

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
GREATER LOS ANGELES CHAPTER
ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL ADMINISTRATORS
(FEBRUARY 1, 2006)**

LOCATION: BEVERLY HILLS COUNTRY CLUB

IN ATTENDANCE: Norma Ayala, Martha Bernard, Teresa Cherman, Luci Hamilton, Mary Holland, Steven Jones, Janet Krause CLM, Mary McDonnell, Kelly McGehee, G Wayne Mitchell, Debbie Mogren, Iona Reddick, Brian Robbins CLM, Tanya Russell, Robert Santos, Susan Seales, Janet Shaw CLM, Michael Steiner CLM, Jim Van Dusen CLM, Maureen Varnes CLM, Terri Wind.

ABSENT: Viviane Abraham, Stephen Green, Patsy Hinojosa, Michelle Liffman PHR, Rosela Marin, Michael Morales, Kim Robinson, Bella Serrano, Kelly Shultz, Iris Stein, Wendy Sweet CLM, Robin Thomas-Miles, Angela Ungurean.

AGENDA TOPICS:

I. Approval of Minutes.

There were no minutes presented for approval. Notes from the meetings from November 2, 2005 and December 7, 2005 were taken by Kelly Shultz. Notes from the meeting of January 5, 2006 were taken by Mary McDonnell.

II. President's Report. (Robbins).

A. Nominating Committee. An overview of the status of the Nominating Committee's efforts, along with a draft slate of Board Nominees, marked "Draft" and "Confidential" was provided and emphasis was placed on the confidentiality of this process, especially since it takes into consideration a number of criteria, including evaluation of positions, skills, personalities, etc. A couple of positions were still to be filled but the vast majority of positions were filled.

The Bylaws call for an annual meeting in February. At the annual meeting a slate can be presented and voted upon or the voting can be done by a mailed ballot. During the past two years the Board has distributed a mailing for voting purposes, and we should anticipate another mailing this year.

Although the recent online survey actually had a slight majority wanting this process to be "on line," it was proposed that we consider it for next year, not this year. For now, this process will continue as a mailing -- a vehicle by which members are able to provide any comments on a confidential basis.

Michael Steiner asked if there was some way we could do a "test run," to get Board prepared for on line voting for future years. **Luci Hamilton** commented that timing is an issue and that there would not be enough time to run a "test run" on line voting process.

In concluding discussion on nominees for new Board, Brian added that in September 2005 at the Board Retreat the Board agreed to create a new position, Community Relations Spot. **Luci Hamilton** has agreed to fill this position for 2006-2007.

B. Cross Over with new Board. Once the Board is confirmed, Brian will coordinate with Wendy (incoming President) to schedule a meeting between the new Board and old Board; date to be determined.

C. Daily Journal. The status of the ad for recruitment was provided by **Martha Bernard** who advised that Tracy Dragoos was working with us and the Daily Journal to finalize the ad and that we were looking to "go to print" in mid-February 2006 for a limited run of 4 placements.

D. Visit by ALA President, David Constantine. An event to meet David Constantine is set for February 28, 2006 at Ciudad, downtown, at 5th and Figueroa. Hors d'oeuvres and drinks will be provided. Invitation will go out tomorrow to present and future Board members and past Presidents. This is a great opportunity for the President of national to make announcements and meet us. We estimate attendees at about 50. A big "thank you" to **Susan Seales** for organizing this event.

E. Home Aid – Heart of the Year Award. We, as the Greater Los Angeles Chapter, are one of the three nominees of the Heart of the Year Award to be presented at the Sherman Oaks Country Club on March 4, 2006. This is a result of our CCW efforts. **Wendy Sweet and Brian Robbins** will attend.

F. Magazine – Non Profit Postage Rate is being explored by Elaine Van Rensburg. The magazine is currently mailed at first class normal rates; if we can save some money in getting discounted rates as a non profit organization, we should do so. We believe there will be some savings there.

