

Southwest Association of Pre-Law Advisors
Executive Board Meeting Minutes
Friday, June 15, 2018
University of Texas at Dallas

Present: Michelle Payne (Texas Wesleyan University), Barbara Kirby (University of Texas-Dallas), Sandy Self (Hardin-Simmons University), Matthew Kerns (UA Little Rock, Bowen School of Law), Hong Tran Escobar (University of Texas – Austin), Lori DeKalb (University of Oklahoma) and Ana Alvarez (University of Texas – San Antonio)

Welcome and Call to Order

Welcome from Barbara Kirby, our host at UT-Dallas.

President Michelle Payne called the meeting to order at 1:08 p.m.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes – Lori DeKalb

Approval of Executive Board Meeting minutes from September 13, 2017: Lori DeKalb distributed copies of the meeting minutes. After the Board reviewed the minutes, Matt Kerns motioned to approve the minutes as presented; Barbara Kirby seconded. **Motion approved.**

President's report – Michelle Payne

Michelle reported that she is still acting as Treasurer and moving into the President's role. She attended LSAC in December (2017) in Florida – all APLAs were present. Discussion at that meeting included various APLA conference dates, caravan dates, and LSAC forum dates. She also mentioned the Texas Connect event and our new SWAPLA website. Other topics discussed at the LSAC meeting were the membership trends and trying to get more members, other APLAs have that issue as well. They also discussed the GRE being used for admission purposes vs LSAT. Possibility of sharing our spring conference with WAPLA was discussed. WAPLA has since decided not to join us for the spring conference but they may want to partner in the future. MAPLA also expressed interest in cohosting a conference in the future. PLANC Board meeting was in February (2018) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, the weather prevented both Sandy Self and Michelle from attending. However, Ana Alvarez was able to attend and Jerry Polinard was also there. Ana reported to PLANC the dates of the SWAPLA spring 2019 conference and the possibility of Texas connect this summer. New Orleans was the site selected for the PLANC conference in 2020.

Treasurer's report – Michelle Payne and Barbara Kirby

Michelle is transitioning the Treasurer position and associated responsibilities to Barbara. The SWAPLA fiscal year is Sept 1 to August 31 which makes it difficult to immediately turnover the responsibilities when the officers are elected. Initially, when officers were elected, Barbara was at TCU with Michelle and they thought Michelle would be able to help Barbara finish out the year. However, with Barbara's move to UT-Dallas, things did not go exactly as planned and Michelle has continued serving in the treasurer role. Total assets through the end of May are \$168,340.19 but we are still waiting for our share of the income/expenses for the Memphis (Sept 2017) conference. Michelle likes idea of spring conference and fall caravan because of how the monies come in. It should make it easier

to distinguish the source of the income, i.e. conference sponsorships vs. caravan fees. Our bottom line will still be over \$120,000 after conference transactions are cleared.

Barbara's report – Michelle has brought organization to the office. She and Michelle have great communication to handle any issues and they work well together. SWAPLA will continue to use the same accountant, Adam Coen. However, they are looking to change banks. Merrill Lynch is too expensive. They are looking to go somewhere with more branches so there will be ease of access for any future treasurers. It was discussed and agreed that both the President's and Treasurer's names should be on the account. Michelle mentioned we still have the PayPal account with about \$43,548. She transfers \$9,000 at a time. Not using buses at caravan has saved us a tremendous amount of money. We discussed adding language to our bylaws that both the President's and Treasurer's names will appear on our accounts. Lori DeKalb made the Motion that we approve the Treasurer's report; Matt Kerns seconded. **Motion approved.**

Law School Caravan report - Hong Tran Escobar

Caravan 2017 caravan report:

Sites, with attendance and costs, were:

TAMU – Oct. 23, 2017 (500+ students) = \$5167.81 (\$2867.81 + \$2300.00)

SMU – Oct. 24, 2017 (160+ students) =

Baylor – Oct. 25, 2017 (200+ students) = \$3681.35 (\$2039.00 + \$1642.35)

UT Austin – Oct. 26, 2017 (524 students) = \$7308.09

UTSA – Oct. 27, 2017 (120+ students) = \$1369.50 (\$874.50 + \$150.00 + \$345.00)

Discussion followed regarding how law schools pay their registration fees. Since we accept both PayPal and checks, it is difficult for the Caravan Coordinator to track because the Treasurer will need to relay that info.

