

**VMLS Executive Committee Meeting
December 13, 2018**

Attendees: Alan Goldsmith, Walter Kroptavich, Chase Johnson, Maura Clancy, Carol Scott, Dave Acerra, Alea Al-Aghbari, and Rebecca (taking the place of Michael Parker).

Chair's Report:

Jobs for JAGs seminar went very well recently: 80 attendees and the program—similar to last year—received positive feedback. At the seminar, Alan distributed copies of TFL and other FBA materials, which was met with positive response from attendees. Alan will order the same materials for next year, given the interest.

The Section joined the amicus brief in *Procopio v. Wilkie* (Blue Water Navy veterans case). Alan and Carol attended the argument. Alan believes the argument went very well for the Veteran's side, from what he could tell. It was a very hot bench.

Vice Chair's Report: Walter reminded the E-Committee that the Section should consider sponsoring an event (probably a reception) for the FBA summer law clerk program. Other opportunities include agency visits, panel presentations, etc. for the law students.

Secretary's Report: Maura reported that she is following up on details for the upcoming Montana CLE in March 2019 and will distribute them to anyone interested. Alan expressed interest in receiving Montana-related updates.

Treasurer's Report: Chase mentioned the Diversity Grant, which provides funding (up to \$3,000) to host an event (provided that it meets grant standards). We will keep this grant in mind if anyone has ideas for qualifying programming.

We discussed the budget. One expense includes a \$2,000 line item for travel reimbursement. The Section has already reimbursed Alan for Puerto Rico CLE expenses. For the Montana event next year, airfare and hotel will cost approximately \$1,000, but Alan may only submit for airfare (not hotel) to reduce that expense. The only other travel expense should be for the Annual FBA National Meeting and Convention, but since Alan is the National Delegate for the Pentagon Chapter, we might be able to lower the \$2,000 expense figure to \$1,500. Chase thinks this would be a reasonable reduction; if circumstances change, we could either modify the budget or just not cover subsequent expenses.

Regarding the miscellaneous fee, a portion of this is the annual fee that the Section owes to the FBA. That leaves approximately \$2,100 for sponsorships, co-sponsorships, etc. We have already paid \$500 for Jobs for JAGs. The CAAF event may only cost approximately \$100-200 of our miscellaneous expenses. The summer law clerk event that we discussed above will not be planned until March, so we don't have a sense of what kind of financial obligation that would entail. Dave indicated that, in the next couple of days, we will receive our end of the year balance. We aren't sure of our FY2019 revenue yet, but in the past, it has consistently been approximately \$2,800/FY (from dues).

If we assume a \$500 expense for Jobs for JAGs, a \$500 expense for the summer law clerk event, and a \$100 expense for the CAAF event, that is only \$1,000. The budget currently assumes \$2,190.

The Section currently has 175 members, so dues should approximate \$3,500 (\$20 per member). Given that projection, the budget will be adjusted to reflect \$3,000 for annual dues revenue. Dave mentioned an FBA rule that when a section has under 200 members, the administrative fee is a flat \$500 fee. This fee is calculated during the first or second week of October. Maura looked into the membership records, and as of September 30, 2017, we had 195 members. Maura forward this to information to Dave. Unfortunately, the \$500 flat fee rule did not go into effect until August 2018, but for FY 2019, our administrative fee should be the flat \$500 fee (barring any surge in membership).

Alan is trying to put together a program for the FBA Annual Meeting in Tampa. That would come at no cost to the Section.

Given these changes, Alan and Chase are going to make edits to the drafted budget to see if we can come up with a budget that gives us a surplus. Based on our quick math during the call, even with our changes, we are still running a deficit of approximately \$900.

Legislative and Regulatory Committee:

Carol reported that the Supreme Court has granted *certiorari* in *Kisor*. They will focus on whether *Auer* deference should be reconsidered. This will be an interesting one that we will pay attention to.

Carol discussed the recent VA benefits-related delays that have been occurring. She believes that VA is going to start paying backpay that has been withheld. On Wednesday, December 19, 2018, there will be a very rare joint hearing between the Senate and House Veterans Affairs Committees, given that VA is having monumental IT problems. Carol believes they will discuss the backpay issues at the hearing on the 19th. Alan proposed a one-month period of watchful waiting on this: if, in one month, the delays are still a problem, the Board as a whole can discuss taking action. Carol responded that the time to take action, if any, is now. The new, incoming chair of the House Veterans Affairs Committee is going to be Mark McConnell. Mark has been very active previously and Carol believes he will be a very good, strong leader. Unfortunately, the Blue Water Bill is currently sinking in the Senate, with one senator from Wyoming being the only hold-out.

Carol also brought up the VA Mission Act as it relates to Native American veterans. She has been to eight reservations, and across the board, the healthcare situation is awful. VA ignores these issues. Comments that relate to this problem need to be made, at least so that the VSOs are aware. If time allows, Carol will put something together and send it to the E-Committee for review.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:49 p.m.