G. Inland Empire Section. **Brian Robbins** attended a meeting about a week ago at Best Best & Krieger in Ontario. Present were a couple of non ALA members as well as independents. There is clearly is a lot of education that we should continue to offer; we need to continue letting people know about the Chapter, both at the national and local levels. As a result of that meeting we will be getting at least two new members to GLA. There is lots of momentum there. We have a base out there which we can build upon.

H. Martha Llano – The unfortunate passing of the President Elect for National was the next topic. A suggestion was made to make contribution in Martha's memory.

Janet Krause offered FALA as an appropriate resource for contribution. **Jim Van Dusen** commented on his memory of Martha Llano and what a great and vibrant individual she was. **Norma Ayala** commented that she had been working with her during the past two three years and that she was an "awesome" lady.

Susan Seales suggested individual donations from each of the members and recommended an email blast communication to all members stating that our National President Elect has passed away and that this is something the family has asked for; our Chapter can donate at least \$500.

Luci Hamilton concurred and added that many past presidents had a continuing relationship with Martha Llano. Luci was very supportive of our being involved in making a contribution.

Luci Hamilton suggested a contribution of \$500 to FALA in memory of Martha Llano may be in order.

Susan Seales seconded the motion for a \$500 donation to FALA plus a scholarship to Regional which will be in Palm Springs plus an email blast to remind the members that this is an opportunity for a non-profit donation.

Mike Steiner asked **Steven Jones** if there was time to make it in the Newsletter and Steven responded that there was time and that he would touch base with Brian to gather logistics.

President's Report concluded.

III. Web Master's Report (Mogren). Debbie Mogren reported that there were no significant projects pending. Membership had an issue this month as all members were set to expire 1-31-06 and now members were being locked out of the members only section of the website. Membership had to go in one at a time to change those dates. With a global programming charge we can have a permanent tool where we can do it in the future; gives us interface so that we can next year use that tool to change the dates. Debbie will investigate.

IV. Historian's Report (Van Dusen). **Jim Van Dusen** reported that the Belisle Directory is with the printers; Merrill should do it within a week. We're waiting for it to get out in the mail. Total of 92 firms participated (approximately same as prior years). Just about wrapped up.

Nothing to report on Bylaws.

Beverly Hills Chapter has filed proper forms with the State Franchise Tax Board. As soon as they respond, we're done. Beverly Hills received a \$1,100 tax refund.

V. Education

A. Seminars (Russell, Cherman, Krause). The January 28, 2006 Labor Law Seminar was a great success. Many in the room acknowledged what a great job our Seminar chairs did and how impressed we were with this Labor Law Seminar. The speakers were excellent; location was perfect; just the right amount of room for the audience; sound was perfect; ran on time, etc. etc. Congratulations to organizers, Tanya Russell, Teresa Cherman and Janet Krause on a great success. All significant complaints raised by attendees in 2005 were addressed in 2006.

Janet Krause reported that there were 41 vendors; actually 38 paid vendors. We did hire the audio visual guys who did a wonderful job; they were there two hours ahead of schedule to get everything set up.

Maureen Varnes added that the evaluations were consistently 6.5 (out of possible 7)-- absolutely phenomenal.

Ilona Reddick added that there may have been a couple of "1's" but **Jim Van Dusen** stated that these may have been the couple of people that reversed the grading.

The general consensus among the Board was that this was one of the best Labor Law Seminars ever – outstanding.

Mike Steiner who sat in the back commented that the audio visual guys needed to be asked to be quiet. He added whether or not we want to ask vendors to stay until the end of the seminar and give them another opportunity (an extra half an hour or so) to display their products and answer questions.

Susan Seales added that she heard some complaints about not finding location and so some people had trouble getting there right at 9AM. An extra half an hour at the end would give them an opportunity to meet with the vendors. Whether or not the vendors would stay, that's the question. A lot of people want to stay because they don't want to stand in line and wait for their cars – another opportunity to meet with vendors.

Janet Krause added that the hotel handled everything very well – the food was excellent and everything was replenished before the next break.

Someone added that we should add water as a refreshment, especially for the vendors. **Teresa Cherman** said that that was an excellent idea – to remember bottled water.

One vendor, Pitney Bowes, couldn't make it.

