

MILITARY AND VETERANS LAW SECTION
Executive Committee
July 21, 2015 Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 noon by the Chair, Tom Flaherty, at the Oregon State Bar Center in Tigard, Oregon. Present were Tom Flaherty (chair), Mary Ellen Farr (secretary), Daniel Zene Crowe, Jack Platten, Dave Kramer, Chris Griffin, Paul Nichol (OSB liaison), Kay Pulju (OSB), Richard Spier (OSB president), and guests Chris Putrzenski, Ross Neher, and Chris Huettmeyer. Present by telephone were Terry Sharp and Robert Schulhof.

Minutes. The minutes of the meeting of June 16, 2015, were approved unanimously.

Bar Information. OSB President Rich Spier attended the first part of the meeting to discuss the development of the legal clinic. Committee members questioned why the OSB has not appeared to be more supportive of the section's involvement in the clinic. Spier noted that he himself is a veteran, is a lawyer, the bar president and a supervisor of legal services and is supportive of the concept of the legal clinic. However, he noted the bar has concerns about the section running the clinic. First, the bar is concerned about legal liability if it gives its imprimatur to the clinic since the bar does not provide legal services and is not insured against negligence in providing such services. Second, the bar has to be careful about how it uses the legal funds provided by members since the bar is not voluntary. Third, sponsoring a legal clinic at one law school has the appearance of favoritism. Fourth, bar sections are not permitted to engage in fund raising. The bar has no objection to members of the section contributing to the legal clinic or to the section members assisting in setting up a separate organization to raise funds. Crowe indicated that such an organization has been established already. Crowe also noted that funding from veteran's support groups has come through so that the section members will now be in a more supportive role in any event.

Flaherty asked what the parameters are for the section to assist in organizing the legal clinic. Spier responded that the individual members can support the clinic and that the section can be supportive of the clinic, but the section and the bar cannot formally sponsor the clinic or suggest that they are the clinic's sponsors. Spier referred the executive committee back to the memorandum prepared by Sylvia Stevens and Helen Hirschbiel.

Spier and OSB staff member Kay Pulju remained at the meeting to discuss the bar's on-going reexamination of the bar's policies on section CLEs. They said representatives of the bar are meeting with all sections to discuss these issues. The bar is reviewing all of its programs to assure the bar is not running afoul of case law limiting the activities of mandatory bar associations and to assure that the sections are not serving too narrow a segment of the population. Pulju noted the bar's goal on CLEs is to break even. Sections have been allowed to sponsor CLEs on their own or through the bar's CLE seminars department, but that may change because it is more cost effective to run the CLEs through the bar rather than through the sections. This section has always run its CLEs through the bar.

Pulju also noted that the bar is working to bring all section web sites onto the same platform through the bar's website. This section has already met that goal.

Finally, Pulju reported that the BOG is going to be looking at the number of sections. The OSB has 42 sections and 25 committees, interest groups and the like. There are wide differences on how these various groups run themselves. Of the other bar associations in the country, the highest number of sections is 25. Some sections have large account balances, and others have very little. Spier noted that sections can meet the goals of legal reform, networking, training and professionalism if the section has more members so dividing the membership between so many groups may be counterproductive. Spier and Pulju left the meeting.

Law School Class. Putrzenski reported that the committee has two possible text books. They are currently drafting the memorandum on the need for the class which will be submitted to Willamette in September. Assuming the class is approved, it will begin in Spring Semester of 2016. They anticipate a two credit class. Mark Ronning and Dave Kremer will head the instruction.

Legal Clinic. Crowe stated that the clinic should be up and running by October 1st and will work with the law school class. His employer is seconding him to the legal clinic, and Alicia Firestone will be the supervising attorney. They are going to build a data base of attorneys willing to represent veterans not being served by the clinic either pro bono or low bono.

Law Students. Griffin noted that Lewis and Clark is very interested in developing contacts with the veterans community, Griffin, Neher and Huettemeyer are trying to open bridges between the bar and the law school regarding veterans issues. Farr and Crowe stated it had always been the intent of the section to expand the law school class to other law schools as they expressed interest. Griffin also asked if there was some way for students to take the military class at Willamette if they are students at other law schools.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.