

**WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**March 25, 2017**  
**Columbia Law School**  
**New York, NY**

A quorum being present, the Board of Directors meeting was called to order at approximately 1:04pm.

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Greta Kolcon, seconded by Amy Saltzman to approve the Board of Directors meeting minutes of January 28, 2017. The motion passed.

**President's Report**

President Flug reported on the event the evening before at Sullivan & Cromwell where the Governor's Counsel's office came and spoke to WBASNY about different legislation that has been passed and that is currently being worked on that impacts women. President Flug reported on convention and how the keynote speaker will talk about 100 years of suffrage. President Flug also reported that 13 out of the 19 chapters participated in Read Across America and that more JALBCA events than ever have been happening.

President Flug also reported on Lobby Day which is being held on May 9<sup>th</sup> with a training call on April 19<sup>th</sup>. Sandra Rivera will reach out to the legislative leaders but each person attending should schedule a meeting with their own representative. Depending upon attendance, there may be a dinner organized for the night before.

**Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Lourdes Ventura reported that there is a healthy bank balance. She reminded the Chapters that they should be focused on recruiting members and trying to raise money so WBASNY can keep doing all the things that we are doing. She also reminded the Chapters that year-end reports are due by June 1 and she asked the presidents to remind all their chapter treasurers so that we do not need to file an extension as we had to last year.

**WBASNY Nominations Committee**

President Flug announced the results of the WBASNY 2017-2018 slate and congratulated those slated for Officer positions.

**Convention**

Dawn Reid-Green and Susan Yellen spoke about Convention this year in Connecticut. They advised that there would be a dinner and paint and sip party on Thursday night, a golf outing on Friday, a first-time attendee reception on Saturday, a Mystic harbor historic tour and an Essex train and riverboat excursion on Saturday and a healthy walk on Sunday.

**Environmental Committee**

Susan Brock and Carol Malz reported that NYSREDA and NYDEC would like to reach 100% renewable energy state-wide and they are conducting a study regarding how to do this. WBASNY has contacted them to see what they need and how we can help; prior to this study going out, during the study being completed, and after it has concluded.

## **Hon. Betty Weinberg Ellerin Mentoring Award Dinner**

Co-chairs Leyla Kiosse, Linda Johnson, and Sean Morton advised as to the planning for the dinner and encouraged everyone to attend.

## **Elder Law/Trust and Estates Committee**

Donna Furey, Lonya Gilbert, and Kim Smith described what a Part 36 representation is. They also described that attorneys are prohibited from earning more than \$75,000 in a year. A discussion ensued as to that cap and requesting that the cap be increased. A motion was made by Kathleen Wright, seconded by Deborah Rosenthal for WBASNY to reach out to OCA requesting an increase in that \$75,000 cap for Part 36 appointments. The motion passed with the usual abstentions.

## **Habitat for Humanity**

Kelly Pressler and Maureen Crush spoke about the Habitat for Humanity event. Dinner will take place on March 31 at Billy Joe's in Newburgh, NY and the event will take place on April 1 in Newburgh, NY.

## **Legislation**

### **Domestic Violence**

The Committee introduced A2625 formally A8080, the teen dating violence education program bill. This bill proposes to amend education law to include teen dating violence and the definition of bullying and harassment. The committee has given its unanimous support to this bill. A motion was made by Simone Freeman, seconded by Deborah Rosenthal to support the bill. The motion passed with the usual abstentions.

The Committee next introduced the trafficking survivors relief act, which is a federal bill. It would increase protection and resources to victims of human trafficking and allow them to move to vacate their convictions and expunge non-violent crimes that occurred as a direct result of the trafficking including prostitution. President Flug reminded everyone that WBASNY had previously sent a letter to senators about not defunding the Violence Against Women Act and requesting an increase. A motion was made by Deborah Rosenthal, seconded by Ann LaBarbera to support the Trafficking Survivors Relief Act. The motion passed with the usual abstentions.

The Committee introduced a third bill, also a federal bill, requiring each United States attorney's office and each district to hold at least one public event every year regarding pro bono services for such human trafficking victims. A motion was made by Deborah Rosenthal, seconded by Shari Gordon to support this bill. The motion passed with the usual abstentions.

### **Environmental Law**

Susan Brock requested that WBASNY draft a position statement regarding the addition of a New York State tax credit for residential community solar system. Right now if you own a home and place solar panels on your property, you can receive an income tax credit for up to \$5,000. If you rent or if your property is not suited for such solar panels, you can now buy those panels or enter into a long term lease for panels on a community plot of solar farm and it would allow you to receive up to the same \$5,000 tax credit. A motion was made by Deborah Rosenthal, seconded Robin Abramowitz to support this position statement. The motion passed with the usual abstentions.

