



## GEORGIA DEFENSE LAWYERS ASSOCIATION SPRING BOARD MEETING

The Mills House  
Charleston, South Carolina  
April 14, 2012

### MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by President Haas at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 14, 2012.

Those present were: **Officers:** President Mel Haas of Constangy Brooks & Smith, Macon; Secretary-Treasurer Ted Freeman of Freeman Mathis & Gary, Atlanta. **Immediate Past President:** Bubba Hughes of Callaway Braun Riddle & Hughes, Savannah. **Vice Presidents:** Hall McKinley of Drew Eckl & Farnham, Atlanta; Matt Moffett of Gray Rust St. Amand Moffett & Brieske, Atlanta; and Peter Muller of Goodman McGuffey Lindsey & Johnson, Savannah. **Board of Directors:** Jo Jagor of Hall Booth Smith & Slover, Atlanta; Craig Avery of Cowsert & Avery, Athens; Rusty Gunn of Martin Snow, Macon; Chris Parker of Miller & Martin, Atlanta; Jeff Ward of Gilbert, Harrell, Sumerford & Martin, Brunswick; and Jamie Weston of Trotter Jones, Augusta. **Past Presidents:** Staten Bitting of Fulcher Hagler, Augusta; Salty Forbes of Forbes Foster & Pool, Savannah; Bob Travis of Bryan Cave, Atlanta; Johnny Foster of Forbes Foster & Pool, Savannah; Warner Fox and Bruce Welch of Hawkins Parnell Thackston & Young, Atlanta. **Also present** were Young Lawyers Committee Chair Andy Holliday of Fulcher Hagler, Augusta; Premises Liability SLC Chair Shane Keith of Hawkins Parnell Thackston & Young, Atlanta; Education Committee Chair Wayne Melnick of Drew Eckl & Farnham, Atlanta; and Executive Director Jennifer Davis.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the February 10, 2012, Winter Board Meeting Minutes, and the motion passed unanimously.

Warner Fox advised that the Association currently has 636 members. The following individuals were then proposed for membership and unanimously accepted:

**GDLA Membership Applications – Spring 2012**

	<b>Member Name</b>	<b>Firm</b>
1.	Alley, Todd	Hawkins Parnell Thackston & Young
2.	Angersola, Joseph J.	Swift Currie McGhee & Hiers, LLP
3.	Catlin, Jeremy E.	Swift Currie McGhee & Hiers, LLP
4.	Costolnick, Jeffrey J.	Drew Eckl & Farnham, LLP
5.	Cribbs, Christina	Levy &Pruett
6.	Eckerson, Bridgette	Mozley, Finlayson & Loggins LLP
7.	Edwards, Elizabeth	Fowler, Hein, Cheatwood & Williams, P.A.
8.	Hayes, David	Owen Gleaton
9.	Hamilton, Edwin L.	Goodman McGuffey Lindsey & Johnson, LLP
10.	Herman, Jennifer N.	Howard & Whatley, P.C.
11.	Herman, Steven A.	Dennis, Corry, Porter & Smith, LLP
12.	Hood, J. Ryan	Arnall Golden Gregory LLP
13.	Howe, Joel A.	Martin Snow, LLP
14.	Brooks K. Hudson	Hull Barrett
15.	Jacobs, Chad E.	Drew Eckl & Farnham, LLP
16.	Karabinos, Karen	Drew Eckl & Farnham, LLP
17.	Kreindel, Justin	Fowler, Hein, Cheatwood & Williams, P.A.
18.	Meader, Garrett W.	Brown, Readdick, Bumgartner, Carter, Strickland & Watkins
19.	McNeill, Rakhi D.	Harper, Waldon & Craig
20.	Robinson, Leilani	Gray, Rust, St. Amand, Moffett & Brieske, LLP

**GDLA Membership Applications – Spring 2012**

21.	Webb, Kelley E.	Downey & Cleveland, LLP
22.	Whatley, Jr., Thomas G.	Howard & Whatley, P.C.
23.	Williams, James Mike	Fowler, Hein, Cheatwood & Williams, P.A.

Young Lawyers Committee Chair Andy Holliday reported that a happy hour has been planned for May 2, 2012, in Atlanta for GDLA YLC members only. Mr. Holiday further reported that he and his Committee are in the process of identifying YLs in the GDLA database; we have birthdays for some, but not all, GDLA members so we are asking YLs to report their birthdays to help us identify who qualifies as a YL (36 years of age or younger). In terms of potential new YLC members, Mr. Holliday asked whether prospective members would be able to attend the Annual Meeting or other GDLA functions. Salty Forbes made a motion that potential new members, who have filed a membership application with the GDLA prior to the Annual Meeting and the Membership Committee has approved, are eligible to attend at the Annual Meeting or any other GDLA function. The motion was seconded and unanimously passed.

Membership Committee Co-chair Chris Parker discussed the progress of the RecruitOne membership drive, which is scheduled to expire on May 1, 2012. Mr. Parker suggested that the membership campaign continue for the upcoming year with a similar incentive for members to recruit new members. In this regard, Mr. Parker called the Board's attention to a list of DRI members who are not also GDLA members and suggested this list might be a good starting point for new members.

Wayne Melnick then presented the Education Committee report. He advised that since the Winter Board Meeting, the Committee had presented two CLEs, one dealing with causal factors in vehicular collisions and the other dealing with apportionment. Mr. Melnick noted that the apportionment CLE had 40 attendees, which was the largest group ever to attend a GDLA sponsored CLE. Mr. Melnick reported on the future CLEs to be held in April and May. In late June, there will be a Skits & Suds in the Atlanta area, and it is possible that Skits & Suds will be taken "on the road" in July.