Caravan 2018 report:

This year we are having a two-part Caravan as follows:

For Part I (Oct. 22-24, 2018)

Oct. 22 from 11:00a-1:30p – Hendrix College in Conway, Arkansas – on-site coordinator: Amanda Moore

Oct. 23 from 10:00a-2:00p – UT Austin in Austin – on-site coordinator: Hong Tran Escobar

Oct. 24 from 11:00a-2:00p – Univ of Oklahoma in Norman – on-site coordinator: Lori Williams-DeKalb

For Part II (Nov. 5-9, 2018)

Nov. 5 from 11:00a-2:00p – Texas Tech in Lubbock – on-site coordinator: Jordan Ryan

Nov. 6 from 12:00p-3:30p – UT Arlington in Arlington – on-site coordinator: Amber White

Nov. 7 from 11:00a-2:00p – Texas A & M in College Station – on-site coordinator: Karen Severn

Nov. 8 from 4:00p-7:30p – TX State in San Marcos – on-site coordinator: Carol Dochen

Nov. 9 from 11:00a-1:00p – UTSA in San Antonio from 11a-1p – on-site coordinator: Ana Alvarez

Nov. 10 from 11:00a-4:00p – LSAC Forum in Houston at JW Marriott (Galleria area)

We have 8 schools participating, many of which are top law school feeders: UT (#4), TAMU (#9), Univ. of OK (#43), Baylor (#55), Texas Tech (#57) and UTSA (#83). Sites have been confirmed. Baylor had to drop out because of a date conflict. Part II will be held during the week leading up to Houston LSAC Forum.

Discussion followed regarding staffing the Pre-Law Advising table at the Forum. Sandy Self suggested we schedule a Board meeting during that time so that Board members can volunteer for the tables. Travel expenses are covered for Executive Board members but we can offer a subsidy for other Pre-Law Advisors who volunteer to spend some time at the table. Ana Alvarez mentioned that LSAC will give a subsidy to Pre-Law Advisors from HACU and HBCU schools if they bring students. Discussion followed how to best implement a subsidy policy. After discussion, Barbara Kirby made the following Motion: SWAPLA will pay a subsidy of up to \$250 to cover expenses, including mileage, to SWAPLA members from schools that do not already qualify for the LSAC subsidy, who bring a minimum of three students to the Houston LSAC Forum AND who agree to volunteer at least two hours at the Pre-Law Advising table. Sandy Self seconded the Motion. **Motion approved.** Matt Kerns will advertise this on the website and Lori DeKalb will include this in the membership drive email. Discussion followed that we should offer something similar for members who bring students to one of the Caravan sites. Barbara Kirby motioned that SWAPLA will pay a subsidy of up to \$250 to cover expenses, including mileage, to SWAPLA members who bring a minimum of five students to any caravan site (no volunteering at a table necessary). Hong seconded. **Motion approved.**

Online registration for caravan: Hong proposed we charge law schools by the number of caravan schools they plan to attend, e.g. first school is a certain amount, for each school added in the fee will be less than the first school. This might encourage more law schools to attend more caravan locations. Discussion followed. WAPLA caravan pricing is similar. We discussed what a reasonable price to start off with would be and where we should cap. Matt suggested \$275 adding \$50 for each school. Michelle suggested \$300 for one stop, adding \$50 for each school. Further discussion developed the pricing scale as follows:

\$300 for first school (includes \$25 SWAPLA membership fee)
+ \$100 for second school (\$400)
+ \$75 for third school (\$475)
+ \$50 for fourth school (\$525)
+ \$50 for fifth school (\$575)
+ \$50 for sixth school (\$625)
+ \$50 for seventh school (\$675)
+ \$50 for eighth school (\$725)

Barbara Kirby moved we adopt the pricing schedule for Caravan as outlined above. Ana seconded. **Motion approved.** Caravan registration will be through either Constant Contact or PayPal. Question was raised regarding who has Constant Contact log in info. Sandy has the log in info and will forward to Matt. Goal will be to have online registration up by July 1, 2018. Hong, Matt, and Barbara will work on registration form. On-site coordinators are working on their logistics form now and fairs have been posted on LSAC's recruitment events page for our region.

The date for next year's Houston LSAC Forum is October 5, 2019 at Marriot Marquis in Houston. We will wait to set 2019 Law School Caravan dates until after Caravan 2018 is complete.

