

CLASP Meeting Minutes
May 15, 2024

Stephanie Jablon
Dr. Deb Gilman
Lea Anderson
David Miller
Breonna Fiske
Jennifer McEnroe
Chris Stachtiaris
Derek Smith
Karen Fadzen
Julie Herzog
Donna Cheswick
Jeff Pollock
Susan DiGirolamo
Lisa Standish
Kathleen Schneider

Stephanie – Steph provided some further information about the possible formation of a statewide PA practice group. Lots of advantages as well as lots of decisions to be made. First step is to start a PA Practice Group and then we can connect with Florida or states which have groups, etc. There has to be a unique reason to establish a PA Practice Group. We also need to be cognizant of the role of the PBA Collaborative Law Committee and the interests of the other practice groups in our state. Deb Gilman mentioned that Florida, Texas and California, who have strong state groups, are able to capitalize on it by bringing better resources to their regions. New York is also in the process of starting their statewide group. We most likely will need to establish a task force. We will do a poll at the summer party. Bob Merlin has shared the materials from the Florida practice group so that we can try to mirror it.

Treasurer’s Report – Karen shared the financial statements. We have \$38,650 in the bank and \$8,500 in net income year to date. Karen has been in touch with Nextier Bank and they have interest rates of 5.11% and she would like to get permission to move the PNC account to Nextier Bank. PNC Bank currently has two signers (President and Treasurer). Nextier would have a minimum of \$25,000. Karen will be renewing our Board of Directors insurance this month.

Membership Committee – Susan reported that we successfully retained our current membership. We have been unable to bring in many new members due to the lack of training but will keep working on word of mouth. Susan also suggested that she can work on connecting members with mentors, if new members would like to be mentored. Deb suggested having monthly “squad” lunch meet-ups to build up trust and connection with other members.

Marketing Committee – No report.

Education Committee – No report. Deb shared that Jeff Ruder of Ruder Law does special education and disability law and helped Deb with a case recently. He would like to come and talk to our group about language needed in parenting plans and reducing school issues in high conflict cases. Possible topic for a lunch n learn or information education session. He will do it at no cost.

Ethics Committee – No report.

Training Committee – Chris shared that the basic training was canceled as there was not enough participation. Planning to re-schedule for March of 2025 and start promoting it in the fall with greater lead time. (Deb mentioned that PBA has a basic training in September 2024 as well). They are going to send a survey asking for topics of interest for possible advanced training. Chris also shared that he is a newly appointed Divorce Hearing Officer in Allegheny County. He is unable to take traditional divorce cases but is luckily able to continue with his collaborative cases! Deb also shared the possibility of a lunch “n” learn on use of AI with Susan Guthrie (of the Mosten Guthrie Institute).

Pro Bono Committee – No report

Idea Committee – No report

IACP Update – Deb indicated that IACP is in the process of hiring a new Executive Director. They received over 200 applicants for the position and they are voting tonight on the possible final candidate. The proposed candidate has a lot of experience in fundraising. They are looking at a possible next forum to be scheduled in 2026. They are working to be sure that appropriate funding and sponsorships are in place to have a successful event.

Social Committee – Summer party is on June 5, 2024 at 5pm downtown at Sienna Mercato and all are encouraged to attend!

Minutes taken by Jennifer McEnroe