Mr. Melnick asked the Board for permission to purchase a LED projector and a portable screen, which he opined would cost less than \$1,000. A motion was made

by Warner Fox to spend up to \$1,000 for these purchases. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Finally, there was a discussion concerning giving speaker gifts to presenters at GDLA-sponsored CLE. Executive Director Jennifer Davis is going to investigate the cost of appropriate gifts and will report back to the Board at the October meeting.

Substantive Law Committee Chair Johnny Foster welcomed Shane Keith, Premises Law SLC Chair, to the meeting. Mr. Foster then announced his “retirement” from SLC leadership and advised that Brian Moore would now be taking over those duties. Mr. Foster reported on a conference call which had been held in March, 2012 among the SLC chairs and Jennifer Davis. As a result of this discussion, Mr. Foster recommended that each SLC hold two subcommittee luncheons or meetings per year. These meetings would be geared toward specific areas of interest within the substantive law area and should include either a speaker of interest to the practice area or a judge. There also should be an opportunity to provide for CLE credits. In order to encourage attendance at these meetings, Mr. Foster moved that the SLC chairs be authorized to spend up to \$25 per person to cover the cost of the food and the CLE expense. The motion was seconded and passed.

On behalf of Judicial Relations Committee Chair Bob Travis, President Mel Haas reviewed the various judgeships that were open and the solicitations which had been received by GDLA since the Winter Board Meeting.

Staten Bitting reported on the dates and locations for upcoming meetings. As a result of the discussion which ensued, the following dates and locations were scheduled:

- 2012 Annual Meeting – June 7-10, 2012, Ponte Vedra Inn & Club
- 2012 Fall Meeting – October 19-22, 2012, Brasstown Valley, Young Harris, Georgia
- 2013 Judicial Reception – February 7, 2013, State Bar Headquarters
- 2013 Winter Meeting – February 8, 2013, State Bar Headquarters
- 2013 Spring Meeting – TBD
- 2013 Annual Meeting – June 13-16, 2013, The Breakers, Palm Beach, Florida
- 2013 Fall Meeting – TBD
- 2014 Annual Meeting – June 5-8, 2014 – Ponte Vedra Inn & Club

Executive Director Jennifer Davis reported for the Website Committee and advised that Brett Miller had volunteered to “beef up” the brief bank.

Executive Director Jennifer Davis reported for Evelyn Fletcher Davis on the newsletter. In this regard, Jennifer Davis had been asked to investigate the cost of sending the newsletter to all judges statewide. This prompted a discussion concerning why the newsletter is sent to federal bankruptcy judges, but not federal magistrate judges. As a result of this discussion, a motion was made by Salty Forbes and seconded by Secretary-Treasurer Ted Freeman to drop bankruptcy judges from the mailing list, to add federal magistrate judges, and to otherwise send the newsletter to all other state and federal judges in Georgia. The motion passed.

Executive Director Jennifer Davis reported on behalf of Kirby Mason that the 2012 *GDLA Law Journal* will be sent out in May and will contain eight of the finest articles ever submitted for publication anywhere.

Sponsorship Committee Chair Peter Muller reported on the continuing success in the solicitation and retention of GDLA sponsors. In this regard, Mr. Muller reported to the Board that Thomson Reuters Expert Witness had recently upgraded from Gold sponsorship status to Platinum, having started out at Silver. He also reported that Global Legal Discovery had signed on as a Gold level sponsor. Warner Fox and Hall McKinley extolled the virtues of Courtroom Sciences, Inc. and Collision Specialists, Inc. with whom they had recently worked.

Trial Academy Chair Matt Moffett delivered the report on the 2012 Trial Academy. Although attendance at this year’s Trial Academy was up 20%, there was a discussion concerning the best format to use for the Trial Academy, how often to conduct it, and whether a new problem was needed. Mr. Moffett reported that there has also been some discussion about possibly having an Advanced Trial Academy at some point in time.

DRI State Rep Bubba Hughes advised the Board that he and Executive Director Jennifer Davis had attended a meeting in Chicago that DRI hosts for SLDO Executive Directors and State Reps, and that Ms. Davis had spoken about “Branding Your Association.”

Amicus Committee Co-Chairs Rusty Gunn and Jeff Ward reported that there were no pending amicus requests although GDLA currently had two briefs which had been filed in the Georgia Supreme Court on cases which were awaiting decision.

Ted Freeman delivered the Treasurer's report and advised the Board that the organization was in good financial shape, both in absolute terms, and in comparison to the same time last year.

President Haas delivered the President's report and told the Board, "It's been a robust year."

There was no old business.

Under new business, Executive Director Davis told the Board that she felt it was important to have someone review and conduct an "insurance audit" of those policies insuring the GDLA to ensure we had sufficient and appropriate coverage. To this end, Ms. Davis asked Peter Muller to approach his partner and Insurance Coverage SLC Chair Robert Darroch; the latter has agreed to do so, therefore Ms. Davis will send him the policies.

Finally, in response to a question concerning the membership status of retired attorneys, the Board was reminded that any member of the GDLA who has been a member in good standing for a period of at least five consecutive years prior to retirement may retain membership in the Association as a retired member, so long as such person continues to manifest a genuine interest in the purposes of the Association.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.