PLANC Board meeting report – Sandy Self

PLANC 2020 conference will be held in New Orleans. The preferred dates are June 8 – 13 but they are also looking at June 7 – 12. They are looking at larger venue hotels – Intercontinental, Ritz Carlton or

Marriott. Exact dates and location will be known soon after members vote on June 25. SWAPLA's responsibilities will be to gather volunteers for key positions.

Website – Matthew Kerns

Website is updated. We are now using WordPress instead of Wild Apricot. All prior content has been moved over and updated. He added some resources under the "Resources" tab, as well as a Pre-Law resources page. Michelle asked if there are links to community colleges. Matt responded that if it was in the old membership directory, it's in the new directory. Tax form is under "About" and then under "Governance." Discussion followed regarding adding a "Forms" section to include the following forms: membership, w-9, reimbursement form, stipend application, and scholarship application. Further discussion followed regarding a SWAPLA logo or letterhead. Matt added a "Regional Events" section so member schools can advertise events. There was also a discussion regarding how to handle membership payments. Matt will set up PayPal account to receive the payments and the membership forms will be sent to Lori so the names can be added to the membership roster. We discussed that starting with 2019, membership will run January 1 to December 31; Barbara Kirby made the motion that we vote yes by acclamation; **Motion approved.** Membership for 2017 -2018 will be 3 months longer, i.e. September 1, 2017 through December 31, 2018. Barbara reminded us that Executive members pay their own membership fee but that all other expenses are reimbursed by SWAPLA.

Lori suggested that we put out a call for membership via email. Other information that can be relayed in the email is the upcoming Caravan, Houston LSAC forum, PLANC 2020 news, spring 2019 conference in Oklahoma, subsidies for Caravan and Forum, scholarships for the spring conference, and the link to the new and improved website. It was agreed that Lori will draft an email to send out in mid-July to early August to current SWAPLA members and other Pre-Law advisors listed in LSAC to encourage them to access the website and fill out membership forms.

Matt asked whether we should add a discussion board to the website. Options are an open forum which can be done for no charge or a closed forum which has an associated fee. We decided not to pursue adding a discussion board since we have access to the PLANC google group discussion board. Matt mentioned that if anyone has any SWAPLA pictures, he can add them to the website using a Flickr link.

SWAPLA Constitution and By-laws - Michelle Payne

Michelle discussed that the issue of the Constitution and By-Law revision project was raised at the Memphis SWAPLA general meeting. The members who volunteered to assist with the project at that meeting were Lisa Buentello and Cathy Cassiano. Michelle said she will contact them to coordinate suggestions for changes to the Constitution and By-laws and that we should include in the effort the entire board including at large and law school members. Issue raised by Barbara that the by-laws require an annual meeting for 2018. Discussion followed that we have it at or near the Houston LSAC Forum. Lori DeKalb said she is not available that weekend. Among other topics, we can discuss soliciting volunteers for the spring conference. The agreed upon time will be 9:00 – 11:00 am on Saturday, November 10 at the Houston forum. Barbara Kirby will draft up a save the date email for members. Matt will ask Vivian Bowden at LSAC if SWAPLA can reserve a room for the annual meeting prior to the LSAC forum. If nothing is available, Hong will check on a meeting location at Rice.

SWAPLA spring 2019 conference – Ana Alvarez

The conference dates are April 4 – 6, 2019. Host law schools are The University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma City University and the University of Tulsa. Ana shared a tentative conference schedule. We discussed and narrowed down the list of potential site hotels and opening reception locations. We agreed to meet in Oklahoma City, OK the week of August 6, possibly August 8 and 9, to choose a conference hotel and to visit museums for possible reception sites. We also discussed the possibility of having the opening reception on Wednesday at 7:00. Lori suggested Vast might be a nice location for the opening reception. We need to brainstorm a conference theme – will discuss more in August when we meet in OKC. We discussed setting up leadership for the conference committees. Committees are: Communication, Registration, Logistics, Programming, Sponsorship, and Budget. We delegated as follows: Communications – Matt Kerns; Registration – Sandy Self and Michelle Payne; Logistics – Lori DeKalb; Programming – Hong Tran Escobar; Sponsorship/Vendors – Michelle Payne and Ana Alvarez; Budget – Barbara Kirby. Barbara read the job descriptions for each committee. We decided that we would have further discussions when we meet again in Oklahoma City in August to select sites for the conference hotel and receptions.

Ana recommended the Board to meet at least once a year in observance to our by-laws.

Meeting adjourned at 4:40.