

**GEORGIA DEFENSE LAWYERS ASSOCIATION
WINTER BOARD MEETING**

**February 10, 2012
Hawkins Parnell Thackston & Young
Atlanta, Georgia**

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by President Haas at 9:05 a.m. on Friday, February 10, 2012.

Those present were: **Officers:** President Mel Haas of Constangy Brooks & Smith, Macon; Executive Vice President Lynn Roberson of Swift Currie McGhee & Hiers, Atlanta; and Secretary-Treasurer Ted Freeman of Freeman Mathis & Gary, Atlanta. **Vice Presidents:** Hall McKinley of Drew Eckl & Farnham, Atlanta; Kirby Mason of Hunter Maclean, Savannah; and Peter Muller of Goodman McGuffey Lindsey & Johnson, Savannah. **Board of Directors:** Sally Akins of Ellis Painter Ratterree & Adams, Savannah; Craig Avery of Cowsert & Avery, Athens; Lance Greene of McNatt Greene & Peterson, Vidalia; Dart Meadows of Balch & Bingham, Atlanta; Brian Moore of Drew Eckl & Farnham, Atlanta; Jeff Ward of Gilbert Harrell Sumerford & Martin, Brunswick; and David Nelson of Chambless, Higdon, Richardson, Katz & Griggs, Macon. **Past Presidents:** Salty Forbes of Forbes Foster & Pool, Savannah; Bob Travis of Bryan Cave, Atlanta; Johnny Foster of Forbes Foster & Pool, Savannah; Walter McClelland of Mabry & McClelland, Atlanta; Jimmy Singer of Bovis Kyle & Burch, Atlanta; Steve Kyle of Bovis Kyle & Burch, Atlanta; Warner Fox of Hawkins Parnell Thackston & Young, Atlanta; and Jerry Buchanan of Buchanan & Land, Columbus. **Also present** were Education Committee Chair Wayne Melnick of Gray Rust St. Amand Moffett & Brieske, Atlanta; Young Lawyers Committee Chair Andy Holliday of Fulcher Hagler, Augusta; and Executive Director Jennifer Davis.

A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the October, 2011 Fall Board Meeting Minutes, and the motion passed unanimously.

Warner Fox advised that the Association currently has 590 members. The following individuals were then proposed for membership and unanimously accepted:

	Member Name	Firm	Date of Application	Years Practicing
1.	Abastillas, Noelle A.	Owen Gleaton Egan Jones & Sweeney LLP	12/17/11	3
2.	Arnold, Christopher	Jones Cork & Miller		3
3.	Austin, John B.	Austin & Sparks, P.C.	1/27/12	26

4.	Bassett, W. Randall	King & Spalding	11/8/11	19
5.	Beaton IV, Ernest L.	Hall Booth Smith & Slover PC	1/12/12	3
6.	Beer, Daniel	Weinberg Wheeler Hudgins Gunn & Dial	1/21/12	>1
7.	Branch, Thomas E.	Callaway, Braun, Riddle & Hughes, P.C.	11/7/11	0?
8.	Boyce, Sharonda	Insley & Race	2/7/12	1
9.	Christopherson, Yasamine	Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough	1/19/12	3
10.	Clay, Charles (Jr.)	Weinberg, Wheeler, Hudgins, Gunn & Dial, LLC	1/3/12	12
11.	Cox, Sean Branson	Goodman McGuffey Lindsey & Johnson	11/2/11	3
12.	Eshman, Michael	Drew Eckl & Farnham	2/9/12	2
13.	Farrow, Scott A.	Troutman Sanders LLP	1/27/12	25.5
14.	Fitts, Lowell	King & Spalding	12/14/11	0
15.	Ford, Adam P.	Owen Gleaton Egan Jones & Sweeney	1/19/12	2
16.	Gillis, Lee M.	James Bates	11/15/11	4
17.	Gregory, Jeremy W.	Balch & Bingham LLP	1/3/12	5
18.	Helms, Victoria L.	Helms & Greene, LLC	12/6/11	15
19.	Herman, Douglas E.	Oliver Maner LLP	12/28/11	11
20.	Horkan, William P.	James Bates	11/15/11	2
21.	Johnson, Myrece	Swift, Currie, McGhee & Hiers	1/31/12	2
22.	Kaup, Joscelyn M.	Allen, McCain & O'Mahony, P.C.	1/24/12	> 1
23.	Kim, Sul Ah	Constangy Brooks & Smith	1/20/12	6 mos.
24.	Ledbetter, Tracey	Sutherland	2/8/12	4
25.	Levelle, Myles	Drew Eckl & Farnham	1/19/12	2
26.	Manly, John B.	Bouhan, Williams & Levy LLP	11/2/11	3
27.	Mayo, Michael	Martin Snow	1/25/12	2

