

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of the Elder Law Section
November 4, 2010
New Mexico State Bar Center

A regular meeting of the Board of the Elderlaw Section took place at the Bar Center on November 4, 2010 at noon. Present by phone were board members Fletcher Catron, Shannon Bulman and Diane Strader. Present at the Bar Center were Mary Ann Green (by phone), Nancy Oriola (accompanied by Margot Keener from Decades LLC), Sara Traub, Maria Martinez-Siemel, Rich Wiener, Lynn McKeever and Laurie Hedrich, Chair. Staff assistance was provided by Tony Horvat.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:15. The first order of business was the approval of the minutes from the meeting August 19, 2010, which were approved upon the motion of Mary Ann Green. The treasurer's report was approved upon the motion of Sara Traub.

Announcement was made that the nominating committee, convened by Kevin Hammar, had submitted three nominees: Sara Traub, Richard Stoops and Debbie Armstrong. This being the same number of nominees as the seats open on the board, it was assumed that these members of the Section will join the board, or continue if they are currently seated. Maria Martinez-Siemel may not be the Young Lawyer's Division representative on the board for 2011 because she will cease to qualify for YLD. The chair announced that other YLD members may be identified and contacted.

Evaluations of the October 1, 2010 Elderlaw Institute have been reviewed by the Chair and she presented a summary. She said that, in general, responses were very favorable. Some presentations were better received than others. The "Professionalism" segment seemed to pose problems, but the entire MCLE requirement regarding professionalism continuing education is being reviewed and Ms. Hedrich believes that the CLE format will change.

Discussion shifted to the planning of CLEs for 2011. In 2010, there were fall presentations by the Elderlaw Section and the Real Property and Probate Sections within one week of each other. Some topics overlapped. There was general consensus among the directors that better coordination, including a possible combined sponsorship, with the Probate Section would result in better service to the members of both sections. No date had been set for the 2011 Fall Institute by the Elderlaw Section. Maria Martinez Siemel pointed out that the Probate Section has its Fall CLE in conjunction with the Tax Section as a two-day event. Further discussion is necessary. Sara Traub is on the board of both sections and will bring up the question with the Probate Section.

Laurie Hedrich announced that she had received a call from the State Bar CLE office warning that dates and times were being filled in fast, so she committed our Section for May 6, 2011 for its Annual Meeting and CLE. Maria Martinez Siemel and Mary Ann Green volunteered to coordinate planning for the CLE and Laurie Hedrich said she would email the Section Members for comments and suggestions regarding a theme.

April 16, 2011 has been declared National Healthcare Decisions Day (“NHDD”). NHDD is an initiative by a coalition of nonprofits, health care providers, government agencies, law firms, etc. to make advance directives available to members of the general public. Local sponsors will use the resources of the national organization to provide local events at public sites. Laurie Hedrich suggested that the Elderlaw Section become a local sponsor and identify at least five sites in New Mexico where lawyers could volunteer. Laurie Hedrich said she would contact Karen Blankenship of the Healthcare Section of the Bar for support from that Section and Marilyn Kelly of the Lawyer’s Referral Program for the Elderly. Laurie also said she would try to identify lawyer volunteers from outlying areas. Shannon Bulman of Santa Fe, Sara Traub of Albuquerque and Margot Keener from Decades LLC, which has a broad geographic presence, volunteered to help.

Several members commented that they would like to work with the Lawyers’ Referral Program for the Elderly in staffing the regular estate planning workshops. Maria Martinez-Siemel will contact Marilyn Kelly to find out what members of the Section can do to assist with her program.

Laurie Hedrich announced that she had goals as Chair for the 2011 membership year. She said she would seek feedback from members by email as to what lawyers want the Section to do. Laurie’s list includes: (1) update website and other resources, (2) weigh in on proposed legislation, (3) create an accessible online calendar for Section events and (4) schedule a brainstorming session for how the Section can meet needs in the greater community. She said that the current membership is between 100-115 and that she hopes to create a broader appeal to attract more members when lawyers submit their State Bar Membership Applications for 2011.

A draft of the Elderlaw Section newsletter was circulated. It was entirely prepared by Laurie Hedrich, though she expressed hope that other Section members will contribute to future issues. Ms. Hedrich is requesting changes and corrections from members before she submits the final copy next week. Bar Association staff manages the formatting and circulation by email. Sara Traub suggested that the newsletter project would be well-served by picking dates of publication and soliciting articles. The next issue is scheduled for June. Shannon Bulman suggested that newsletters and CLE materials should be available from the website and there was general accord that this was a great idea.

A regular meeting schedule for the board was set to begin in January 2011. Meetings will take place on the second Thursday of every other month at the State Bar Center.

The meeting adjourned at 1:10.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn McKeever, Secretary