

Family Law Section meeting November 14, 2009

Meeting called to order by the Section Chair, Pamela Waggoner

Introductions: those in attendance gave their names, where they work, and the office they hold, if any, within the Section

The minutes of the October meeting were approved.

Report of the chair:

-- Pamela does not yet have the final draft of the proposed rules that were prepared at "Divorce Camp." She will make those available when she has them.

-- Many good ideas have been submitted for the Family Law Institute, and a number of them are being incorporated into the Institute's agenda.

-- Attendees are asked to write legibly when signing the roster for attendance at the meeting and CLE. MSBA keeps track of who attends the CLEs and can verify someone's attendance upon request.

-- Beginning next month, MSBA will offer pre-registration for Section meetings & CLEs, available at the Section's page at the mnbar.org website. This will make it easier for MSBA employees to keep track of attendance, and will also allow better attendance estimates for the purpose of ordering food and organizing CLE programs in the coming years. Walk-ins will still be allowed, but people are encouraged to pre-register. The CLE will continue to be free of charge as a benefit of section membership.

-- Section Officers have been invited to a meeting to discuss assembling a database of Minnesota District Court decisions. Pamela will attend. The discussion is in its preliminary stages at this point.

-- The Section encourages local "satellite" meetings in greater Minnesota. Attorneys who wish to host the meeting in their offices (and join by speakerphone) will be able to contact Section leadership or MSBA staff about setting it up. Kick off for the Satellite Meetings will be in January – for the January 9, 2010 meeting. Section Members attending Satellite Meetings will receive the CLE credit.

-- February's meeting will be February 20, not February 13, because of President's Day holiday weekend.

Treasurer's Report submitted and approved.

Amicus Committee: no report

DA Committee: Ellen Abbott reported that the Committee is working on:

-- training modules for DV screening, also trying to get the "Bench Guide" distributed.

-- coordinating with law enforcement and animal control in Hennepin County, in cases where domestic abuse victims need a place for pets to stay

-- a work group to do outreach to the media to foster better understanding of domestic violence and to use language appropriate to the violence.

Strategic Planning: meeting will be December 12 after the Section meeting and the CLE

Publications: Linda Wold was unable to attend, but Pamela reported that Linda is still awaiting job descriptions for Section Council members to include in the next Forum issue.

Legislative Committee: Glen Norton reported on the Legislative Committee's work. Glen will attend the Assembly's Legislative Committee to present the Section's policy positions. In addition to explaining what the Section supports and opposes, the Section Legislative Chair will be asked to prioritize issues for this session. After some discussion, there was a motion made and seconded to prioritize as follows:

- 1 Oppose joint physical custody presumption
- 2 Oppose "Child Abduction" Act
- 3 Child support/spousal maintenance calculation
- 4 ARTs
- 5 Oppose "Child Witness testimony" Act

Motion passed w/four abstentions.

Mary Lauhead announced that the upcoming AAML meeting in Chicago will have a session "What Shall We Tell the Children?" based on most current research. The Manual can be ordered at the AAML website.

Steven Arnott announced that he has law students available to put in 140 hours for unpaid internships.

Loretta Frederick announced that AFCC will be having its national meeting in Denver. "Parental Alienation" will be the major topic.

Melissa Froehle announced that her organization, Minnesota Fathers and Families Network, will be holding its annual conference January 13-15, 2010 in Alexandria, MN.