Pennsylvania Bar Association
Minority Bar Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday March 26, 2020

Attendees: Tyesha Miley (Chair), Tony Thompson (Vice-Chair), Andrea Farney (Secretary), Louann Bell (PBA), Bill Cluck, Verdell Dean, Thadeus Edwards, Marshal Graynor, Trent Hargrove (PBA Diversity Officer), Arlene Marshall Hockensmith, Anne John (PBA President), Stephanie Latimore, Tsiwen Law, Marisa Lattimore, Guerline Laurore, Sharon López (PBA Past President), Michael McDonald, Hon. Carolyn Nichols, Wes Payne (Zone 1 Governor), Nego Pile, Tyrone Powell, Beverly Rampaull (PBA Secretary), Michael Sand, Dolly Schuster, David Schwager (PBA President Elect), Maraleen Shields, Logan Stover (PBA Legislative Coordinator), Gina Thomas, Patrice Turenne, Susan Wolf (PBA), Phil Yoon

A meeting of the Pennsylvania Bar Association Minority Bar Committee was held on Thursday, March 26, 2020.

Vice Chair Tony Thompson called the meeting to order.

I. Introductions of attendees:
   a. Brief introductions of attendees occurred. The meeting was held by phone only due to COVID-19 concerns.

II. Action Items.
   A. Approval of February 14, 2020 Meeting Minutes.

      The February 14, 2020 Minutes were approved with a correction to Section B, Line 7 to be modified to state “we would table any action….” Verdell Dean moved, Mike McDonald 2d. The motion passed. Abstaining were Beverly Rampaul, Phil Yoon, and Guerline Laurore.

III. Subcommittee Chair Reports:

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

      Andrea Farney reported. The Summit is October 7, 2020. It will be at the Doubletree by Hilton in Plymouth Meeting. It is called Diversity 2.0 Practical Tips and Tools for Lawyers, Law Firms, and Bar Associations. The Subcommittee is targeting Managing Attorneys from Majority firms as participants. The Subcommittee is collaborating with the Montgomery Bar Association. It will be a 1-day event (as usual) and substantive programming is
well underway. The planning group had phone meetings on 2/21/20 and 3/20/20. Andrea recognized her co-chairs, Anthony Cox, Sharon Barney, Jay Silberblatt, and Patrice Turenne. She also noted active planning committee membership by Sharon López, Antoinette Hubbard, Trent Hargrove, Judge Domitrovich, and Montgomery Bar Association folks, Jimmy Chong, Evelyn Rodriguez Devine, and Nancy Walsh.

Programming includes an Allies Session, led by Carl Cooper and Dr. Jonathan Kantor and Dr. Ellen Ostrow. This will include implicit bias and vignette processing and research. Following this will be a pipeline presentation with a multigenerational perspective. Sharon Barney is moderating and the panelists include Dan Mateo, Rachel Hadrick, and Dylan Grayson. Following will be 3 “Ted Talks” and follow-up with resources. The afternoon will also include small group break out sessions with a large group report back and the closing is with President Elect David Schwager and Chief Judge Juan R. Sánchez, of the Eastern District of PA. The next Subcommittee call is 4/17.

**President Anne John joined the call to speak with and hear from the Committee. She thanked everyone for their participation, particularly during the COVID-19 crisis. She advised PBA staff are doing a wonderful job in keeping the organization running by working remotely. There was a video zoom call this morning with 90 some participants attending. It went very well. She credited our Chair, Tyesha Miley, for her participation.

B. Minority Law Day – Western PA update – Verdell Dean, Tony Thompson

Verdell Dean reported. They are going to postpone the 4/22 event and are looking to reschedule for the fall. Most of the schools are not yet committing to outside programming, so they will need to wait on the schools scheduling. The program was on Youth Court.

C. Community outreach – Raphael Castro & Nego Pile

No report.

D. Newsletter – Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith

Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith reported. Articles have been submitted for the next issue of Houston’s Legacy. She is working with Diane Banks from PBA on putting it together. She expects the issue to be out on 4/22/2020.

E. Legislative – Tsiwen Law & Brenda Marrero

Logan Stover advised the state senate and house are meeting sporadically and voting remotely. Only COVID-19 bills are happening right now. There is a new date for the primary election, June 2, 2020. People should consider mail-in ballots.
IV. Liaison Reports

A. YLD – Anthony Cox

No report.

V. New Business

A. Permanent At-Large Position – update

It was reported the WIP voted in favor of the recommendation.

B. Recommendation re House Bill 196

There wasn’t any report. Logan advised non-COVID-19 legislation was not moving or expecting to move at the moment.

C. Louann Bell’s Retirement

Louann Bell is our long-time Committee Liaison (amongst many other PBA duties) and she is retiring. Tomorrow is her last day. Our Chair wanted to recognize her with flowers and in other ways, but the COVID-19 virus has postponed that for now. Stay tuned. However, many, many members gave words of gratitude and thanks to Louann Bell on her retirement from PBA. Thank you Louann.

VI. Member comments or concerns

A. Tsiwen Law reviewed concerns about Anti-Asian Racism Associated with the Coronavirus (COVID-19). There has been some racist attacks and xenophobic profiling against members of the Asian Pacific American community relating to the global virus outbreak. A statement was put out by the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Pennsylvania about it. A copy was sent out on the MBC Listserv. Reports of bias can go to the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission.

B. Education Liaison. The Committee received an email requesting a liaison from our Committee to assist PBI with identifying diverse speakers for programming. Discussion ensued. Dolly Schuster agreed to take on this role for now. Dolly is a long-time member of the Committee and has experience putting together many CLEs, including for the Civil and Equal Rights Committee and the Women in the Profession. Thank you Dolly for agreeing to take on this role!

C. Notary. Nego Pile discussed the importance of modifying the rules, on a temporary basis, for notary signature during the COVID-19 virus. There was
discussion about how this is in the works and that PBA supports this measure or remote notarization.

D. The Committee welcomes Susan Wolf as our new Committee Coordinator. Susan’s experience includes serving as the Bar Executive in Lebanon County and working for the PA Medical Association. Welcome Susan!

VII. Adjournment

- Next MBC Meeting Day – May 7, 2020 (This could change due to COVID-19)
- Next Executive Council Meeting – April 27, 2020

Minutes Submitted by Andrea C. Farney, Secretary.