

**Veterans and Military Law Section—Executive Committee Call
February 11, 2016 at 3pm ET**

In attendance: Bob DeSousa, Frank McGovern, Jim Richardson, Alan Goldsmith, Chase Johnson, Carol Wild Scott

Chair's Report--Bob DeSousa: All committees are filled and active. It is important to continue to push membership in the section by asking all FBA members to consider joining. The newsletter has an April 1 deadline and members are encouraged to submit articles. It is also vital to come up with ideas for CLE.

Vice Chair's Report—Frank McGovern: We are looking to host/participate in a CLE this spring in Philadelphia in conjunction with the Eastern District of Pennsylvania Chapter. We also hope to put on CLE at the upcoming Women in the Law event in New York and at the National Convention in Cleveland. Jim Richardson also pointed out an upcoming event in Baltimore in conjunction with the Maryland Chapter.

Ex-Officio's Report—Jim Richardson: Legislation is pending in Congress to remove Veterans Administration employees from the purview of Title 5 USC pertaining to federal civil servants, and put them under Title 38 which covers the VA. This would permit them to be terminated with fewer procedural protections. Carol Wild Scott confirmed that this would apply to all VA employees who are members of the Senior Executive Service. Jim said we should work with the Career Service Division to come up with a proposed FBA position on this proposal. It was then noted that several bills have been introduced on this issue. Turning to membership, Jim said he was trying to get all former FBA presidents to join the section, especially those who are prior or retired military.

Secretary's Report—Alan Goldsmith: The panel discussion on the proposed revision of the Uniform Code of Military Justice submitted to Congress by the Department of Defense was cancelled due to the recent inclement weather. However, the contact person at the American Bar Association stated that efforts were underway to reschedule the panel for some time in February or March. Alan will send an e-mail around when he is notified of the new date. Bob also advised that the Military Justice Committee has interest in this issue and, when appropriate, will do an article for the section newsletter.

Treasurer's Report—Chase Johnson: Since FBA only provides financial reports every other month, no current report was available but Chase will circulate the next report when it comes out. He also stated that it would help the section's financial situation if, at some point, we could sponsor some revenue producing events such as CLE's.

Immediate Past Chair's Report—Carol Wild Scott: The VA recently conducted a symposium on suicide prevention. Carol was able to meet with a member of the House of Representatives who is a member of the Veterans Affairs Committee, and she is still trying to get a seat at Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi's roundtable. She also reported that VA is trying to change the procedure concerning adverse decisions to the detriment of claimants, and noted efforts to get the VA to use Title 5 administrative law judges instead of the officials now serving in that capacity. Carol also advised that the remand rate at the Court

of Appeals for Veterans Claims is now 70%. She also noted a problem on Indian reservations with tribal representatives being unable to advocate for Indian claimants at the VA.