

Approved Minutes
MSBA Planning Committee
November 9, 2009 -- 6 p.m.
Columbia, Maryland

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting convened at approximately 6:15 p.m. Those attending were: Robert Anbinder, Henry Dugan, John Murphy, Mary Murphy, Ted Staples, Alan Bussard, Elizabeth Morris, Paul Carlin, and Karen Federman Henry.

Approval of minutes

The minutes of the September 24 meeting were approved.

Subcommittee reports

- Relevance of the bar—Mary Murphy reported that this subcommittee will modify the survey used by the Planning Committee when it interviewed the large firms and then circulate the survey to the County Attorneys Offices, the Attorney General's Office, and the Public Defender's Office. The solo practitioners and small firms will not be surveyed, because the needs of those groups are well-represented and addressed through the section and programs that focus on those types of firms. It was agreed that no additional assistance would be gained by surveying the solo/small firms. The discussion included the potential need for family-friendly events that would enable practitioners to participate in bar activities without having to choose between professional activities and family time. The survey will try to capture this type of information.
- Certification of specialties—John Murphy reported that this subcommittee has a wealth of information to evaluate. Sources include the Maryland Commission on Professionalism, the prior Planning Committee, and the ABA Standing Committee on certification. The overall focus of the review will include who would administer the certification, what areas of practice would be certified, what costs are involved, pros and cons of certification, and other factors that may be useful to the leadership of the MSBA in deciding whether to pursue certifications.

- Website and electronic filing—Vasilios Peros provided two proposed tasks for this subcommittee by email. First, the subcommittee will review the MSBA website and make recommendations regarding updates to better serve the membership. The review will include checking other sites for ideas and newer technology. The discussion included a recommendation to review the content management system, which the MSBA is already undertaking—this will aid in coordinating the efforts. The second task involves reviewing the status of electronic filing in Maryland and what training will be needed for practitioners. The discussion led to the conclusion that the subcommittee should focus on the federal system, which works well, and not review other nearby jurisdictions that do not work as well. In addition, the subcommittee will work with Judge Clyburne to evaluate these systems and identify implementation methods that could work in Maryland.
- Member development—Henry Dugan reported that this subcommittee will evaluate a method for developing young members into bar leaders. Their work will include interviews to determine why some attorneys stay active and some do not. They also will evaluate a method for connecting the Young Lawyers Section with the Leadership Academy to facilitate transitioning attorneys from entry level participation to leadership roles in the MSBA.

Budget

The Chair reported that the budget for next year must be submitted in December. Paul Carlin raised the issue of whether the President for 2010-2011 will want to have a planning retreat. The Chair will contact the President-Elect to determine whether this should be included in the requested funding for the Planning Committee's budget.

Next meeting

The next meeting has been set tentatively for February 3, 2010. During January it will be determined whether to hold a dinner meeting or conference call, depending on the progress of the subcommittees.

Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at approximately 8:15 p.m.