

GDLA Winter 2006 Board Meeting Highlights Hawkins & Parnell, Atlanta February 3, 2006

On February 3, 2006, the Board of Directors of the Georgia Defense Lawyers Association met in the offices of Hawkins & Parnell. In attendance were Bubba Hughes, Jimmy Singer, Grant Smith, Rick Rominger, Ted Freeman, Walter McClelland, Salty Forbes, Lynn Roberson, Jo Jagor, Mel Haas, Steve Kyle, Johnny Foster, Joe Chambliss, David Nelson, Bruce Welch, Hall McKinley, Clay Ratterree and Steve Milano, Executive Director.

President Johnny Foster called the meeting to order and the Board approved the Fall Board Meeting Minutes.

Secretary/Treasurer Travis gave the treasurer's which reflected a positive cash balance.

President Foster then expressed the Board's appreciation to Bob Brinson and Georgia Lawyers Insurance for their sponsorship of the previous evening's Meet the Judges Reception at the Capital City Club.

Secretary/Treasurer Travis gave a report of the Dues Committee. After discussion, it was decided to raise the dues from \$150 to \$170 with younger lawyers' dues being \$85. It was also decided that once a member had reached 65 with 10 years of service to GDLA, the dues would be one-half of the then-existing dues rate. The same for the younger lawyers.

It was further moved and approved that past presidents, once they reached the age of 65, would be exempt from dues.

Although there was discussion of awarding free CLE registration for large firms bringing in more than five people, it was not approved by the Board. Board members were also reminded that they do not, while actively serving on the Board, get credit for free CLE registration, when bringing in new members.

There was a discussion of what to do with large firms to encourage them to join GDLA. There was a discussion of a proposal that once 10 members from one firm join GDLA, new members come in with no initiation fee. Salty Forbes will review our 501(c)(6) status before any further action on what might be contended as separate classes of dues.

Lynn Roberson moved that the Board review waiving the initiation fee for younger lawyers with less than five years of practice. We will look at and discuss this at the Spring Board meeting.

Membership Chairman Salty Forbes gave an extensive membership report. Board members were encouraged to talk to attorneys in their individual firms to encourage delinquent people to renew dues. Chairman Forbes moved to enforce our By-Laws canceling the membership of delinquent members, approximately 35 at this time. Article IV of our By-Laws provide for the suspension of membership upon nonpayment of dues.

The motion was made and passed that all applications and dues are forwarded directly to Salty. After review, he will forward checks and applications to the Secretary/ Treasurer/Executive Director so that checks may be deposited.

Chairman Forbes moved the admission of 61 new members of GDLA and all were approved for membership.

Lynn Roberson gave a membership recruitment and retention report. There was a discussion of meeting with the Litigation Chairs and any member of GDLA already in the larger firms. There was a discussion of doing a show-and-tell at each of the larger firms.

President Foster reported that the younger lawyers CLE and worker's comp seminar planned for February 3 were cancelled when we found out that the Claims Association was having a worker's comp seminar and the State Bar was having a Meet the Judges' Reception that same day.

Craig Avery is preparing a list of competing organizations and we are going to check with them before we schedule future events of GDLA.

Jo Jagor is going to pick a date for the CLE for younger lawyers. Staten Bitting will pick a date and get it done before April 28 so we can vote new members in after the worker's comp seminar.

We are going to try to cover our cost and break even with our CLE seminars. A discussion of CLE seminar fees followed. Presently those who attend seminars get their initiation fee and first-year dues waived. They also get free DRI membership if they join the GDLA and have not previously been a DRI member. The three or four people who prepare the younger lawyer CLE with Jo will have no application fees and no dues in the year in which they assist her.

The substantive law committees, chairs and vice chairs were announced by President Foster. President Foster will invite four new chairs to our Spring Board Meeting. The SLC Steering Committee will continue to monitor our Substantive Law Committees and Johnny will remain active after his term of President ends.

Kirby Mason and David Nelson will help reorganize our Web site.

Sally Aiken of Clay Ratterree's firm has agreed to begin work on our charge book.

There was consideration and discussion of having a prize for the person who posts the most briefs in our brief bank. There was some discussion that those who donated the most within thirty days would get free registration to Bermuda but most thought that this would be too much.