Tanya Russell added that if vendors are granted an opportunity to be more social, they'll be there. Some, however, are employees who, as soon as they are done, want to get out.

Susan Seales recommended the same location for next year.

Teresa Cherman acknowledged Silver & Freedman and **Ilona Reddick** who did an outstanding job and added that we did not pay for the speakers nor for the handouts (\$6,000).

It was recommended that Silver & Freedman be considered for next year again.

Ilona Reddick thanked the Board for allowing Silver & Freedman to be speakers and said that they would like to be called back.

Teresa Cherman added that because our accounting system shows ALA as the mailing address, the checks went to Rosela, Susan, Kelly and Theresa. She asked if we can send

an email out to check your accounting systems to make sure you are sending your checks to the proper addressee.

Brian Robbins: Fantastic; terrific success; well done!

B. Programs (Holland). **Mary Holland** reported that in March 2006, Matura Farrington is sponsoring a speaker, Sam Alibrando. Topic: Communications, people from different cultures; how one as an administrator can identify and make a better culture.

Other topics/speakers under consideration:

April - Marta Vago- Career Paths – Mind Your Own Business. Need to follow up with her to get a description of topic.

May – Citibank - education topics such as identify theft and finance. Told them that they couldn't come and sell any of their products. They oftentimes speak to many organizations.

Brian Robbins added that Citibank does have one of the better financial surveys as one of their marketing tools. The risk is that it could become a sales talk and that we need to be careful that it does not go that way.

Mary Holland added that for June we're looking at possibly doing something on business recovery – disaster recovery. With Katrina, the news alert about another possible terrorist strike, this may be a good idea to refresh on this topic.

C. CLM Report (Seales/Bernard). Both **Susan Seales** and **Martha Bernard** reported that they have received zero replies to participate in a study group. The interest has truly dissipated. Reasons may include timing; interest may be cyclical. **Susan Seales** commented that she thinks that we haven't sold what the CLM designation can do.

Susan Seales recommended that a full page testimonial in our magazines, responding to the question "why you felt it was worthwhile – what's it done for you?".

Mike Steiner CLM added that it helps you stand apart – just in initial introductions. He has met a number of people who were influential in helping people who were looking for jobs, and he would be more than happy to write a testimonial and added that the designation is "most obvious when a new job is on the table, but just in your peer group, just in your own self ego, when you are asked what you do.-- put it on your cards, put it on your email!"

Susan Seales agreed and that when highlighting begs the question and you are asked what it means.

Maureen Varnes CLM added the financial benefits of CLM designation, including discounted insurance rates.

Susan Seales added that those are exactly the types of comments that need to be put in our newsletter, to get the interest of those who are new. This is where Susan sees we may be waning.

Another recommendation was made that we could offer some scholarship for those people who take the test. Is our Chapter willing to pay for someone to take the test?

Mary McDonnell offered that we should promote that as something toward our career path.

Susan Seales added that in the future only those who have that designation will get the job over those who don't .

Mike Steiner added that he sees the lack of interest as part of a cycle, currently at the bottom of its cycle.

Susan Seales added that vendors want to continue to do the study groups – Narver for example.

Jim Van Dusen CLM added that we are an aging profession; we have to consider those who may have five years to go and ask themselves whether they want to put in the effort . Still, even if we have only one person interested, that's fine, we should go for it , and Jim cheered us on to not give up, keep plugging along; don't let it go.

Deb Mogren suggested that we may want to look at a webinar CLM program and **Susan Seales** reminded us that only a certain number of webinar classes count toward certification.

Mike Steiner added that they are credited as long as they are interactive and **Susan Seales** reminded us that there is a limit (five hours) to the number of hours webinar hours that can be applied toward certification as five (5).

Brian Robbins echoed Jim's comments – it's going to be cyclical but we need to keep trying.

D. Sections

1. IT (Santos). **Bob Santos** reported that there was no meeting in February. Bob added that the topic for March is "Alternatives to Microsoft Office – Sun/Correll". New capabilities to work directly with Word documents.

