



Miami-Dade County Bar Association

To: Miami-Dade County Bar Association Executive Committee and Board of Directors

From: Suzette L. Russomanno, Esq., Secretary

RE: Meeting Minutes For October 21, 2020 Board Meeting

Date: November 16, 2020

Attendance

[See Meeting Attendance July 2020-June 2021.xlsx](#)

Meeting called to order at 5:00 p.m., once it was established that a quorum was present.

Director Davis moved to approve the consent agenda, which is the board meeting minutes for September 16, 2020; Vice President Hockman seconded the motion. Opportunity for discussion was provided, but no members raised any issues or concerns. Motion carried.

Group 1 Board of Director Opening

The following members applied for the Group 1 Board of Director vacancy:

Jordan Isicoff

Andrew Sarangoulis

Bernadette Nina Vasquez

Each candidate was provided an opportunity to speak to the board to advocate for a seat on the board.

The Board was invited to speak on behalf of a candidate. Melissa Jordon spoke on behalf of Ms. Vasquez and Amber Kornreich spoke on behalf of Mr. Isicoff. The board voted and winners were Ms. Vasquez and Mr. Isicoff.

Thereafter, President Muir swore Ms. Vasquez and Mr. Isicoff into office.

Report by Hon. Scott Janowitz Regarding Court Grant

The Court is seeking a grant from SJI-State Justice Institute and National Court System. The deadline to submit the grant has been extended. The DCBA will be contacted to support the grant. Will be reaching out to VBAs and Legal Aid and Legal Services.

We are taking a look at the numbers and the court will have new filings and delayed filing. Invited to apply for a grant post Covid transformational ideas within the court system. It would apply best to Eviction cases. 18,000 evictions a year and expecting double those numbers next year.

49% default and 44% writs of judgment. No writs are being executed right now, but that will change in a rather of weeks.

Trying to develop/replicate the Traffic portal. The landlord/tenant portal will be called Court Help. When a summons goes out for the Eviction, it will tell the tenant to go to the portal. When a tenant disputes amount of rent owed, it will provide a mechanism for tenant to upload information that supports their position (pictures, documents, etc.). Tenants can also answer Complaint through this portal. It will then provide for a zoom hearing to try and resolve the issue or at least rent determination.

The Court believed it will be able to handle about 4,000 cases as a trial run.

Legal Aid Report

Report presented by Karen Ladis, Executive Director.

Director Ladis encouraged board to visit website and register for the Speeding Lawfully Speed Challenge on October 25, 2020. Over 100 people registered. It is a virtual spin challenge on Sunday at 10:00 a.m. Director Ladis thanked the DCBA and also thanked Director Vining for organizing the event.

Next event: December 4, 2020-Nuts & Bolts of Divorce Seminar

Affiliated Bar Reports:

APABA-Virtual Installation is October 22, 2020 and doing Mock Trial of Murder of Vincent Chen on October 29, 2020.

Caribbean Bar Association-Gala Saturday, October 24, 2020 at 7pm via Zoom.

CABA-October 29, 2020 event and webinar with Florida Bar Representative regarding Unlicensed Practice of Law.

South Miami/Kendall Bar-October 30, 2020-Chief Judge Soto webinar for members

FACDL-Brian Kirlew advised Gala will be Saturday, October 24, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. Monthly CLEs for Public Defenders via Zoom.

Gwen Cherry-October 22, 2020 Webinar on Law & Policy; co-sponsoring with Broward County Bar Association and Caribbean Bar Association.

Haitian Lawyers Association-No report as representative not present.

MDFAWL-No report as representative no present.

Wilkie D. Ferguson-They have secured a date for Black History Month event. It will be on 2/18/2021.

Committee Reports

A. Juvenile Court's Committee

Vanessa Offutt spoke to the Board regarding Teen Court. It is a diversion program for Teens that get in trouble for shopping lifting, etc. and provides opportunity for young adults to go through this program and not have anything on their records. It also provides teens interested in the law to get experience. A lot of the students are minorities. Kids are very curious and want to learn. Ms. Offutt is also on the Florida Bar Diversity & Inclusion Committee. DCBA can submit a request for a grant on behalf of any program we believe would benefit from the grant.

