

WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
Board of Directors Virtual Meeting
April 18, 2020

A quorum being present, the Board of Directors Meeting was called to Order at approximately 12:04 pm.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Deborah Rosenthal, seconded by Shari Gordon to approve by acclimation the minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting from January 25, 2020. The motion passed.

President's Report

President Hay emphasized that during these uncertain and stressful times, it is important to continue WBASNY sisterhood and to check in on friends. She noted that the recognition of WBASNY Award recipients have been postponed until 2020-2021. She noted that Vice President Deborah Rosenthal is coordinating a group of people to make suggestions to Chief Administrative Judge Lawrence Marks regarding court improvement and simplification and instructed members to send suggestions to Vice President Rosenthal. President Hay advised members to review WBASNY's most recent newsletter, which contains a lot of great information, particularly regarding Covid-19 resources.

Treasurers' Report

Vice President Dawn Reid-Green reported that WBASNY has a total income of \$307,697.56; however, approximately \$20,000 of that is for the Supreme Court admission and will be returned if that event is cancelled. She announced that the Officers approved reimbursing chapters for the unused portion of board assessments. President Hay noted that there is income for Convention, and Headquarters will be contacting sponsors to see if they would be willing to donate the funds even with the Convention cancelled.

Doris S. Hoffman Medal

President Hay presented Marjorie Karowe, a founding mother of WBASNY and the Capital District Women's Bar Association, with the Doris S. Hoffman Medal. Ms. Karowe was one of only 15 women in her law school class of 1974. President Hay gratefully applauded Ms. Karowe's years of service and generosity to WBASNY including her leading the recent Nominations Task Force. Ms. Karowe thanked WBASNY for her award and stated, "in 90 years of living, I have to say: aim for the moon, and even if you miss, you'll land among the stars."

Stand Against Hate

President-Elect Joy Thompson presented a request by the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) to join it in making a "Stand Against Hate," in response to anti-Asian racism linked to the coronavirus pandemic. NAPABA states: "This disease does not discriminate. Discrimination distracts from the problem before us, and only perpetuates unfounded stereotypes." A motion was made by Joy Thompson, seconded by Amy Baldwin Littman, to have WBASNY sign on to NAPABA's statement. Vice President Rosenthal made a

friendly amendment to approve the motion by acclamation. President-Elect Thompson and Past WBASNY Past President Littman agreed to the amendment. The motion passed with two abstentions.

Immigration Committee

Committee Co-Chair Jennifer Echevarria presented a position statement to support an independent immigration court. She noted this position is supported by the American Immigration Lawyers Association and National Women's Judges. Legislation Committee Co-Chair Marea Wachsman said that the Chair of WBASNY's Committee of Women's Judges stated she was confident all members would be in favor of anything that promises justice, impartiality, and judicial independence. Co-Chair Wachsman also stated that the Legislation Committee supported this position unanimously. A motion was made by Tina Hartwell, seconded by Danielle Bernard to approve the position statement. Discussion ensued. The motion passed, with 11 abstentions.

Legislation Committee

Legislative consultant Sandra Rivera and Co-Chair Marea Wachsman noted that while the legislative session is drastically shortened, legislators are working remotely and WBASNY's legislative consultants continue to lobby for WBASNY's priorities.

International Women's Rights Committee

Committee Co-Chair Fay Parris stated that the Committee is looking to convert all WBASNY events for the Commission on the Status of Women to virtual ones as well as to host virtual conferences with WBASNY's international sister bar associations.

One Voice

President Hay discussed WBASNY's One Voice policy; specifically, that WBASNY as a whole speaks on statewide, national, and international matters, and chapters can speak on their own on local issues. She noted that WBASNY Committees cannot represent to others outside WBASNY that they represent WBASNY's voice (unless authorized) nor write external communications on WBASNY or committee letterhead. Chapters can submit nominees to awards not listed as WBASNY or non-WBASNY awards on the website.

Covid-19 Resources

Recording Secretary Dawn Lott outlined a number of resources for chapters and members during New York on Pause and the COVID-19 pandemic.

New Business

Jennifer Brown raised concerns that many law firms were not able to receive funds from the Federal Payroll Protection Program. Discussion ensued. Helene Blank, Angela Giannini, and Brittnay McMahon will work to develop a resource to assist members in applying for future PPP funds. Alicia Lendon noted that the New York Attorney General's Office has great resources about avoiding scams during this time at <https://ag.ny.gov/coronavirus#smallbus>.

Deborah Scalise recommended that WBASNY consider creating a small or solo firm committee; Corresponding Secretary Heather Neu suggested reaching out to chapters with such committees for guidance and potential chairs.

Helene Blank stated that the federal government has narrowed the definition of sexual assault to mean physical assault only. Legislation Committee Co-Chair Marea Wachsman stated that opposition to that would be consistent with WBASNY's past positions in favor of the Violence Against Women Act. Domestic Violence Committee Co-Chair Amanda Norejko stated that the Committee will work to draft a statement opposing the changed definition.

A motion to adjourn was made by Hon. Joanne Quinones, seconded by Shari Sugarman. The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Heather Neu
Recording Secretary