Workers' Compensation Section Executive Council Zoom Meeting August 9, 2024

The meeting was called to order by the chair Karen Cullen, JCC's Langham and Hedler were introduced, and recognized as guests. All members were present with the exception of Richard Chait and Mark Eckels. Emeritus member present Dawn Traverso.

Meeting Overview

The Florida Bar's Executive Council discussed various initiatives to promote professionalism, wellness, and leadership development within the legal profession. They also addressed updates on the Florida Supreme Court's approved reforms, including new rules for civil practice and the use of AI. Speakers shared updates on workers' compensation, including upcoming courses and legislative activities and committee reports. The council appointed new members to the Executive Council, Overall, the conversation focused on promoting collaboration and knowledge sharing among jurisdictions, while also addressing the importance of mental health and wellness in the legal profession and new initiatives directed to woman in the practice.

Guests addressed Professionalism in the legal community.

> Judge Langham and Judge Hedler provide updates on professionalism initiatives. Judge Hedler discusses professionalism initiative, expressing disappointment with initiative not being implemented. Judge Hedler values section's engagement, appreciates collegiality, and recognizes unique community.

Professionalism panels for lawyers, with questions for judges.

> Judge Langham addressed the initiative on professionalism not being implemented despite effort and enthusiasm. Lorna Brown Burton suggests discussing with bar staff if WC section could move forward with professionalism panels on a practice area basis. Judge Hedler notes implementing a judicial branch model due to Supreme Court order on administrative orders and suggests modeling Supreme Court's approach to addressing issue. Richard M motions to table the issue for further discussion at the next meeting. The motion was seconded. Zoom participants were given the opportunity to object through virtual means. No objections were noted virtually. Motion passed without objection. Leo G requested that the materials referenced in the discussion above be circulated to the Council prior to the next meeting. The Chair agreed to have that done. Leo shared prior experience with the issues at a local level, Karen stated professionalism is a high priority for the Council and we will explore fully.

Karen thanked both Judge Langham and Judge Hedler for their support and continued involvement.**Approval of Minutes**

> Minutes from the April 17, 2024, meeting were unanimously adopted without correction.

Treasurer's Report

Report was presented by Tracey and budget through May31, 2024 was approved without objection.

Board of Governor's Report

Lorna Brown-Burton provided an update on the Board of Governors meeting. Ms Brown-Burton advises BOG discussed Florida Supreme Court reforms on civil justice, technology and confidentiality issues were discussed as well as AI, lawyers to review new rules and ABA guidelines on confidentiality and AI use in legal practice.

Lorna Brown-Burton shared updates from the Florida Bar Board of Governors, including a proposed revision to Bar Rule 6-3.6(recertification) and two new member benefits one for loan forgiveness/assistance and Smart draw.

Committee Reports- Karen mentioned the executive committee met and added a few new members to various committees

CLE

Holly Akers gave the committee report and welcomed Rick Morales to the committee. Upcoming courses include death and dependency, AWW/CR and indemnity, JCC presentation on motions and trial practice tips, and Medicare panel, with presenters from various fields. December and January off and February returning with case law update. Need topics and presenters for 2025 looking at 120 rule and privilege issues as possible topic contact Holley if interested in presenting or have ideas on topics. Holly will send the list of CLE events to committees like technology to post to platforms and website events calendar. Rick Morales was added to the Section CLE committee.

Legislative Committee: Richard Chait & Matthew Carillo

Matt Carillo presented the report big issue is the opt out Texas model is being looked at but is in its initial stages. HB 161 bill signed by the governor regarding health care fees and costs effective Jan 2025 unanimously approved. Concerns if costs go up rates go up, take away doctors can charge more come January.

News & 440 Report Kenneth Hesser-Co-Editor Matthew Troy- Co-Editors

Matt Troy reported last issue was sent out and addressed AI. Waiting on a few pieces to complete the next issue coming out for Summer. Ken addressed the next issue explores your first job and asked if anyone wanted to contribute let them know. The goal for the next four issues is centered on 50th Anniversary, history of the section, etc. Karen mentioned this is a big job and complimented all involved with the publication for their hard work and dedication.

Membership Committee: Karen Gilmartin & Michael Srebick, Co- Chairs

Karen G reported bar dues coming up remind members of your firms to check the workers compensation box on the dues form. Also try and get the word out that membership is important. Will check out membership roster against last years to see where we stand. Karen G mentioned there is a Judges' meeting in October to provide feedback to the Court please contact Karen G or Mike S with any constructive feedback you would like to contribute. Karen asked that membership is being talked about in the emerging leaders meeting as well.