28.	Melonakos, Michael	Goodman McGuffey Lindsey & Johnson	11/25/11	3
29.	Miller, Aaron A.	Mozley Finlayson & Loggins	1/21/12	4
30.	Mohs, Brian T.	Appelbaum & Associates, P.C.	12/9/11	3
31.	Myers, James P.	Insley & Race, LLC	2/6/12	9
32.	Patrick, Kevin C.	Goodman McGuffey Lindsey & Johnson	11/25/11	4
33.	Pessagno, Stephen	Weinberg Wheeler Hudgins Gunn & Dial	1/21/12	>1
34.	Rhodes, B. Shawn	Wallace Law Group	1/19/12	4
35.	Rhodes, David	Scudder, Bass, Quillian, Horlock, Taylor & Lazarus LLP	1/30/12	2
36.	Sawyer, David C.	Gray Rust St. Amand Moffett & Brieske	1/19/12	3
37.	Seanor, Jan M.	Dennis, Corry, Porter & Smith, LLP	11/30/11	4
38.	Smith, Angela H.	Moore Ingram Johnson & Steele, LLP	1/26/12	10
39.	Spainhour, Kevin C.	Insley & Race	1/21/12	3
40.	Staten, Tunisia	Ashe Rafuse & Hill	1/19/12	6.5
41.	Stazak, Kathryn	Drew, Eckl & Farnham, LLP	12/6/11	1
42.	Stein, Joshua S.	Goodman McGuffey Lindsey & Johnson	6/9/11	6
43.	Svoboda, Alexandra	Crim & Bassler	1/21/12	5
44.	Thomas III, Robert P.	Fulcher Hagler LLP	1/24/12	> 1
45.	Williams, Brian F.	Harper, Waldon & Craig	12/22/11	3
46.	Wilson, Zachary M.	Hawkins Parnell Thackston & Young	1/19/12	4

On behalf of the entire Association, President Haas welcomed Andy Holliday, who he appointed as chair of the Young Lawyers Committee, and thanked him for his willingness to serve. Mr. Holliday reported that President Haas had also appointed two vice chairs, Jason Logan, Macon and Pamela Lee, Atlanta (the latter will serve as a liaison to the Education Committee). Mr. Holliday further advised that his Committee was working with Jennifer Davis to glean from the membership database who is a member; they plan to then set up a list-serv so YLC members can blast to each other in the same way that the SLCs can now. He also reported that his Committee

intended to sponsor events at locations in Savannah, Macon and Atlanta, and may arrange a breakfast meeting as part of the GDLA Annual Meeting in Ponte Vedra. Ms. Davis added that she was approached by the State Bar Young Lawyers Division for the GDLA to sponsor their Annual Meeting in Savannah. The goal will increase visibility among the State Bar's YLD as a membership recruitment vehicle. A motion was made by Ted Freeman to authorize the YL Committee to commit up to \$1,000 on behalf of the GDLA to sponsor the State Bar YLD Annual Meeting. The motion was seconded by Lynn Roberson and passed unanimously. As a Sponsor, the GDLA's name will appear in the State Bar Annual Meeting brochure.

Dart Meadows then presented the Membership Committee report. There was a discussion of whether or not attorneys who were members of captive law firms could be members of the GDLA. Currently, there is a bylaw restricting such membership. A motion was made by Warner Fox and seconded by Ted Freeman that this item be placed on the agenda for further discussion at the Spring Board Meeting. If approved, it would have to be approved by the members at the Annual Meeting.

Dart Meadows reported that of the 45 new members, 11 had applied as a result of the RecruitOne membership drive. Mr. Meadows encouraged the Board to get behind this effort, and if everyone would undertake to recruit one new member, the membership in the Association would take off.

A question was raised concerning in-house counsel, and whether they were eligible for GDLA membership. The Board was reminded that such persons could become Associate members of the GDLA, but they could not be full members.

Wayne Melnick presented the Education Committee report and outlined the two goals his Committee had for the upcoming year: (1) Work with Platinum sponsors to fulfill their right to offer a CLE as part of their annual sponsorship benefits; and (2) put on one CLE per month. Mr. Melnick described each of the seminars already scheduled for March, April, May, June and July, and that his committee was in the process of arranging further seminars for the remainder of 2012.