A motion was made for blast e-mails soliciting briefs and jury charge. Those participating and providing a document ultimately used on the web site would be eligible for a prize by way of a random drawing in the nature of a \$100 certificate redeemable by anyone in the firm of the winning member. The Web site committee would be the final arbiter of the winner and how the award will be administered. Board members are exempt.

There was a report from the Judicial Relations Committee. Johnny will appoint new members to the Superior Court Council and State Court Judges as our representatives.

Lynn Roberson reported on the Judicial Qualifications Commission. Nothing is presently pending. Typically Lynn gets a three- to four-day notice and is invited to the Commission Board for five minutes. Lynn and Walter solicit comments in the outlying counties. Lynn needs more help. The resumes are very extensive in a very short review period. She needs input from the entire Board.

We cannot adhere or respond to requests from judges for our mailing list since that would interfere potentially with our By-Laws.

Steve Kyle then gave a report on our Annual Meeting on June 8-11 in Bermuda. Executive Vice President Warner Fox is putting together a great program.

Steve Kyle also gave a report on our Fall Meeting on October 20-21 at Barnesly Gardens in Adairsville. Steve Kyle also said that Clay Ratterree would be his backup on meetings coordinator.

We then had a report from Bubba Hughes on the Law Journal. There is apparently not enough time to coordinate with all of our new committees. Clay and Bubba are planning to meet next week. We need to solicit our partners for articles about tort reform, lien law change, Medicare liens, illegal aliens, etc. There were several possibilities of articles on offer of judgment and Daubert which Bubba will follow up on as well as the potential decision on the venue provision of tort reform. We need a good quality

product. Lynn Roberson suggested an article on punitive damages. We are trying to set an April 1 deadline and then get our bill dues notice out on June 1. We want the Journal out before we send our renewal notices.

It was suggested that the speakers at Bermuda turn the speeches to articles for the Law Journal. It was recommended that the new president appoint the Law Journal editor right after the Annual Meeting in order that we can get a head start on the Journal. Mel Haas is going to help Bubba and Clay on the Journal. Perhaps we could have one Journal devoted solely to the Substantive Law Committees and each Committee appoint a liaison to the Journal.

We also want to put the memorial resolutions in the Journal. It was moved and approved by the Board that the resolutions honoring Willis J. "Dick" Richardson, Jr. and James A. "Bubba" Dunlap would be included in our Journal.

There was some discussion that the Richardson award is now given to the student head of the mock trial board and maybe the award winner could contribute to our Journal.

There was also a report by our DRI representative Bruce Welch on the DRI Annual Meeting and SLDO Conclave in Chicago (summary was attached and circulated in Agenda to Board members). Bruce notified us of the March 2006 State Representative meeting in Chicago and the Southeastern Regional meeting on June 2 in Orlando.

It was at this time that the Board held a discussion on Secretary/Treasurer Travis' research into insurance coverage for the organization as well as exculpatory and indemnity clauses for Board members. It was approved and authorized by the Board to go ahead and get liability coverage and if in the opinion of Secretary/Treasurer Travis we needed the multimedia coverage to also purchase that coverage.

The language circulated by Secretary/Treasurer Travis on indemnity and exculpatory paragraphs will be reviewed by the Board and voted upon in April. If approved in April, they will then be sent to the members pursuant to our By-Laws. The two paragraphs were tabled and will be taken up on April 28. There was a suggestion that "INC" be added to our coverage sheet with Wachovia Insurance Services.

There also was a specific comment about the meeting chairman being included in the indemnity paragraph along with the ex officio past presidents. (Executive Committee includes last three past presidents.)

There was a report that the newsletter was on track.

Clay Ratterree gave a report on our sponsors and exhibitors. Steve Kyle moved and approved that we line up our sponsorship coverage to go from January to December and that we would pro rata our current billing on sponsorships. The Board gave a vote of thanks to Steve Milano for his work on increasing our sponsorships.

Salty Forbes gave a report on the GDLA history project, notifying us that there would be a meeting of a subcommittee with Frank Love and Mac McClendon on today's date.

The Board also asked Secretary/ Treasurer Travis to express its appreciation to Travis' partner, Tom Richey, for his work on insurance coverage, By-Laws and Articles, including the indemnity and exculpatory provisions.

The regular Board meeting concluded at which time the Board went into executive session to discuss and act upon Executive Director's compensation. The Board adjourned from executive session.