

**MINUTES – FAMILY LAW SECTION  
COUNCIL MEETING**

**Date: March 3, 2018**

**Place: Double Tree Hotel, Novi**

**I. Administrative matters**

**A. Call to Order and Welcome**

The council was called to order by Kent Weichmann.

The following (19) council members were present: Sean Blume, Elizabeth Bransdorfer, Jim Chryssikos, Matt Catchick, Mike Golematis Christopher Harrington, Sahera Housey, Jennifer Johnsen, Shelley Kester, Mathew Kobliska, Peter Kulas-Dominguez, Vanessa Moss-Wilson, Anthea Papista, Steven Reinheimer, Kristen Robinson, Amy Spilman, Robert Treat, Kent Weichmann, and Hon. Tina Yost-Johnson.

Council members absent: Shon Cook, Randy Velzen.

Ex-Officio and former council members: Neil Colman, Ron Foon, Colleen Markou, Traci Rink, Elizabeth Sadowski, and Ross Stancati.

Guests: Steve Heisler, Dion Roddy, Stephanie Johnson, and Chris Piatkowski, and Emily Calabrese.

**B. Introductions.**

**C. Chair Report:**

1. Kent discussed the State Bar program called the “Modest Means” program. This program is designed to make legal representation more available to people who are disqualified from Legal Aid programs because they make *too much* money (“lower middle class”), but whom don’t have much in the way of disposable income or other economic resources to retain counsel. This program is in the very early stages of planning and discussion. Steve Reinheimer, Peter Kulas-Dominguez, Colleen Markou, and Jennifer Johnsen volunteered to get involved with this program.

**D. Approval of Minutes**

Chris Harrington made a motion to approve the January 20, 2018 minutes. The motion was seconded by Liz Bransdorfer, and was passed.

#### **E. Treasurer's Report/Finance Committee**

A motion was made to approve the Treasurer's report. There was a comment that the Journal might have a double entry, and if so, this will be cleared up. A report of dues-paying members in the Section was also submitted. Sahera Housey seconded the motion to approve the report and Council voted in favor of the motion.

#### **F. Corresponding Secretary**

No report, but keep submitting any ideas for "Hot Topics" in Family Law to Sahera Housey so she can have them published in the Michigan Bar Journal.

### **II. Key Committee Reports**

#### **A. Amicus – no report**

#### **B. Court Rules –**

1. **ADM File No. 2016-49.** This proposal would re-define "prospective client" by creating a new MRCP 1.18 "Duties to Prospective Client." This rule will help clarify the relationship between an attorney and a person who has not yet retained the attorney. This rule will also clarify the standards for an attorney being disqualified from representing a client if they have only met with the person as a prospective client, including issues "intentional disqualification" when a prospective client is meeting with a number of lawyers for the sole purpose of disqualification. The Committee recommended this proposal be supported. Chris Harrington made a motion that the Council support this rule proposal, with a couple minor modifications. Council voted 17-2 to support the motion.

#### **C. Legislation –**

1. No action items.

#### **D. Shared Parenting Bill**

1. The Committee is making great progress and will possibly have a bill ready for Council review at the next meeting.

### **III. Standing Committee Reports**

#### **A. Adoption**

There will be a new SCAO form for Step-Parent Adoption cases.

#### **B. Alternative Dispute Resolution**

No oral report; refer to the written report to see what they have been up to.

#### **C. Alternative Family**

No Report.

#### **D. Annual Meeting**

September 27, 2018 in Grand Rapids. Reserve your rooms now because this is Art Prize weekend.

#### **E. CLE/ICLE**

No report.

#### **F. Collaborative Law**

The Committee is preparing a request for an ethics opinion regarding Collaborative practice, which will focus on clarifying what services a lawyer can provide, and when to avoid conflicts of “dual representation” and appearing for one of the parties if a litigation track is later filed. Once the Committee has a draft request prepared, it will provide to Council for a vote.

#### **G. Domestic Violence**

Women’s Lawyers Section is discussing a program for PPO training and/or seminars.

There will be a special issue in the Journal on DV, and any journal ideas are welcome.

The Committee is working on updating a statewide recommendation for “Batterer’s Intervention Standards.” It is believed that a number of jurisdictions are not making this a priority in screening and resolving Domestic Relations cases.

#### **H. Family Court Forum**

It will be 6/8/2018 at Travis Pointe Country Club. Topic will be: “Children Who Resist Parenting”

**I. Family Law Journal**

No report.

**J. Family Law Journal Advertising**

A couple new advertisers have been added.

**K. Family Support**

The new tax reform laws continue to be implemented into the support calculators.

**L. Membership**

There is a Law Student Association Fair at the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law on 3/6/2018 at 1:00pm. The Membership Committee will be there to represent the Section. Stop by and say hello and recruit some law students if you are in the area.

Young Lawyers Summit is scheduled for 6/15 – 6/17; seminar will be at the Inn at Bay Harbor in Bay Harbor, MI. Motion was made for Sponsorship at this event, which will cost \$250; motion passed.

Some additional FLS pins have been sold.

**M. Mid-Winter/Mid-Summer Seminars**

Mid-Winter: Everything went very well. Based on sponsorships and a couple other items, there will be \$1,500 coming back to the Section in seminar revenue. The Committee Chair moved for reimbursement of funds that were necessary to “close out” the bill with the resort; certain expenses for the resort had not been included on the initial deposit and needed to be paid before departure. After a detailed discussion on the necessity of the expenses and verification of the exact dollar amount of expenses, the motion passed unanimously.

Mid-Summer: will be 7/19-7/22 at Boyne Mountain. Sponsors and speaker volunteers are being lined up. Sandy Glazier, James Harrington, and Shon Cook have committed to speaking.

**N. Political Action Committee**

Matt Catchick again produced the “Contribution Plan” for PAC in the coming year. A chip card reader is on the way.

**O. QDRO/Taxation**

N/R

**P. Technology/Social Media**

Roster for Council members has been updated on the SBM website.

No additional report on the listserv transition.

Please submit photos of Family Law events to this Committee so Facebook page can be updated.

**IV. Ad Hoc Committees**

**A. SCAO Forms Committee**

Please submit any comments for suggested changes.

**B. Twenty Year Review**

No Report

**C. Public Relations Committee**

No Report

**D. Judicial Response Committee**

No Report

**E. Self-Represented Litigants**

No Report

**V. Announcements/NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**VI. Future Meetings**

2017-18 Council Meeting schedule for remainder of the year:

April 7, 2018– University Club, Lansing at 9:30 am.

May 5, 2018 – University Club, Lansing at 9:30 am.

June 2, 2018 – University Club, Lansing at 9:30 am.

**VII. Adjournment at 11:10am**

Respectfully submitted – Christopher Harrington