There was a discussion concerning Mr. Melnick's involvement in a fringe group by the name of Rumpus Monkey.

Johnny Foster and Brian Moore presented the report on behalf of the Substantive Law Committees. It was noted that the activity level of each of the committees had varied from year to year, but they had never functioned on all eight cylinders. According to Mr. Moore, part of the problem has been that the committee chairs were uncertain about exactly what they were expected to do. There ensued a general discussion of how the Association could raise the level of involvement of the Substantive Law Committees. One SLC chair has asked whether the Association would fund committee meetings. The suggestion was made that such committee meetings could be funded by existing GDLA sponsors, who might well welcome the opportunity to meet with GDLA members in a small one-on-one setting. Jennifer Davis noted that our current sponsorship program is not a la carte, but rather an annual package of benefits; so the Board may want to consider that before soliciting sponsors for additional monies for SLC or other events. Mr. Moore told the Board he would arrange a conference call with all of the

committee leaders to give them a sense of Board's vision for these committees and to solicit feedback from them. Mr. Moore will report back to the Board at the Spring Board Meeting.

Bob Travis reviewed the various judgeships that were open and the solicitation which had been received by GDLA since the Fall Board Meeting. There was also a discussion concerning the Judicial Qualifications Committee and the recent attacks on it by certain members of the Bar. While the GDLA cannot itself take a stand concerning this issue, several Board members expressed the desire to share their personal opinions and asked Jennifer Davis to advise them of the addresses where letters could be sent, if desired. Mr. Travis noted that the Judicial Nominating Committee was more receptive to both the GDLA and other organizations' input than had previously been the case.

Jennifer Davis reminded the Board of the upcoming Spring Board Meeting, the Annual Meeting and the Fall Board Meeting. Ms. Davis said she will be sending out notices for the Spring Board Meeting shortly.

David Nelson delivered the report on the website and advised that he was trying to solicit orders, motions and briefs from members to be posted the Brief Bank and Tort Reform Database. He was also planning to post an article by Professor Paul Milich concerning Georgia new evidence Code which is to take effect on January 1, 2013. Mr. Nelson is also soliciting an article by Professor Ron Carlson. Jennifer Davis reported that Brett Miller had volunteered to take on the challenge of beefing up the Brief Bank.

In the absence of Evelyn Fletcher Davis, Jennifer Davis reported to the Board on the Newsletter. One question which has arisen is whether or not we want to send the Newsletter to all judges or just a limited number. Ms. Davis advised she would attempt to determine the cost differential between what we are now doing and sending the Newsletter to all judges and would report back to the Board at the Spring Board Meeting.

Kirby Mason told the Board that the *Law Journal* was in good shape. Ms. Mason advised that she already has had three articles submitted to her, and there are 12 additional articles which have been promised.

Peter Muller kindly declined any credit for the phenomenal success in the GDLA's sponsorships, instead conceding that all credit was due to Jennifer Davis. With that said, Mr. Muller suggested that some long-time GDLA sponsors have questioned the new fee schedule, but at this point, there has been no attrition. He also announced the addition of three new sponsors: Delve Information Resources returned as Platinum Sponsor; RGL Resources joined at Platinum; and Thomson Reuters Expert Witness joined at Gold.

Although membership at the Trial Academy was up 20% from the previous year, there was a discussion about possibly going to an every other year format for the Trial Academy. There was also discussion concerning a more advanced Trial Academy. It was noted that most of the attendees at last year's Trial Academy had come from smaller firms. It was emphasized that in order for the Trial Academy to be successful, the number of attendees should be in the range of 25 to 30.

The Amicus Committee reported that it had received four requests for amicus briefs, and the Association had accepted two of those requests.

Secretary of Treasurer Ted Freeman reported on the financial condition of the Association and noted that at the end of the calendar year 2011, the Association had total assets of \$186,032 compared to \$145,872 in 2010 and \$113,691 in 2009. In short, the Association is in the best financial shape that it ever has been in.

The discussion of a Paralegal Division of the GDLA was tabled until next year.

Under New Business, the Board was reminded that as a 501(c) corporation the Association was prohibited from doing any lobbying at the upcoming session of the Georgia General Assembly. There also was a discussion concerning sending a reminder out to all GDLA members concerning the policies for use of the blast e-mail.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.