

## LLAW Executive Board 1<sup>st</sup> Quarterly Meeting

### Minutes

September 6, 2023 at 12:00 p.m.

Present: Bev Butula (Archives Chair), Amy Crowder (Nominating Chair and Past President), Diane Duffey (Grants Chair), Katie Dunn (Secretary), Carol Hassler (Website Chair / Webmaster), Angela Henes (Treasurer), Sarah Kober (Placement Chair), Liz Manriquez (President), Carol Schmitt (Membership Chair), Wendy Smith (Vice President and Programming Committee Chair).

1. Call to Order
  - A. Liz called the meeting to order at 12:02.
2. Approval of Special Kick Off Goal Setting Meeting Minutes
  - A. Katie will be sending out shortly.
  - B. Amendments:
    - i. p.3, where we are talking about the table, it should be WLA, not ALA.
    - ii. Remove reference to checking notes.
    - iii. Under tentative budget changes 7.b last bullet point, remove jobs \$50 and add \$75 operating expenses.
    - iv. Carol Schmitt, not Carol Smith.
  - C. Wendy moved to approve minutes with requested amendments, Carol Hassler seconded, minutes approved.
3. Treasurer's Report

**LLAW Statement of Accounts - Summary**  
**FY24 (2023-2024)**

As of 9/5/2023

<u>Checking Account</u>		<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Beginning Balance		\$ 7,433.29		\$ 7,433.29
	Budgeted Amt			
Board of Directors	\$25.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Archives	\$25.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Government Relations	\$25.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Grants	\$3,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Membership	\$25.00	\$ 1,864.70	\$ -	\$ 1,864.70
Newsletter	\$25.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Nominating	\$25.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Placement	\$0.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Program	\$900.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Public Relations / Articles	\$200.00	\$ -	\$ 118.13	\$ (118.13)
Website Committee	\$200.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Operating	\$100.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Checking Totals</b>	<b>\$4,550.00</b>	<b>\$ 9,297.99</b>	<b>\$ 118.13</b>	<b>\$ 9,179.86</b>

<b>FY24 Balance less Beginning Balance</b>				<b>\$ 1,746.57</b>
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4. President's Report

- A. Liz will include a reference to the Survey in her President's letter.
- B. Budget and survey will be discussed later in the meeting.

5. Committee Reports

- A. Archives – Bev Butula: No report
- B. Government Relations – Jess Moore: No report
- C. Grants – Diane Duffey: No report
- D. Membership – Carol Schmitt: No report
- E. Blog/Newsletter – Michelle Wollmann: No report
- F. Nominating – Amy Crowder: No report
- G. Placement – Sarah Kober: No report
- H. Program – Wendy Smith: A program with a guest speaker on mental health concerns will be held next week Thursday at noon. A reminder for registration was sent to membership yesterday.
- I. Public Relations – Jenny Zook: Jenny's article on insurance law resources is out today. She is seeking Inside Track authors for 2024 and thanks everyone who has already volunteered to write articles this year.
- J. Web – Carol Hassler: Carol is getting familiar with the website platform and making a to-do list. She is looking at whether there is a better way to complete registration (including Paypal) and thinking about general flow and access to Google Forms. Contact her with any project ideas or questions about the website, including LLAW's Google account, which we use to create signup forms.

K.

## 6. Old Business

### A. Proposed Budget (attached as Appendix)

- i. Liz noted that revenue is not matching with expected expenses. We have \$2,050 budgeted for expenditures, compared to \$1,864 revenue from membership. We need to reduce by \$250 in programs or grants to balance the budget.
- ii. Vendor sponsorships of programs:
  1. Angela noted that we hadn't discussed vendor sponsorship in these budget discussions and said that one vendor per meeting (Lexis, Thomson Reuters, WK in the past when we had a rep) generally sponsors at a level of \$100-\$300. Carol Schmitt said that this is generally additional and not part of the budget. She added that usually we say "dessert sponsored by X" or "speaker sponsored by Y".
  2. Wendy said that both the law firm and social meeting were sponsored last year and we'll definitely be asking the vendors to sponsor again. This doesn't change programming's financial position in terms of balancing the budget this year. It would be nice to have funds from membership available to programming, but if the budget can not sustain this, programming can continue to self-fund from program registration fees and vendor-sponsorship.
- iii. Liz noted that we need to make up \$250 somewhere or we could go over by \$250 and asked for thoughts from the board on the proposed budget. The survey will be informative too.
- iv. Cash reserve policy
  1. Wendy: Should we establish a policy for what should be held in cash reserves, as many non-profits do to account for unexpected costs or drops in revenue. If we know what our baseline should be, we could potentially spend some of it down this year or over sequential years. Not sure what the right number is.
  2. Liz noted that there is nothing in the bylaws about reserves and asked if reserve / minimum balance has been discussed previously.
  3. Bev: We haven't discussed this previously, but in the past (based on Bev's experience being on the board for 18 years), every few years, we had a program that generated income, so we didn't worry too much about spending beyond revenue in individual years. If this now is all the money we have for eternity, we need to think about that overage differently. Otherwise we will deplete our funds over time What is the number that we should never go under?
  4. Carol Schmitt concurred with Bev's comments (based on her 20 years on the board. Carol Schmitt and Angela share Bev's concern that we no longer have income exceeding expenses.
  5. Angela: In planning programs, you first think about the max amount you want people to have to pay for a meeting (\$15 or \$20?) and what sponsorships you might be able to get, and then think about what the food expenses are. This can vary based on

how expensive the restaurant is. Membership continues to go down. When we had the institute, we had twice as many members as we do now. People retire or don't renew their membership.