2. Finance (Mitchell) **Wayne Mitchell** informed the Board that he is in the process of trying to schedule a speaker to cover malpractice insurance for last month's meeting which was rescheduled to February 28 at Westin Benshoof – Topic: Malpractice insurance as it relates to law firm mergers and acquisitions.

3. **HR(Robinson/McGehee).** **Kim Robinson** reported that their Labor Law 2006 Update meeting at the heels of the Labor Law Seminar was pretty well received. Everyone liked having a labor law attorney there so that they could ask questions. The next scheduled meeting is on March 28, 2006.

4. **San Fernando Valley (Eliya).** No update.

5. **Corp.Gov. (Stein/Serrano).** **Brian Robbins** advised that they are meeting tomorrow. **Jim Van Dusen** stated that the last he had heard, the meeting was cancelled.

6. **Small Firm (McDonnell).** Mary McDonnell reported that the next meeting is scheduled for February 23, 2006 on the Westside at Shapiro & Dupont LLP. We will not be meeting in March.

7. **Multi-Office (Seales).** Meeting scheduled for the same day, February 23, 2006 and it is set to be a roundtable discussion.

8. **Ventura/Santa Barbara (Hilton).** **Brian Robbins** advised that a mixer is scheduled for next Thursday at a restaurant in Santa Barbara. 14 people on the email.

VI. Treasurer's Report (Shaw). **Janet Shaw** referred us to our handouts. Highlighted was the fact that there are areas where we brought in extra profits, primarily from the Labor Law seminar, Holiday Luncheon, and the Golf Tournament (which brought in more than expected). There are areas where we're down a little bit or off somewhat but, overall, we're not doing too badly. The year to date loss is \$17K lower than we had anticipated, a good thing. As of January 2006, we have a balance of ~\$41,700 in cash.

Brian Robbins commented that he didn't think we have a lot of big ticket items coming in and so we are going to end up the fiscal year (ending March 31) pretty well. Compliments to **Janet Shaw** on very good budgeting.

January 2006 financial statements accepted and approved.

Janet Shaw added that she will working on the tax report this month.

Brian Robbins asked if we are thinking about contacting the same accounting firm we have been using.

Jim Van Dusen responded that the contact is one he has been using, Charlie Gross of Williams & Ribb.

Brian Robbins inquired as to whether we could outsource some functions. With some input from Janet and some others, Brian sent an RFP to a few individuals. Has received one response that was way too high. Received one yesterday that seems plausible, but still need to look at it a little more. Need to look at dividing line of what we need to control and what we need not to. Looking into it, may make sense, may not. A problem he sees is that it will cost \$50/hour, or more, to do it.

VII. Membership. (Marin/Varnes). **Maureen Varnes** reported that she will be sending out packages -- 177 renewals processed, another 170 that need reminders. We're now going to have four people on the membership team -- that will help to break it down to people who can work on retention, new members, etc.

Maureen Varnes added that she is aware that Cindy Fortune is remodeling their office and asked if there is a bulletin board on website where people can post office furniture.

Debbie Mogren added that a problem to posting such items would be "who would monitor?"

Iлона Reddick suggested that we make it part of the Job Bank; instead of general management, office equipment/furniture.

Debbie Mogren added that we already have a Classified section and that anyone can post anything they want on it although we have not monitored it.

Maureen Varnes asked if one can get an automatic notification each time something new is posted?

Debbie Mogren replied that it can be done, for a price, just as any program modification is a charge.

VIII. Job Referral Services Report (Reddick). **Iлона Reddick** reported that as of January 31, 2006 we had 23 positions, one of which was filled.. It's starting to get busy on the website; just on Thursday or Friday last week, she received five new positions, four posted today.

IX. Hospitality (Ungurean). **Brian Robbins** advised that Angela was not able to be here today and that the next meeting is set for February 14, 2006.

X. Vice President's Report (Steiner). **Mike Steiner** added that he did not have much to report, except for a "humongous" thank you to **Robert Santos** on his nomination as Vice President for the upcoming Board.

Additionally, the two awards to the chapter for community service and volunteers have been submitted -- both of them went out.

