

**WAUKESHA COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Monday, August 21, 2023
via Teams video conference**

Present: Remzy Bitar, Jesse Blocher, Michelle Fitzgerald, Sarah Guenther (Treasurer) (disconnected), Christine Hansen (Secretary), Alexander Kay, Corey Montiho (President), Daniel Rieck, Sara Scullen, AnnMarie Sylla (Past President).

Excused: Aaron Hall (President Elect), Andrea Lau, Jack Pitzo

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by President Corey Montiho at 12:01 p.m.

Welcome: President Montiho welcomed the four new members to the Board of Directors: Remzy Bitar, Michelle Fitzgerald, Alexander Kay, and Daniel Rieck.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Sarah Guenther circulated the written treasurer's report prior to the meeting. President Montiho tabled discussion about the treasurer's report to the September meeting because Treasurer Guenther was disconnected from the meeting.

Board of Governors Update: District 6 Board of Governors (BOG) Representative AnnMarie Sylla reported that at the June 2023 BOG meeting the BOG voted by a narrow margin to transfer \$5 million of bar assets into a special purpose trust to shield the assets from litigation awards. The money was recently transferred into the trust. There were many people upset about the vote. As such, if members have questions the directors can give them her contact information and she will put them in touch with someone who can answer their questions.

Old Business:

1. **PayPal QR Code:** Corey Montiho advised that the PayPal QR code is up and working on the WCBA website. Directors were encouraged to share with WCBA members the availability of the QR code on the website to pay for membership or events.
2. **Membership Update:** President Montiho advised that overall membership levels are approximately up to pre-covid numbers. The Board is still in need of members to help with committees, however.

New Business:

1. **WCBA Courthouse Banner:** Discussion was had about whether to remove, keep, or update the scrolling electronic WCBA banner in the courthouse. Jesse Blocher and Sara Scullen shared that the banner is outdated. Christine Hansen voiced that the WCBA should maintain a presence in the courthouse. Corey Montiho will reach back out to Clerk of Courts Monica Paz to determine if there is a monitor in the new courthouse on which the WCBA can post information for members.
2. **Judicial Portraits:**
 - a. **Missing Portraits:** Corey Montiho advised that Judge Strampe has not sat for his portrait. He will reach out to Judge Strampe and leave it to him as to whether or not he wishes to sit for his portrait.

- b. Portraits Missing Plates:** Corey Montiho advised that the portraits for four judges are missing their brass plates: Kathryn W. Foster (1988-2018), Patrick C. Haughney (1996-2018), Lee S. Dreyfus, Jr. (1990-2020), and Maria S. Lazar (2015-2020). President Montiho will reach out to Geiger Awards to see if they can make the plates for the portraits.
- 3. WCBA Presidents Plaque:** Corey Montiho reported that the WCBA past presidents plaque that hangs in the courthouse has not been updated for many years. Jesse Blocher suggested it be updated or taken down. President Montiho will look at the plaque and report back at the next meeting.
- 4. Local Bar Relations Meeting:** Sarah Guenther attended the August 16, 2023, state bar “Connecting with Local Bars” meeting. Her report on the meeting was tabled to September in response to technical difficulties with her connection.
- 5. Sections and Bench Bar Committee**
 - a. Criminal Section Chair:** Corey Montiho reported that Sarah Guenther has been serving as interim Criminal Section Chair since Olivia Garman resigned the position. Michelle Fitzgerald recommended Mark Powers for the position. Corey Montiho will help Sarah Guenther with the position until a new chair is found and will put together a synopsis of the chair’s responsibilities for directors to share when recruiting a new chairperson.
 - b. Bench/Bar Committee Update:** Bench/Bar Committee Chair and former Director Josh Cronin was unavailable to provide an update on the committee’s activities. Christine Hansen will review the bylaws to determine if the chair needs to be a WCBA director.
- 6. 2023-2024 Seminars:**
 - a. Litigation CLE:** Jesse Blocher advised that the litigation seminar is generally seven to eight credits with one ethics credit. The attendance for the October 2022 civil litigation seminar was similar to the attendance for the prior spring seminars. Director Blocher requested input on whether to keep the seminar in the fall or move it to February. Sara Scullen recommended fall. A tentative date of October 16 or 17, 2023, was selected for the next litigation seminar. Jesse Blocher will lead the planning and look for speakers and Sara Scullen and Remzy Bitar will assist.
 - b. Ethics Seminar:** Discussion was had that there have typically been four groups that rotate in speaking at the seminar: the State Bar’s ethics counsel, Office of Lawyer Regulation, Wisconsin Lawyers Mutual Insurance Company, and malpractice attorneys. Michelle Fitzgerald suggested having the 2023 presenters be attorneys on both sides of a malpractice case. AnnMarie Sylla has volunteered to be the lead planner for the November 2023 ethics seminar and Corey Montiho will assist.

7. 2023-2024 Bar Events:

- a. Judicial Roundtable/Support Staff Luncheon:** The planning of the criminal section judicial roundtable, which is generally held in the spring, was tabled until a 2023-2024 criminal section chair is installed. Christine Hansen recommended speaking with Director Jack Pitzo about the roundtable and discussing at a future meeting whether the Board should return to hosting a full support staff luncheon.
- b. Euchre Night/Happy Hour:** The Euchre Night events are planned by Jim Mathie and Judge Michael Aprahamian. Corey Montiho will reach out to Jim Mathie about scheduling future events.
- c. Judges' Night:** The last Judges' Night was held October 27, 2022, at Tuscan Hall. Christine Hansen reported that the event was well-attended by the judiciary. Secretary Hansen will be the lead planner for the next Judges' Night event to be held in October 2023 and Michelle Fitzgerald will assist.
- d. Holiday Party:** The 2022 holiday party was held on December 8, 2022, at the Historic Courthouse 1893. The event was fairly well-attended. Directors spoke favorably about the event and the venue. Past President AnnMarie Sylla discussed the pros and cons of the venue for the WCBA's needs. Corey Montiho will be the lead planner for the 2023 holiday party and AnnMarie Sylla will assist. They will try to confirm a date for the 2023 holiday party in the next couple of weeks. Corey Montiho will reach out to Judge William Domina to get the judicial training calendar.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Christine Hansen, seconded by AnnMarie Sylla. The meeting was adjourned at 12:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine L. Hansen, Secretary