Susan Brock also requested that WBASNY support an up to \$5,000 income tax credit for residences that contain geothermal systems. A motion was made by Deborah Rosenthal, seconded by Rebecca Kennedy to support this position statement. The motion passed with the usual abstentions.

## **Access to Justice**

Patricia Hennessey presented regarding the Department of Financial Services new regulations that are being issued. It has been proposed that \$50.00 will be added to the attorney registration fee in order to provide legal services to indigent persons. NYSBA has opposed this fee and wants WBASNY to join them in opposing the fee. A discussion ensued as to the breakdown of attorney registration fees and the best possible methods by which WBASNY can oppose such a regulation. A motion was made by Deborah Scalise, seconded by Mindy Zlotogura to oppose the fee with NYSBA. The motion passed with one opposition and the usual abstentions. Deborah Scalise, Beth Friesan and Jocelyn Jacobson will work together to draft a letter that must go out this week.

The Legislation Committee co-chairs, Kelly Dam and Christine Weinberg, reminded everyone to participate in Lobby Day and advised that they would like two people from each Chapter to participate so that we have a voice during the day.

The legislation committee then spoke about the NYC eviction bill. There was a discussion that ensued regarding proof of funds, where the funding would be coming from, estimations on the millions on homeless sheltering. A motion was made by Deborah Rosenthal, seconded by Shari Gordon to support funding for the eviction bill. The motion passed with the usual abstentions. The Access To Justice Issues Committee will write the letter.

## **Health Law and Reproductive Rights**

The Committee reported that the Contraception Care Act seems good on its face but it only requires each insurance provider to offer one contraception out of the eighteen possible categories. In addition, it purports to cover contraception for twelve months but it requires every person to first get a three month prescription and then go to the same doctor to get a twelve month prescription after that. These proposals are problematic for women. A motion was made by Kathleen McNally, seconded by Elizabeth Bryson to support the act but write in opposition to these problematic portions. The motion passed with the usual abstentions.

Patricia Hennessy also spoke about new regulatory attempts to broaden the definition of religious exemptions in providing birth control to employees. There are proposed rules with the Department of Financial Services that broaden the exemption beyond our governing Court of Appeals decision. A motion was made by Elizabeth Bryson, seconded by Deborah Rosenthal to write a letter with our support of the regulation with opposition for the broadening. The motion passed with the usual abstentions.

President Flug thanked Kelly Dam, Christine Weinberg, Greta Kolcon, and Sandra Rivera for all of their hard work on the legislation committee this year.

## **WBASNY/NYSBA Domestic Violence Initiative**

Domestic violence committee co-chairs Susan Pollet and Amanda Norejko reported on the initiative. They have been considering three bills for the joint initiative. One is regarding the simplification of notification of rights to victims of domestic violence in family and criminal court. The second is the nuisance call bill where domestic violence victims can call for help without fear of losing housing. The third was regarding orders for spousal support in family court, family offense proceedings and the date of the calculation for spousal maintenance cap. Position statements have been sent and things are going really well. They are hoping to focus on those three bills at lobby day. A discussion ensued about further actions that are planned including a pro bono model based off the Adirondack Women's Bar Pro bono Clinic and a CLE model from Onondaga County.

### **International Women's Right Committee**

Fay Parris gave an update as to the events that have been held since the last Board Meeting including the committee's activities at the United Nations during the Commission on the Status of Women. WBASNY Co-sponsored a program with Cornell Law School examining surrogacy internationally.

### **New/Old Business**

Deborah Rosenthal and Elizabeth Bryson proposed to nominate the team of attorneys who participated in the Matter of Brook S.B. case for an award with the New York Law Journal. A motion was made by Ann LaBarbera, seconded by Dawn Reid-Green to support the nomination. The motion passed with the usual abstentions.

The Finger Lakes is holding a wine CLE on May 6th.

Patricia Hennessey reported that the President is making attempts to defund the Legal Service Corporation. A motion was made by Patricia Hennessey, seconded by Shari Gordon for WBASNY to write a letter opposing the defunding of the Legal Services Corporation. The motion passed with one opposition and the usual abstentions.

The New York Women's Bar is putting on an event for women running for office.

### **Motion to Adjourn**

A motion was made by Sherry Sugarman, seconded by Kelly Damm to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly A. Pressler, Recording Secretary