6. Bev: We should note that balancing the budget isn't all on programming, and that isn't necessarily fair because it does generate income. Programming generates the most involvement from members of all our activities. With reduced number of members [and thus reduced revenue], we need to look at expenses across the board and not just at programming has to do.
- v. Institutes (money-making programs)
1. Katie (new board member) asked for more information about the institutes. Liz wondered if we could do something like that again.
  2. Bev: There have been 3 institutes while Bev has been on the board, it's like a day-long mini AALL with speakers and sessions. It is doable but is an extremely large amount of work (setting up venue, soliciting speakers (largely volunteers), registrations). You need a very dedicated committee and you need people that will almost volunteer to speak because you're not making any money if you're paying the speakers. It has to be engaging. Law librarians (and a few paralegals and lawyers) attended from all over, Nebraska, Iowa. The question today is in our post COVID world how much would we charge for this and would people actually want to travel or would it be virtual and with virtual how much money are we actually generating? One that we did 18 years ago resulted in about half of the money that remains in the LLAW checking account.
  3. Katie: there are a lot of virtual professional development opportunities now that has reduced participation in local professional development. COVID accelerated this. The virtual professional development activities have just exploded and that's become more of a default mode for people. People tend to go to less local stuff.
  4. Bev: AALL does so many now throughout the year. There's so much to pick from, it would have to really wow people.
  5. Carol Schmitt: It's true that more and more of our members are choosing to do virtual meetins and not come in person, which does save money, but yet, the whole point of LLAW is networking, meeting each other. So how do we do that?
  6. Other ways of increasing revenue: Increased dues? That would have to go through the membership
- vi. Financial accounts and tools:
1. Checking account: Katie asked if we could put some of our money in a high-yield savings account. Interest rates on online high yield savings accounts are high now, but still low or 0% on local checking accounts. We might make \$200/year in interest if we put some of our funds in a high interest account. Angela said that LLAW's current checking account is a low-transaction account at

BMO with no fees. We've had this since the beginning of LLAW. (It was M&I bank). Previously we also had a savings account, it was closed to avoid fees and avoid maintaining two accounts. We write grant checks but don't receive many physical checks. Angela will look into alternative accounts including CDs and asks that if anyone has experience with this in another facet of their life, send her an email.

- i. Bev said that we can switch our bank, but it would be good to ask for a board or member vote. Would need to change the procedures to acknowledge the other account.
- ii. We have only had a debit card for 8 years, without it, it was a pain to pay programming expenses.

## 2. Paypal

- i. Carol Schmitt asked if we could find an alternative to Paypal. We lose almost 4% per transaction with Paypal. Paypal is a .49 fee plus a percentage. This adds up. Is there an alternative payment method? Possibly could we do Zelle or Venmo?
- ii. Carol Hassler: when we initially set up Paypal, it was the cheapest option that met our needs (secure, embedded in site). That was more than 10 years ago. It's worth reevaluating e-payment options, we might find something cheaper but we won't find anything that doesn't take some kind of cut.
- iii. Angela: We looked into Wild Apricot earlier, but it was more expensive than Paypal.
- iv. Angela will look into Paypal alternatives before the next quarterly meeting.

## vii. Grants

1. Sarah asked if it's worthwhile to look into outside grants. Carol Schmitt noted that ALA Bloomberg has a Programming grant that we have received in the past. It is a process to apply. Wendy said that grants are sometimes available for programs. Discussion of timing of grants vs. planning.
2. Wendy noted that how this might work is if we wanted to do the institute again we could propose having a theme that matched the granting organization and it's a bit of an ordeal. So we might try for some special program we want to do and write the application.

viii. Angela suggested possibly encouraging people to leave us a bequest in their wills.

## 7. New Business

### A. Budget Survey for Membership (Draft):

[https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/previewId/1e248c3a-12dd-4ac0-9411-4aa2b2af2d9d/SV\\_0xO6ejuPmGpbc8K?Q\\_CHL=preview&Q\\_SurveyVersionID=current](https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/previewId/1e248c3a-12dd-4ac0-9411-4aa2b2af2d9d/SV_0xO6ejuPmGpbc8K?Q_CHL=preview&Q_SurveyVersionID=current)

- i. Qualtrics (UW-provided survey tool) was used because some people can't access Google Forms from work. No questions are mandatory.
  - ii. Katie and Liz will try adding the LLAW logo and an introductory paragraph at the top of the survey.
  - iii. Wendy will send Liz another question to add asking people to rank their budget priorities.
    1. Board decided not to include the AALL poster session under the budget priorities ranking question. Jenny Zook (Public Relations Chair) is not in attendance today, but she had said at the last meeting that she felt it was something that could be skipped, as it's a lot of work and not many chapters still do the poster session.
  - iv. Liz will send survey out to membership tomorrow, give people until the 16<sup>th</sup> to respond, and board will meet the first week of October to finalize the budget. Business meeting is the 14<sup>th</sup>.
  - v. Overall, the board is interested to hear what the membership has to say about budget priorities on the survey and will take it into account in planning the budget.
- B. President's Letter will discuss outreach but also budget realities and encourage members to complete survey.

8. Other Announcements: None

9. Adjournment

- A. Angela Henes moved to adjourn the meeting. Bev Butula seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 1:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Katie Dunn  
Secretary