Pennsylvania Bar Association
Diversity Team
Conference Call Meeting

April 23, 2015 – 12:00 p.m.

Minutes

Attendance:
Committee Members - Melinda Ghilardi, Chair, Beverly Rampaul, Vice Chair, Jennifer Ellis, Andrea Farney, Stacy Hawkins, Stephanie Latimore, Marisa Lattimore, Mike Lee, Jackie Martinez, Mike Reed, Hon. James Ross, Dolly Shuster, Jessie Smith
Staff – Barry Simpson, Fran O’Rourke, Trent Hargrove, Louann Bell, Susan Etter, Dick McCoy

Melinda chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Approval of Minutes
The minutes of the March 2 meeting were approved with revisions from Trent Hargrove, Dolly Shuster and Stacy Hawkins.

Diversity Award
Mike Reed reported that it had been decided to present the 1st annual diversity award to the Minority Bar Committee (MBC) during the PBA House of Delegates meeting on May 8. Melinda requested that Mike Reed make the presentation to the MBC leadership. Barry noted that three minutes were allotted in the House agenda for the award presentation and acceptance. Trent Hargrove will work on the publicity for the award and its presentation. Barry advised the members that discussion is underway as to the possibility of once again establishing an awards breakfast prior to the House of Delegates meeting due to the large number of awards that have recently been created. A suggestion was made that the diversity award be named after Janis Leftridge, PBA’s first diversity officer, or possibly someone else who has championed diversity within PBA. It was decided to table that discussion for a future meeting.

Attorney Registration/Data Collection
Barry reported that he has no current update since he first spoke to Chief Justice Saylor about this issue. At that time he was advised that the Chief was aware of the issue and it is on their agenda. It is quite possible the issue may not be addressed until the Court once again has a full complement in January 2016. Jessie Smith volunteered to talk to Mimi McCormick and ask that she speak to Justice Todd about this since she is a known supporter.

Report of the Diversity Officer
Trent noted that he had a discussion with the new assistant dean for career services at Dickinson Law School regarding possible areas of collaboration with the PBA including networking, mentoring and clinical skills development. He plans to continue seeking ways to work with her as well as other law schools in hopes of setting up pipeline programs. He also noted that during the March 23 Committee/Section Day he chose to attend some of the “non-diverse” committee
meetings to get a sense of the activity of those groups. He attended the Health Care Law Committee and the Elder Law Section meetings. He advised the members that health care for the elderly and delivery of legal services to these diverse populations is an increasing area of focus for discussion. Trent also informed the Team that he, David Trevaskis and Susan Etter attended a meeting with prominent students of color from the Abington High School leadership development group. They took a tour of the capitol and discussed the importance of civic participation in the U.S. Constitution. Trent advised the members that he had a conference call with the Diversity Office of the New Jersey State Bar Association and discussed the mutual desire for the collaboration of the New Jersey and Pennsylvania Bars. They also discussed programming and the best practices for diversity. He also noted that the Strategic Priority Subcommittee recently met. The meeting summary is attached to these minutes. He plans to keep refining the goals and objectives identified going forward. The items identified to be done this governance year are:

1. Minority Counsel Business Development Forum – Currently being developed by the MBC Diversity Summit Subcommittee co-chairs, Tyrone Powell and Andrea Farney. It will provide opportunities for minority and women owned firms in partnering with corporate clients. It was suggested that the Solo/Small Firm Practice Section and the WIP be included in this endeavor.
2. Best Practices Discussion with the Diversity Committee of the National Council of Bar Presidents.
3. Facilitated discussion with affinity bar association in Pennsylvania. This may be done in the Fall.
4. Continuing to develop CLEs for inclusive lawyering for the 21st century lawyer.

**House Term Limits Resolution**

Jessie stated that the Team has been struggling with this issue for a long time, noting that the original resolution drafted by the Diversity Task Force was done in 2010. The subcommittee pulled together a statistical analysis as was suggested at an earlier meeting. The analysis identified several other states that have already done this and have even more stringent limits than what are suggested in the Team’s resolution. Since this is not just a diversity issue but a membership and governance issue, the subcommittee is suggesting that this issue be sent to the PBA Planning Committee. It was noted that the chair of the Planning Committee is now the PBA treasurer rather than the PBA president-elect which allows for the leadership to remain in place for a longer period of time. See the attached reported for a listing of other options that can be considered. Some members expressed concern about passing this resolution on to the Planning Committee. Barry noted that general consensus of the Planning Committee is that the committee should not interject itself into the workings of the other committees. With that in mind they may not feel this is an issue for their consideration. Mike Reed noted that the ABA’s model would suggest this issue be dealt with by the Board or the House. A suggestion was made that the Bar Organization Committee could be tasked to look at this issue. Another suggestion was that the Planning Committee or possibly the PBA president should appoint a Governance Task Force to address this issue specifically. It was decided that the report should be amended to address the concerns that were expressed during the meeting. Jessie will discuss the issue with Barry and Fran and then come back to the Team with a report revised accordingly.

**Minority and Woman Governor Positions**
Dolly noted that the two minority and one woman governor positions each have three year terms, but at the end of each term the Board and House must vote on whether another three year term should be granted. In that sense the seats are not permanent positions on the Board. In addition, there is no provision in the appointment procedure that the PBA president consult with the WIP or the MBC when making their appointment. The subcommittee strongly feels that all three of the seats are still needed. The subcommittee recommends that the minority and woman governor seats be made permanent and that the WIP and MBC be consulted during the appointment selection process. The subcommittee also recommends that the “no repeat” provision be removed from these seats so they have the same requirements as the zone governors positions. After discussion it was decided that the subcommittee should continue to work on their recommendations. A revised report should be put together to pass along to the new Team and subcommittee.

**Report of PBI Executive Director**
Dick reported that 20-25 recommendations were received for the three open seats on the PBI Board. The names which the Nominating Committee chose will be announced at the PBA Board of Governors meeting on May 6. He also noted that the chair of the PBI Diversity Committee is going off the Board. Seth Mendelsohn will select her replacement.

**Next Meeting Date**
The next meeting will be determined by incoming chair, Beverly Rampaul.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:56 p.m.