

**Mecklenburg County Bar
26th Judicial District
2009 Annual Meeting
May 21, 2009 – 12:00 p.m.**

Minutes

I. Call to Order and Memorials

John Lassiter, President

President John Lassiter called the 97th Annual Meeting to order. He introduced those seated at the head table and welcomed all Bar members and visitors.

President Lassiter read the names of the following MCB members who passed away during the year: **John T. Allred Sr., William F. Barnes, B. Irvin Boyle, James N. Brennan IV, George C. Covington, Kenneth R. Downs Sr., Philip E. Gerdes, Larry Ray Green, Robin L. Hinson, Kathleen G. Lee-Stevens, Marshall McCallum Jr., Susan Ivy McCrory, Thomas C. Ruff, Joseph C. Travis, Alfred F. Welling Jr., and Henry H. Wilson III.** Following this reading, President Lassiter asked for a moment of silence.

President Lassiter expressed his gratitude for serving as Bar President. He observed that progress has been made toward collegiality; that the Bar has reached out to other local Bars, and that the relevancy of the Bar continues to be a focus. Mr. Lassiter thanked those who helped make his year a success and recognized all volunteers. Special thanks were extended to Social Sports Committee co-chairs Matt Arnold and John Nipp for today's event. Staff Events Coordinator Leah Reed was also acknowledged for her efforts.

II. 2008 Annual Meeting Minutes & Bylaw Approval

John Wester, Secretary

Secretary John Wester presented the minutes from the 2008 Annual Meeting. The minutes are posted on the Bar's website and copies are available at the registration tables. President Lassiter asked for a motion to dispense with the reading and approve the minutes as presented. Following a motion and second, the minutes were unanimously approved.

Secretary John Wester presented the amended bylaws. The proposed bylaws are posted on the Bar's website and copies are available at the registration tables. President Lassiter asked for a motion to approve the bylaws as presented. Following a motion and second, the bylaws were unanimously approved.

III. Treasurer's Report

Maria Minsker, Treasurer

Maria Minsker presented the financials. She reported that the 2009 budget is on track and that the Executive Committee reviewed the 2010 proposed balanced budget at their May 14, 2009 meeting. The current financials are available at the registration tables as is the draft 2009-2010 budget. Ms. Minsker noted that the proposed budget does not include a dues increase. She thanked the Bar staff for working diligently to keep expenses low. All members of the Bar are invited to the open meeting on June 3, 12:00 noon, at the Bar Center to discuss any questions or concerns regarding the Budget for the coming year.

IV. Presentation of Pro Bono Awards

Larry Gwaltney, VLP Co-Chair

Larry Gwaltney thanked attorneys for their extraordinary efforts in Mecklenburg County and presented awards to the 2009 *pro bono* winners. The outstanding large firm award was given to **Hunton & Williams LLP** with over 3,000 hours dedicated to *pro bono* work. For the second year in a row, the outstanding small firm award went to **Hatcher Law Group, PC** with over 350 hours committed to *pro bono* work. The outstanding individual attorney award was given to **William K. Packard** of Robinson, Bradshaw & Hinson with over 150 hours of *pro bono* work including work with Charlotte Housing Authority, Thompson Child & Family Focus, Hall House, and Children and Family Services Center. Partner/Program awards were given to: Legal Aid of North Carolina's **Thomas P. Holderness** of Robinson, Bradshaw & Hinson, Legal Services of Southern Piedmont's **Richard S. Wright** from James, McElroy & Diehl, Council for Children's Rights' **Heidi S. Risser** of Redenbaugh & Risser, and Pro Bono for Nonprofits' **Christopher J. Tucci** at EquiFirst Corporation. The Jane V. Harper Pro Bono Award was given to **Kimberly E. Zirkle** of Moore & Van Allen.

Mr. Gwaltney congratulated all *pro bono* award recipients and thanked all those who have offered their time and energy for *pro bono* work this year. Mr. Gwaltney also welcomed Erika Olson who will co-chair the VLP Committee with Sean Perrin in fiscal year 2009-2010.