Forum Committee: Leo Garcia, Mark Touby, Rogers Turner

Leo G reported planning the next forum April 9-11 2025, going to be challenges adding 4 new panels on track 2. Speakers are on a rotation a number are coming off rotation will need assistance from the Council to fill the voids. Profit from the forum this year was $ 37,270.18 WCCP check will be sent to Willie Mae and the bar shortly. Mark T explained the forum is getting a freshening up locations within the Omni will be changed one more year in the building we are in now, then one year in the main Omni hotel building. 2027/2028 the forum will be moving to the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort. Rogers reported on the updating of the course materials as new speakers and topics evolve. Mark mentioned that the track one consolidation of topics opens more room for track two new panels, topics, and presenters, like emerging leaders, woman in workers comp. and professionalism.

Rules Committee: Christopher Smith & Henry Roman, Co-Chairs

Chris S reported on the issue that because the rules committee has not yet formally taken the steps necessary to be in compliance with the rules of the Florida Bar, that discussion about any proposed rule changes would be premature and he made a motion to table discussion of the proposed rule changes until the next meeting which was seconded and no objections were noted.

Judiciary Committee: Mark Touby & Chris McClure, Co-Chairs

Mark T reported welcomed Mark McClure to the committee. They have had discussions and will continue working on the professionalism issue referenced earlier will also coordinate work on the roundtable committee with Paola L and Phil A to make sure all the JCCs are involved. Will attend the meet and greet at the WCI convention.

Board Certification Committee: Tracey Hyde & Rosemary Eure, Co- Chairs

Tracey H gave the report exam was in May congratulations to Sean McCormick and Jesse Rowe for passing. Eight people sat and four passed. Will work on preparing a new test for next year, encourage people to sit for the exam if possible. Placing a table outside of the attorney breakout room and the WCI convention to encourage people to take the test. Will be getting together to meet in person for the exams to be graded in June.

Technology Committee: Richard Manno & Ya'Sheaka Williams, Co-Chairs

Richard M gave the report officially welcomed Ya'Sheaka as co-chair. The committee met Richard, Ya'Sheaka and Jesse Rowe an active section member will be splitting responsibilities for the various platforms. Ya'Sheaka will manage the new section Linked In account, Jesse will be responsible for Instagram and Richard will maintain website and Facebook platforms. The section has an official email address Flabarwcs@gmail.com. Two primary goals this year reach out to section members to get them engaged on the various platforms and invite them to the platforms and to place more content on the platforms to encourage continued involvement by members of the section.

Sponsorship & Advertising Committee: Lizzette Francisco & Lance Avera, Co-Chairs

Lance A reported there is a new sponsorship form with different levels which is available on the website, the committee is actively seeking sponsors. Lizzette added we have had several sponsors in the past like Ringler, Ametros and IWP and she encourages the council members to bring forth any new potential sponsors to the committee to add to the sponsor list. Also, Lizzette asked that the sponsorship committee receive some feedback from law firm sponsorships at the forum regarding revenue and comparison data to last year's efforts. Would like new and fresh new sponsors. Lance mentioned the committee is happy to reach out to potential sponsors to encourage their participation.

Gender Bias & Diversity Committee: Sal Richardson & Kimberly Syfrett, Co-Chairs

Kim Syfrett is now co-chair with Sal R on this committee. They are working on coordinating a meeting to discuss the issues this committee is tasked with addressing. Looking forward to placing some articles in the newsletter regarding the 50th Anniversary.

Emerging Leaders: Neil Ambekar, Chair

Neil A reported had the first of their emerging leaders mixers in Orlando at the end of May had about 10 members and a few seasoned practitioners. Looking to have one in Ft Myers soon also looking to liaison with Bd Cert to assist newer attorneys just starting out to help give them an assist for when they are eligible to sit for the exam most likely will be a zoom meeting and Ken H has agreed to assist with this project.

Health & Wellness: Sean McCormack & Courtney Bahe, Co-Chairs

Sean M reported there is a tentative event looking to schedule for October 29, 2024 dealing with insomnia and cardio relaxation techniques, will coordinated with Holly to make sure no conflicts. Would like this to be a be a free CLE if possible with membership and it will be presented by Dr L. Joseph. Courtney added looking to come up with some ideas to improve and promote health and wellness not only with individual attorneys but maybe also in firms in light of more remote practitioners and also trying to incorporate staff in the process in the firm setting as well.

Section Roundtable Committee (New Committee): Philip Augustine & Paolo Longo Co-Chairs

Paolo L reported started this last year under his watch and was able to do it in all the jurisdictions it was well received by the JCCs and Judge Langham. Thinking about doing them quarterly rather than in every jurisdiction each year and rotating them. The committee will need some additional members Henry Roman has agreed to help might need one or two more to assist. Also looking to work with Sponsorship Committee to see about getting box lunches sponsored as well. Lance A will reach out to Paolo to coordinate this effort.

