Pennsylvania Bar Association
Minority Bar Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 7, 2020

Attendees: Tyesha Miley (Chair), Tony Thompson (Vice-Chair), LaToya Winfield Bellamy (Secretary), Susan Wolf (PBA), Sharon Barney, Jennifer Coatsworth, Anthony Cox, Jr., Verdell Dean, Thadeous Edwards, Andrea Farney, Trent Hargrove, Anne John (President), Guerline Laurore, Tsiwen Law, Marisa Lattimore, Sharon López, Lynn Marks, Beverly Rampaul, Michael Sand, David Schwager (President-Elect), Maraleen Shields, Dolly Shuster, Jay Silberblatt, Stella Tsai, Phil Yoon, Clair Papieredin (PBI/PBA), Marshal Granor

A meeting of the Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA) Minority Bar Committee (MBC) was held on Thursday, May 7, 2020.

Vice Chair Tony Thompson called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

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

II. Action Items.
    A. Approval of the March 26, 2020 Minutes on the motion by Tsiwen Law and second by Dolly Shuster.
    B. Welcome to the Committee’s new Secretary, LaToya Winfield Bellamy.

III. Subcommittee Chair Reports:

   A. Diversity Summit – Presented by Jay Silberblatt; Co-Chairs Sharon Barney, Anthony Cox, Jr., Andrea Farney and Patrice Turrene.

      The subcommittee has shifted to planning a virtual conference in partnership with the Montgomery County Bar Association. They’re confirming publicity and event title and conferring with speakers. Comments were offered by PBA President Anne John, President-Elect David Schwager and MBC Chair Tyesha Miley.

   B. Minority Law Day – Presented by Verdell Dean; Co-Chair Tony Thompson

      Due to the pandemic the Western PA event did not take place. It is unclear whether volunteers will be permitted to visit schools in Fall 2020.

   C. Community Outreach – No report.

E. Legislative – Presented by Tsiwen Law; Co-chair Brenda Marrero

Recent legislation passed to permit remote notarization of documents during the COVID-19 pandemic by notaries that apply for authorization. Other issues of note include increase in unemployment claims and more staff needed and federal funding needed for state.

IV. Liaison Reports

A. YLD – Presented by Anthony Cox, Jr.

A potential mentor program was discussed. There’s an upcoming business meeting following which a more in-depth report will be provided. There will be a discussion on the economic impact of the pandemic.

V. New Business

A. Permanent At-Large Position

Tsiwen Law provided an update that the resolution was approved by the Commission on Women in the Profession (WIP) and will be presented in the House of Delegates at the Fall meeting rather than the Spring virtual meeting.

B. NAPABA Statement and ADL Statement

Tsiwen Law discussed the troubling spike in attacks and incidents against Asian-Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic. Bar associations should oppose violence and support the NAPABA statement. Tsiwen Law moved that the MBC support the statement, which was second by Dolly Shuster. Beverly Rampaul amended the motion to provide that the MBC adopt its own statement, which Maria Nucci supported. Discussion brought out the important considerations of the PBA Bylaws and applicable procedures as well as President John’s previously issued statement condemning the racially motivated attacks. No official vote was taken on the motion, but there was a consensus to work on a draft statement that would be processed the appropriate channels of the PBA and presented as a matter of concern of the MBC and a posting of President John’s statement on the MBC page.

VI. Member comments or concerns

A. Beverly Rampaul announced two open positions in the Lancaster County Public Defenders’ Office.

B. Sharon Lopez discussed the highlights of the WIP Report Card and an acknowledgement of Allegheny Court of Common Pleas President Judge Kim Berkeley Clark as a trailblazer.
C. Sharon Lopez suggested a service project in November in support of the Black Lives Matter Movement and acknowledging the shooting death of Ahmaud Arbery.

VII. Adjournment at 4:03 p.m.

Next Executive Council Meeting – June 1, 2020 @ 12:00 p.m.
Next Meeting Date: June 12, 2020 at 12:00 p.m.

Minutes Submitted by LaToya Winfield Bellamy, Secretary.