V. Nominating Committee Report

Robert Stephens, Past-President

Bob Stephens thanked all those who served on the Nominating Committee for their service. The 2009-10 slate of officers and board members presented for the Bar's approval were: **Patrick E. Kelly**, President, **A. Todd Brown**, President-Elect; **Robert C. Dortch**, Vice-President; **Karen Eady-Williams**, Secretary; and **Maria Blue Minsker**, Treasurer. Nominees for Board members to serve a three-year term were: **Hon. Albert Diaz**, **Jill E. Dinerman**, **Trevor M. Fuller**, **Jonathan C. Krisko**, **John C. Nipp**, and **Claire K. Shapack**. **Nina Shor** was nominated to serve a one-year term to fill a vacancy in the class of 2010. Mr. Stephens asked for additional nominations from the floor. With none offered, a motion was made and seconded to close the nominations. The floor was given to President Lassiter.

VI. Election of Board and Officers

John Lassiter, President

President Lassiter thanked Mr. Stephens for his service and asked for a motion to approve the nominated officers. The motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved. He then asked for a motion of approval for the Board nominees, which was also seconded and passed unanimously. Mr. Lassiter offered his personal thanks to those members rolling off the Board. They are: **John H. Cobb**, **Robert K. Corbett III**, **John W. Gresham**, **Lina E. James**, **LaVenettra W. Reaves**, **Henry B. Ward III**, and **John R. Wester**.

VII. Oath of Office

Hon. Albert Diaz

The Honorable Albert Diaz, Special Superior Court Judge for Complex Business Cases of the North Carolina Business Court, read the oath of office for President of the Mecklenburg County Bar to President-elect Patrick E. Kelly. Mr. Kelly took the oath and was sworn into office.

VIII. Presentation of President's Plaque

Pat Kelly, Incoming President

On behalf of the Mecklenburg County Bar, Mr. Kelly presented a plaque to John Lassiter, the 2008-2009 Bar President. Mr. Kelly thanked Mr. Lassiter for his dedication to the Bar and for his active role as a citizen.

IX. Remarks

Pat Kelly, Incoming President

Pat Kelly thanked Judge Diaz, his family, and addressed the guests and members of the Bar. Mr. Kelly spoke about the recent privilege of addressing the graduating class of the Bar Leadership Institute (BLI), noting the importance of being involved with the Bar. Mr. Kelly reviewed the mission of the Bar and what the Bar accomplishes on a day-to-day basis. In performing these functions, the Bar helps to ensure that our duties as individuals and attorneys are fulfilled to the profession and the community. Mr. Kelly concluded his speech with a quote from Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.'s essay entitled "Life as Joy, Duty, End." Justice Holmes concludes that the intangible rewards that come from his duty as a professional are the most meaningful-- not the monetary or tangible rewards of his work. Mr. Kelly thanked the Bar and the staff for their trust and confidence as he takes on the role of Bar President.

Mr. Kelly took a moment to comment on the Bar's 100 year anniversary taking place in 2012. The Bar and the Mecklenburg Bar Foundation (MBF) have appointed a committee to write the history of the Bar. Bar History Committee co-chairs Mark Bernstein and Ray Farris serve on the committee with members Ozzie Ayscue, Hon. Robert Johnston, Chase Saunders, MBF President Claire Rauscher, Jerry Parnell, Luther Moore, Scott Broyles, and Debra Nance. Howard Covington and Marion Ellis have been chosen as the book authors. The book is expected to be completed and on sale in 2012. Anyone aware of any historical records is asked to contact the Bar or a member of the Bar History Committee.

X. Drawing

John Lassiter/Pat Kelly

Mr. Lassiter congratulated Mr. Kelly and recognized MBF President Claire Rauscher along with all other Past Presidents who were present. Mr. Lassiter and Mr. Kelly thanked the annual meeting's year-round sponsor Lawyers Mutual Liability Insurance of North Carolina, benefactor sponsor Special Counsel, donor sponsor Lexis Nexis, contributor sponsors Findlaw and Westlaw, and supporter sponsor Exact Document Services. Drawings took place for door prizes from Dana Rader Golf School, Rafael's Salon, Auto Bell Car Wash, Brio Tuscan Grille, and Bricktop Restaurant.

XI. Adjournment

John Lassiter, President

Mr. Lassiter thanked the Bar staff, and the Bar members for attending.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John R. Wester
Secretary