Pennsylvania Bar Association
Minority Bar Committee
Meeting Minutes
Friday September 13, 2019

Attendees: Tony Thompson (Vice Chair), Andrea Farney (Secretary), Norris Benns Jr., Bill Cluck (Chair Environmental and Energy Law Section), Jen Coatsworth, Sharita Coleman, Dean Danielle M Conway (Special Guest), Judge Stephanie Domitrovich, Kristen Feden, Ana Paulina Gomez, Rachel Hadrick, Trent Hargrove (PBA Diversity Officer), Arlene Marshall Hockensmith, Tsiwen Law (Past MBC Chair), Marisa Lattimore (Past MBC Chair), Stephanie Latimore (Co-Vice Chair WIP), Sharon López (PBA Past President), Lynn Marks, Wes Payne (Zone 1 Governor), Gabriela Raful, David Schwager (PBA President-Elect), Mike Sand, Nigel Scott, Jay Silberblatt, Rhodia Thomas, Patrice Turene.

A meeting of the Pennsylvania Bar Association Minority Bar Committee was held on Friday, September 13, 2019.

Calling Meeting to Order
Vice Chair Tony Thompson called the meeting to order.

I. Introductions of attendees:
   a. Brief introductions of attendees occurred.

II. Action Items & Announcements.
   A. Approval of August 9, 2019 Minutes.

The minutes of August 9, 2019 were approved with the following corrections: (1) New Business A – the Environmental & Energy Law Section made a request to the PA Bar Foundation to establish a minority law scholarship for those interested in environmental law; (2) Mike Sand attended the last meeting; (3) Louann Bell requested members to email her if they were present at the last meeting and not reflected in the minutes; (4) Legislative report – race based domestic terrorism increased 25% in 2018 from 2017 (remove doubled).

III. Subcommittee Chair Reports:

A. Minority Attorney Conference – Marisa Lattimore, Gina Thomas & Rhodia Thomas (October 3-4, 2019, Philadelphia)
Rhodia Thomas reported. The Conference is less than one month away! The theme is Communities Under Attack: Leadership Moving Forward and the dates are October 3 & 4 at PBI in Philadelphia. Phoebe Haden and Tom Kline will be giving the keynotes. The Rising Star will be awarded to Patrice Turenne. The A Leon Higginbotham Jr. Award will be presented to past MBC Chair Prince Thomas. Please continue to get the word out. Marisa Lattimore reported $20,500 in sponsorships. The Subcommittee is pleased with this amount because last time the amount was $18,000. Registration is low right now, but it is early. The Subcommittee believes the panels will be excellent.

B. Membership Development – Cherylle Corpuz, Sharon López & Jacqueline Martinez.

Sharon López reported. They have calls on the 4th Friday of every month and for an efficient ½ hour. They continue to work on the pictorial directory by focusing on the MBC Executive Committee Members first. Ana Paulina Gomez is acting as a concierge by reaching out to new members. Welcome to Gabriella Raful as a new member who is attending the meeting today! Also to Obinna Abara!

C. Diversity Summit – Andrea Farney, Sharon Barney, Anthony Cox, Jay Silberblatt, & Patrice Turenne

Andrea Farney reported. The Subcommittee is still in the initial phases of discussions on where to hold the Summit and the Summit theme. As reported last meeting, one potential theme is on focusing on the law school pipeline and engagement of younger lawyers in the bar association. Potential location includes central PA and Northeastern PA. The Subcommittee is further discussing having break-out sessions in lieu of all panel presentations. The Subcommittee wants to spark new engagement.

D. Minority Law Day – Nigel Scott, Patrice Turenne, Rachel Hadrick, Roberto Datorre, Verdell Dean & Imogene Cathey

Nigel Scott reported for Eastern PA. They had a productive planning call last week. He will be sending a proposed agenda to the Subcommittee. They are incorporating Youth Court into the program. Kristen Gibbons Feden is going to give a presentation to the students and there will be a mock youth court. In the afternoon they will have the traditional appellate arguments. The event is October 21. Please sign up to volunteer. Louann is working on CLE credits for it and will know more about this hopefully next week.

Rachel Hadrick reported for Central PA. Invitations to the schools went out. The event is scheduled for October 24th. Please email her and/or Louann if you can volunteer.
Tony Thompson reported for Western PA. The Subcommittee will be meeting to begin organizing the program. They usually have it in the spring.

E. Community Outreach – Raphael Castro & Nego Pile

Sharon López reported for the Subcommittee. The Subcommittee is working with the Philly Minority Law Day Subcommittee on Youth Court programming. There is an October 17th training in Harrisburg for attorneys interested in participating as a volunteer for Youth Court in the Philadelphia area.


Arlene Marshall Hockensmith reported. They are in process of putting the fall 2019 issue together. They hope to have copies available for the Minority Attorney Conference.

G. Governance – Marsha Grayson

No report.

H. Legislative – Tsiwen Law & Brenda Marrero

Tsiwen Law reported. The state legislature is coming back this week, so there isn’t any report at the state level right now.

IV. Special Presentation – Dean Danielle M. Conway, Penn State Dickinson Law

Dean Conway gave a brief presentation. She welcomed Members contacting her on Twitter, LinkedIn, or by email. She clarified that Penn State Dickinson and Penn State University Park are separately accredited. She spoke about the absolute necessity of pipeline programs to effect diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. She reminded us that we need to teach about the importance of defending the constitution and the rule of law. She wants to have a pipeline type program every summer. She is talking about more than helping prospective students prepare for an exam. She thinks programs need to start at middle school age at the latest. There are 9 law schools in Pennsylvania and the Deans do work together on collective issues. She believes in marketing and documenting activities to get the word out on what is happening. She makes a strong case for engagement through discourse on explaining why we need diverse lawyers.

V. New Business.

A. Sharon López advised members that the Hispanic Bar Association of PA and the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of PA are holding a joint networking event
in Harrisburg on September 18. Don Hahn, the Mayor of State College will be the speaker. All are welcome.

B. Jay Silberblatt advised members that the Solo and Small Firm Section is interested in collaborating with the Minority Bar Committee for purposes of the Section’s Annual July Conference.

C. Jenn Coatsworth advised members of an October 30th Food Tasting Networking Event at White and Williams. The event is a collaboration of the Philly Bar Association and Affinity Bars. All are welcome.

D. Jenn Coatsworth also advised members of an upcoming event at Alice Paul Institute on the ERA. More information will be forthcoming.

E. David Schwager advised members of an event planned for July 9th 2020 – the 125th Anniversary of the incorporation of the PBA. He and President Anne John are talking about programming for this event. He invites members to contact him with their thoughts and ideas. It will be a year-long celebration.

F. Sharon López advised members of 3 cases on LGBTQ rights to be heard by the US Supreme Court on October 8th in Washington DC. The cases are about whether federal law provides employment discrimination protection for individuals who are LGBTQ.

G. Members are also reminded that on October 4th the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of PA is holding its 35th Anniversary Banquet. Cecillia Wang, Deputy Legal Director of the ACLU will be the featured speaker. All are welcome.

VI. Member Comments or Concerns

None.

VII. Adjournment. Motion made and seconded to adjourn.

Next Executive Council Meeting September 30, 2019.
Next Meeting Date: October 11, 2019

Minutes Submitted by Andrea C. Farney, Secretary.