Long Range Planning Committee: Karen Cullen Sean McCormack Paolo Longo

Karen reported they have met and are looking to continue JCC roundtables, focus on emerging leaders and get more younger attorneys involved in the section and on track for leadership positions, and the 50th Anniversary Gala is a big focus in the short term

Chair Remarks: Karen Cullen, Chair

Karen expressed her gratitude to serve as chair, she addressed the responsiveness and willingness of members to respond to her requests to be involved in the section. Karen also thanked the executive committee and Willie Mae for their efforts and assistance and is looking forward to the section events that are upcoming this year, Napa Retreat in October, Park City Ski trip in February make sure to book your reservations with the links provided as the rates are significantly better through the section.

Chair-Elect Report: Sean McCormack, Chair-Elect

Sean reported thanked Karen for her leadership looking forward to continuing the initiatives and programs that are already in place. As for new ideas thinking about a section podcast in an effort to exchange information to our members, maybe done quarterly with guest speakers talking about relevant topics to the section not as a CLE event but more an information event.

Old Business:

No Old business

New Business:

Vote to fill Robert Friedman's 4th District Seat Karen Cullen, Chair

The Executive Committee met, and their recommendation is to move Sal Richardson in to the 4th District seat vacated by Robert Friedman and they also recommend to nominate Ryan Knight an emerging leader to fill Sal's at large seat. A motion was made to adopt the recommendation to move Sal R to the district seat and seconded, Sal and Ryan were then moved to a virtual room prior to voting, no objects were noted to Sal R being moved to the district seat. Motion passed. The council then turned to the recommendation to nominate Ryan Knight to the defense at large seat vacated by Sal R. There was a motion and second, there was brief discussion about Ryan's background and involvement in the Emerging leaders committee, his professionalism and experience by various committee members that know him or have litigated against him. He is highly regarded. The motion passed unanimously. Both Sal and Ryan were brought back to the zoom meeting and welcomed into their new roles.

Ski Trip Speakers Philip Augustine

Phil asked if anyone attending would like to speak to reach out to him, Karen or Willie Mae there has been some interest from Judge Pitts, Mike Winer, Ken H and Matt T trying to get some new blood in the speaker pool as well. Looking to try and get the roster finalized within the next month or so to get the brochure completed and to the section to market the event.

Women In Work Comp Committee (New Committee) Karen Cullen, Chair

Karen indicated Judge Heller approached her shortly after the forum addressing the issue that some young female lawyers expressed a need for mentorship which has led to the formation of this new committee. Dawn Traverso is chairing the committee. Dawn T reported they will be having their first meeting at the WCI convention on the Sunday before the DCA meeting and greet meeting. Dawn spoke about the composition of the committee and the subcommittees, events and panels planned including a panel discussion at the forum and quarterly zoom meetings the first to be held int the fourth quarter of this year. Planning live events as well to discuss issues and first one is planned for Orlando in September at the JCC office Also looking to create an award honoring Francis Perkins a trailblazer, innovator and progressive leader in the area of workers comp.

50th Anniversary Gala Committee(Special Event committee) Karen Cullen, Chair

Karen reported committee meets monthly they have already met several times. She acknowledged the committee members. Karen G reported the theme for the Gala is Roaring 20's 2.0 at Florida. Bar convention in June 2025 at The Boca. Willie Mae reported she has been working with the meeting director for the Bar to get room assignment, band info and photographer info for the event so that potential sponsors can start to be secured for the event.

Upcoming CLE Audio Webcasts

August 14, 2024
Topic: Death & Dependency
Presenters: Neil Ambekar and Jesse Rowe
September 1,
topic TBD

Future Meetings:

Workers' Compensation Section Annual Out of State Retreat Marriott Napa Valley, Napa, CA
October 9-13, 2024

Willie Mae mentioned please get registered for this event right away she is needing to finalize numbers for transportation, dinner and wine tour at the event. If members would like to visit other wineries there is time built into the retreat to do tastings on your own.

Workers' Compensation Section Executive
Council Meeting Joe's Stone Crab, Miami, FL
January 17, 2025, 11:30 a.m.

Workers' Compensation Ski Retreat Westgate Park City Resort & Spa
Park City, Utah
February 24-March 1, 2025

Workers' Compensation Section
Educational Forum Omni Champions Gate
April 9-12, 2025

Executive Council Meeting
April 9, 2025; 3:00 pm

Florida Bar Annual
Convention The Boca
Raton Resort
June 25-28, 2025

Workers' Compensation Section 50th Anniversary
Gala Thursday, June 26, 2025, 6:00 p.m.

Leo G mentioned he will be reaching out to firms to sponsor tables at the Gala if your firm is having budget meeting might want to include the gala as a potent firm event next year. Willie Mae mentioned the room limitations and that the event will be limited by the vendors or specialized tables in the room. There was discussion by various members that their firm would like to secure a table. Willie Mae mentioned that approximately 200 tickets will be sold for the event to allow the participants to be comfortable, Leao reminded everyone that is only 20 tables of ten.

Adjourn
Motion to adjourn and second meeting concluded,10:25 am