

**Mecklenburg County Bar
26th Judicial District
2010 Annual Meeting
May 20, 2010 – 12:00 p.m.**

Minutes

I. Call to Order and Memorials

Pat Kelly, President

President Pat Kelly called the 98th Annual Meeting to order. He recognized all distinguished guests who were present: Judge Richard Boner, Judge Lane Williamson, Judge Albert Diaz, Judge Lisa Bell, Judge Charlotte Brown, Judge Jena Culler, Judge Karen Eady-Williams, Judge Tyyawdi Hands, Judge Donnie Hoover, Judge Hugh Lewis, Judge Hugh Campbell, Judge Selina Brooks, Edward O’Keefe, Barbara Weyher, Hon. Ron Chapman and Hon. Peter Gilchrist.

President Kelly read the names of the following MCB members who passed away during the year: Joseph J. Estwanik, IV, Hon. William T. Grist, David H. Henderson, Hon. Clifton E. Johnson, Edgar Love III, Leon Olive, and Robert G. Sanders. Following this reading, President Kelly asked for a moment of silence.

President Kelly stated that it has been a privilege and honor to serve as Bar President. He reflected on the elements and ideals of law. He briefly touched on this year’s highlights: the Board implemented a strategic plan; the Bar has helped displaced lawyers through Coffee Connections; the Bar continues to provide high quality CLE’s. Mr. Kelly thanked Ms. Roberson, the staff and those who helped make his year a success.

II. 2009 Annual Meeting Minutes & Bylaws Approval

Hon. Karen Eady-Williams, Secretary

Secretary Eady-Williams presented the minutes from the 2009 Annual Meeting. The draft minutes are posted on the Bar’s website and copies are available at the registration tables. Hon. Eady-Williams asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Following a motion and second, the minutes were unanimously approved.

Hon. Eady-Williams presented the draft bylaws for approval. The bylaws are posted on the website and copies are available at the registration tables. She asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Following a motion and second, the bylaws were approved.

III. Treasurer’s Report & Dues Increase Vote

Maria Minsker, Treasurer

Maria Minsker reported on the current financials. She noted that the current balance sheet reports \$237,000 in liabilities and \$868,000 in equity. Copies of the YTD financials and draft FY 2011 budget are available at the registration tables. All Bar members are invited to attend the open meeting on Wednesday, June 2, 2010 at the Bar Center.

Ms. Minsker stated that the bylaws dictate that a dues increase be approved by the full Bar. She read the attached dues increase Board resolution and moved to approve a dues increase of \$75 to \$225 annually beginning July 1, 2010. A second was made from the floor. Mr. Kelly asked if there was any discussion. Discussion was requested. Mr. Kelly stated that

the Board of Directors gave him authority to conduct the dues voting process. He asked those who wished to present their case either for or against to congregate towards the back. Each side will have three minutes to coordinate who their spokesperson(s) will be. After the three minutes, each group will have five minutes to present.

Three individuals spoke in opposition to the dues increase and two individuals spoke in favor of the dues increase. After presentation, Mr. Kelly reminded those present that a motion is on the table to increase the dues to \$225 annually. He also reminded the Bar that this is official business of the 26th judicial district and only active members may participate in the vote. Mr. Kelly then asked for a voice vote. Division was requested from the floor and Mr. Kelly directed that a hand vote be taken. The hand vote count was counted by Bar staff. The results were presented to the head table for tabulation. The count was confirmed by the tally sheets and three groups at the head table. The results were as follows: 208 for and 157 against. The motion to increase the dues to \$225 annually passed.

IV. Presentation of Pro Bono Awards *Sean Perrin & Erika Olson, VLP Co-Chairs*

Sean Perrin asked those who were accepting awards to begin making their way towards the stage. The following 2010 pro bono awards were presented: Bank of America received the Outstanding Large Firm award for its ongoing leadership with the Wills on Wheels Clinic in Mecklenburg County. Accepting the award for Bank of American was General Counsel Edward O’Keefe. The Law Office of Michael Long was presented with the Outstanding Small Firm award for the most pro bono cases handled by any other Mecklenburg County Bar volunteer through Legal Aid of North Carolina and Michael Long accepted the award. The award for outstanding individual was given to Robert W. Simmons of McGuire Woods and his sons Rush and Grier Simmons accepted on his behalf.

Partner/Program awards were given to: Legal Aid of North Carolina’s Mark Nebrig of Moore & Van Allen; Legal Services of Southern Piedmont’s Francisco J. Linares of Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft; and Council for Children’s Rights’ David L. Levy of Hedrick, Gardner Kincheloe & Garofalo. The Jane V. Harper Pro Bono Award was given to Julie Seidenstein of Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough.

