event in person by December!

14. **Adjournment.** Moved to adjourn by Mark Cousens, Seconded by John Runyan. Meeting was adjourned at 1:07 pm

Respectfully Submitted,



Heidi T. Sharp, Secretary

State Bar of Michigan Labor & Employment Law Section