

**VMLS Board of Directors Meeting**  
**October 9, 2018**

**Attendees:** Alan Goldsmith, Steve Newman, James Downey, Chase Johnson, John Wells, Dawn Kennedy, Jim Richardson, Maura Clancy, Walter Kroptavich, Carol Scott.

**Chair's Report:** the VMLS is joining the *Procopio* lawsuit in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit (there were nine votes in favor of joining, no votes against, and one abstention) (see further details below).

Next major events: Puerto Rico CLE in November 2018. Jobs for JAGS seminar on November 29, 2018. CLE focusing on assistance for Native American veterans in Montana in March 2019. Alan previously attended the first annual awards reception for the Veterans Consortium and touched base with Ed Glabus while he was there. Ed expressed interest in the Montana CLE.

The section has a goal to be involved in next year's FBA National annual meeting and convention. Alan discussed the idea of an all-day CLE that mimics the Puerto Rico and Montana events. Will consider speaking with Bob DeSousa about this as a potential co-sponsor.

A goal for the 2020 annual meeting in Charlestown is for the CAVC to hold a session of Court at the FBA National annual meeting (as they are slated to do in Montana). Alan ran this by the chair of the folks organizing the Charlestown convention and will keep the section posted.

**Vice Chair's Report:** Walter discussed an event that will be held next summer that aims to get more law students involved in section/FBA events. We will discuss this in more detail at the January 2019 Board meeting.

**Secretary's Report:** no report.

**Treasurer's Report:** The section currently has \$6,333 in the bank, not including one outstanding travel expense. The section will incur pending obligations going forward re: events, but no concerns about funding. Chase is working on the section's annual budget and is currently waiting on an itemized list of all miscellaneous charges from FBA. Once that is complete, he will circulate the drafted budget for everyone to consider for the next FY (January—December 2019). Alan needs to make reservations for the Montana CLE at some point, and has pending travel expenses for the National Meeting, so those need to be considered in calculating the budget/amount in the bank.

**Immediate Past Chair's Report:** Jim has been in contact with a professor in Montana for the past year or so. He is going to do more to get involved in the Indian Law section and will work on doing a discharge review panel for the Montana CLE. Alan will most likely present on this topic.

**CLE Committee:** no report.

**Membership Committee:** the section has established a page on LinkedIn and we are currently working on adding pictures, a leadership listing, etc. Alan suggested obtaining a list of (1) all VMLS members, (2) all Pentagon chapter members, (3) every FBA member with a military prefix, and (4) every FBA member with a .mil email address. James is going to work on this so that we can work on growing membership by reaching out to people that meet these criteria.

**Military Justice chair:** no report.

**Communications Committee:** Dawn discussed that the September newsletter publication may not have been distributed yet, and indicated that the next newsletter does not go out until February 2019. The deadline for materials for that newsletter will be at the end of January 2019.

**Legislative and Regulatory Committee:** Carol communicated that briefings have begun on appeals reform. VA has started rolling out RAMP, but the IT part is far from ready. Carol has not yet heard about the next roundtable with Rep. Pelosi.

Hilary Wandler is planning a CLE for tribal veterans' service officers. A current problem at VA is the lack of an accreditation mechanism for TVSOs. There are some VSO posts on reservations, but they receive no support and no representation.

Veterans suicide prevention issue: Carol suggested writing a letter to Sens. Isaacson and Tester, asking their committee to inquire re: rate of suicide among American Indian veterans. No one is collecting these statistics and this is a prevalent problem among Native American veterans.

Blue Water Act: though it passed the House, the Act only made it to one hearing in the Senate before VA attempted to halt the process. Military coalitions came out with support for the bill, and the American Legion, VFW, DAV, Paralyzed Veterans wrote letters of support. But there is a delay in the committee and the thinking is that the bill is not going to go through after all. If there are changes to the bill, it needs to go back to the House. This is why *Procopio* is so important – if there is a decision by late spring/early summer, it may remove the need for the legislation altogether. Relatedly, VA is afraid that VBA will have a lot of difficulty processing these claims. Burnpits and other exposure issues are also coming down the pipeline—there is a toxic exposure bill in the works right now. But re: Blue Water, it seems that we (the section) are beyond the point where we could make a difference.

### **New Business:**

The Board approved the proposed section by-laws unanimously.

The Board approved a \$500 sponsorship for 2018 Jobs for JAGS unanimously.

Updates are being made slowly to the section website. Alan to resend the welcome message for the website.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.