Mr. Perrin congratulated all pro bono award recipients and thanked all those who have offered their time and energy this year.

V. Presentation of Distinguished Service Award *Barbara B. Weyher, NCSB President*

Mr. Kelly introduced North Carolina State Bar President Bonnie Weyher.

Ms. Weyher reviewed the criteria for the Distinguished Service Award and announced Mr. Luke Largess from the office of Tin Fulton Walker & Owen as the award recipient. She highlighted Mr. Largess’ exemplary service to the profession. Mr. Largess devotes his time and resources to justice and to those who cannot afford counsel. He has also provides reduced professional services and provides public service through NCLEAF, where he remains involved as Board President. Ms. Weyher congratulated Luke Largess and presented him with the Distinguished Service Award.

Mr. Largess accepted the award and provided brief remarks noting that his achievements were not done alone. He thanked the Mecklenburg Bar Foundation for their gift of \$20,000 to NCLEAF which provides over \$750,000 in assistance annually to public service lawyers.

Mr. Kelly congratulated Mr. Largess and all the pro bono award winners today and asked the Bar to give them a round of applause.

VI. Nominating Committee Report

John Lassiter, Past-President

John Lassiter thanked all those who served on the Nominating Committee for their service. Mr. Lassiter presented the following slate of officers and board members for the Bar's approval: **A. Todd Brown**, President, **Robert C. Dortch, Jr.**, President-Elect; **Hon. Karen Eady-Williams**, Vice-President; **Tricia Morvan Derr**, Secretary; and **Robert E. Harrington**, Treasurer. Nominees for Board members to serve a three-year term were: **Carla N. Archie**, **Kodwo P. Ghartey-Tagoe**, **Amy Purwin Hunt**, **Mark R. Kutny**, **Daniel V. Mumford**, and **William R. Soukup**. **Jonathan A. Vogel** was nominated to serve a one-year appointment to fill a vacancy in the class of 2011 and **Edward T. Hinson Jr.** was nominated for a two-year term as ABA Delegate. Mr. Lassiter 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 Kelly.

VII. Election of Board and Officers

Pat Kelly, President

President Kelly thanked Mr. Lassiter for his job as chair of the Nominating Committee. Mr. Kelly 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.

VIII. 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 A. Todd Brown. Mr. Brown took the oath and was sworn into office. His wife took part in the ceremony.

IX. Presentation of President's Plaque

Todd Brown, Incoming President

On behalf of the Mecklenburg County Bar, Mr. Brown presented a plaque to Pat Kelly, the outgoing 2009-2010 Bar President. Mr. Brown thanked Mr. Kelly for his outstanding service and dedication to the Bar.

X. Remarks

Todd Brown, Incoming President

Todd Brown thanked Judge Diaz and addressed the guests and members of the Bar. Mr. Brown expressed his gratitude for the trust and confidence that the Bar has entrusted him with. He thanked Pat Kelly for his leadership and generosity during this past year. He also thanked his family and those from Hunton & Williams for their encouragement and support to serve the public and the Bar.

Mr. Brown noted that the Bar had few members at its inception in 1912. In 2012, the Bar will celebrate its 100th anniversary and the Bar now stands at 4,300. The Bar must add value; it has an obligation to the public. He noted that his window of opportunity is brief and the list is long. He promised to work closely with the Bar and give value and quality

service for practices and upgrade/review the programs. Long term strategic plan is the framework that will lead the Bar through the next five years. The Bar must promote the highest standards of professionalism and assure access to legal services regardless of social, ethnic or economic status. Successful implementation will sustain the Bar in the future and he is confident we are up for the challenge. The Bar must continue to be good stewards of its resources; currently 60% of the Bar's revenue comes from non-dues operations. We need to promote greater collaboration/participation of the Bar. The Bar has over 70 committees and sections which need member support.

Mr. Brown concluded by stating that these are tough times. He asked members to work with the staff and explore CLE options and training opportunities. He committed to increase diversity in all committee/section chair/co-chair positions and to continue to advocate and promote professional and ethical behavior. He again thanked the Bar and expressed his eagerness to begin.

XI. Drawing

Pat Kelly/Todd Brown

Mr. Kelly thanked the annual meeting's year-round sponsors Lawyers Mutual Liability Insurance of North Carolina, Consolidated Planning, Allen Tate Realtors, RBC and Gilsbar. The Supporter sponsors for this year are Chicago Title Insurance Company and the Charlotte Athletic Club Golf Simulation.

Drawings took place for door prizes from Blackfinn, Capital Grill, Charlotte Athletic Club, The Palm, Strike City, Vivace, Chima Brazilian Steakhouse, and Emerson Joseph's.

XII. Adjournment

Pat Kelly, President

Mr. Kelly thanked all those for attending.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Karen Eady-Williams
Secretary