On a personal note, **Mike Steiner** stated that this will be his last Board meeting and that it has been a great time -- that it's really been a pleasure and that he looks forward to keeping in touch. Mike added that he would not have been considered for this job without this volunteer group and then he spoke a little bit about the firm in Hawaii.

Luci Hamilton acknowledged **Mike Steiner's** excellent work on the Golf Tournament -- "this involved a lot of hard work, your heart and soul went into it and we really appreciated your success -- this was an idea that became a reality when you came into the picture. Congratulations."

Mike Steiner appreciated Luci's remarks and advised us that October 23, 2006 is set for the next event – Golf course has it slated; perhaps Mike Palmer could be approached to coordinate?

Brian Robbins added that Mike Palmer would probably be interested and added that we need to find a way to get more members to play.

XI. Vendor Liaison Report (Ayala, Liffman, Russell). **Norma Ayala** referred us to the handout which reflected the following:

We are looking good for the next term; a lot of vendors are returning; your new vendor wants to sponsor everything; we're working hard to get a new vendor for next event.

Robert Half has already paid for holiday 2006.

Overnite Express is sponsoring February Lunch; Matura Farrington is sponsoring March luncheon. USI Insurance (new vendor) sponsoring April luncheon. May and June spots should be filled next month and the new vendor team will be set in August.

We're working on the member/vendor mixer – perhaps downtown; however, is Board opposed to having it on the West side again?

Brian Robbins suggested that we keep it downtown and a recommendation was made to check on the following venues: Ciudad, Daily Grill.

Norma Ayala added that we spent \$2,500 at last year's mixer and had 85 attendees. We're expecting 100 people for this event., and our intent is to try to get vendors to cover the entire cost. Tentative dates are March 16 and March 23, 2006.

Luci Hamilton offered to explore the Daily Grill as a venue for the vendor mixer.

XII. Magazine Editor's Report (Jones). **Steven Jones** reported that the magazine will be out on Friday. The topic for March will be "Employee Benefits." Steven added that we are still having a few problems with vendor ads.

Brian Robbins added that we are still reviewing what we will be doing with next year's magazine; attempt to get others involved. '

Steven Jones recommended that we get someone to assist with taking pictures.

XIII. President-Elect's Report (Sweet). **Brian Robbins** reported that unfortunately, President-Elect **Wendy Sweet** could not be here today but that she is doing better. Cards have been signed and will be delivered to her.

Brian Robbins reported on the survey data as follows: 114 questions key themes; as of yesterday, 91 complete surveys, 14 partials, 385 were sent out (including former members). Themes included: more education, key benefit; 48% said networking, 100% replied that \$55 membership fee is a value. On the question of Board accessibility, 60% said "yes."

90% said they would like to have handouts accessible on the web. 91% are aware of CLM; most people said downtown was more convenient; 84% said they liked their primary communication via email, like advance notice of events at least two weeks; vendor interaction – too much? too little? - 64% said it was terrific as it was, 30% were neutral; overall, 90% responded that what we're doing with vendors is good.

Congratulations to Wendy who did a great job on the survey

XIV. Past President's Report (Hamilton). **Luci Hamilton** provided the Board with a status on our brochures as follows:

While they are final; they are incorrect -- not the color we designated. The good news is that we are going to have 2,000 extra brochures. We're getting another set, white, not grey. The designer decided to change our logo on the very first draft and then also decided at the time they went to press that grey was nicer and chose not speak to the client. Needless to say, the client (us), client was very upset – signed proof. We'll get another 1,000, glossy, white color brochures. Correct brochure is forthcoming.

Brian Robbins inquired as to how we are handling the inserts to which **Luci** replied that we decided that we were going to use our letterhead and create a cover letter with whatever information you want to send out with the names of the Board members. As a Board we decided that this would be what we needed.

Susan Seales asked if we have made a decision about having a gathering at National with our Chapter in Montreal? **Brian Robbins** replied that we have not, but that we would put it on next month's agenda.

A question was raised regarding our giving away a free registration to Montreal and **Brian** replied that as part of the survey process we were going to award two registrations -- February 24 is the cutoff date.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 P.M.