Ms. Offutt would prepare the grant, but pursuant to the rules, she needed the board to approve the submission of the grant.

Secretary Russomanno made a motion for the board to approve Ms. Offutt submitting a grant to the D&I to request grant funds for the Teen Court Program. Director Cynamon seconded the motion. Discussion ensued where Amber Kornreich and Lori Sochin expressed support for the Teen Court program and the DCBA seeking a grant for the program. The board voted and the motion carried.

B. County Court Committee

October 23, 2020 at 12:00 p.m.-Judges will share how to handle evictions.

October 28, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.-Webinar to the public concerning topic of everyday interest. Several attorneys have volunteered their time to give the public the nuts and bolts of evictions.

Membership Report:

President Elect Puglisi asked everyone to make their calls. Before you send the email, please check the Florida Bar and make sure the email address is correct. Please make all corrections on the Google sheet.

Director Vining gets \$100 Amazon Card for completing her list first. However, which ever member had the most renewals also was awarded an Amazon Card. President Elect Puglisi encourages board to sign up for the Membership Committee.

CIM contacted InterMiami and they invited us to visit their training facility. CIM is contacting non-members that attend and asking them to join.

Renewals are at 54% and CIM would like to increase the renewal numbers to 75% by end of 2020.

Treasurer's Report:

\$93,111.10-Cash Position Report Balance.

Total of all DCBA accounts: \$515,696.00

Secretary's Report:

No report; Secretary Russomanno reminded board that all meeting minutes are being uploaded to Dropbox and to access documentation for board meetings via the DCBA Dropox link. Meeting minutes will no longer be circulated to the board via e-mail prior to the meetings.

Vice President Report:

Vice President Hockman enjoyed the Mayoral Candidate Webinar and encouraged the DCBA to host more of those types of events.

President-Elect Report:

President-Elect Puglisi encouraged the board to support former DCBA President Steve Davis for Florida Bar President-Elect.

YLS Report

YLS will host a Halloween Virtual Happy Hour on October 22, 2020 and will host Tea with the Court event with Judge Seitz.

Building Report:

Signed contract with Contractor. Waiting on feedback from Centennial on the additional information needed. Walk through with prospective engineers and architects conducted on October 20, 2020 and we hope to have an architect and engineer selected shortly.

Amy Gamara recently attended a conference held by the Miami Association of Realtors and called some brokers in the downtown area to do a survey. COVID affected the market at the beginning (it slowed down the market specifically in offices but did not stop). Still closing new deals and getting new tenants. The companies are learning that they can still keep their employees working remotely and still keep their offices. 90% of those companies are looking to work remotely; 85% office and remotely and 60% say offices will not go away. Second quarter worst part but WE Work leased 22,000 SF in Downtown Miami. Market vacancies are between 18% in A & B class offices. 21% in bigger buildings. All brokers she contacted said they have a good outlook. Big influx of companies coming from NY and CA and occupying office space. Legal and health insurance companies are leasing offices in the area. Open office spaces are accommodating to include safety protocol.

Overall the forecast in the office market is positive (based on her conversations with at least 50 different brokers in the area and the top 10 brokers)

Director Cynamon advised WE WORK was evicted from their space in Lincoln Road. Director Cynamon asked if Ms. Gamara has any tenants for the DCBA. She contacted UPS Store, Office Depot, Staples, and she is in the process of contacting Amazon to pitch an Amazon Go Store on the first floor. Cynamon stated that Amazon already signed a lease in Lincoln Road. Ms. Gamara advised that she does not have a tenant yet because prospective tenants are asking when the building will be completed. Ms. Gamara stated she would be willing to include membership marketing material when she sends her marketing material about our building.

Director Libhen asked whether tenants that still remain in their buildings have requested a reduction in their rent. Ms. Gamara advised that many owners are reducing rent adding the amount owed to the end of the lease.

President's Report:

No report.

Director Jordon moved to adjourn, Director Cynamon seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:14 p.m.