

Minutes
Judicial Section, State Bar of Texas
2014 Annual Business Meeting ~ Omni Hotel, Ft. Worth, TX
Monday, September 8, 2014

1. Welcome and call to order by the Chair, Judge Penny Roberts.
2. After a motion and second the minutes were approved from the 2013 business meeting.
3. Secretary-Treasurer's Report: Judge David Garcia reported on the current fiscal condition of the Judicial Section and the financial information was presented for approval. Financials were approved unanimously.
4. Committee Reports:
 - a. **By-Laws Committee:** Justice Evelyn Keyes and Justice Pat Pirtle reported on changes and recommendations to the by-laws summarized as follows:
 - 1) Article II – Membership: Re-wrote the description of who can become a member of the section.
 - 2) Article III, Section 3: Added the word 'intermediate' before 'judge or justice' to clarify who is qualified to be nominated for Chair-Elect.
 - 3) Article III, Section 5.1: Added an ex officio position for a presiding judge if one is not already serving in an elected position.
 - 4) Article III, Section 5.2: Added an ex officio position for a Liaison from the TCJ Board.
 - 5) Article III, Section 8: Revised to 'leaves the bench must resign from the Board' to encompass any situation.
 - 6) Article VI, Section 1.2: Section Chair (or his/her appointment) to serve as liaison to the TCJ Board.
 - 7) Article X, Section 2: Added the word "unbudgeted" to the \$2500 cap.
 - b. **Judicial Ethics:** Judge Paul Davis discussed the role of the Judicial Ethics Committee, where to find formal ethics opinions and how to request an ethics opinion and encouraged members to submit a question regarding social media.
 - c. **Legislative:** Judge Alfonso Charles reported that the judiciary lost several of our stalwarts that have always assisted us in prior years: Rep. Pitts and Lewis and Senator Duncan.

Priorities:

 1. Pay raise: Judicial Compensation Committee plans on requesting the legislature to provide all judges a 5% pay raise this session along with a request for cost of living raises every two years thereafter.
 2. Judicial Compensation Committee will also request legislation that their recommendations become law unless specifically voted down by the legislature.
 3. Plan II judicial retirement judges did not receive a pay raise last session so we will attempt to raise them this coming session.
 4. A raise for the associate judges.

5. Increase Judicial Education Funding (Fund 540). We will be working with OCA and other grantees to secure additional funds for education funding.

Monitoring other Legislative bills likely to be filed:

1. Judicial Election bills.
2. Expanding terms for District Judges to six years and appellate judges to eight years.
3. Possible expansion of County Courts at Law Jurisdiction.
4. Driver's safety responsibility act.
5. Michael Morton act.

Keys to success:

1. Speak with one voice and have a united front.
2. Keep informed and pay attention with updates via emails and on the judicial section website.

- d. **Nominations:** Judge Alfonso Charles presented the following proposed slate to the membership:

Judge Penny Roberts, Immediate Past Chair
Judge David Evans, Chair
Justice Pat Pirtle, Chair Elect
(Secretary/Treasurer appointed by the new Chair)
Place 2 - Appellate Justice: Gina Benavides
Place 4 - District Court Judge: Joe Lopez
Place 6 - District Court Judge: Chris Oldner

There were no additional nominations from the floor. Following a motion and second, the slate was unanimously elected by acclamation.

5. Judge Penny Roberts introduced all new members of the judiciary and had them stand and be recognized.
6. Other Business: Judge David Evans provided the membership with historical information about the Alliance for Judicial Funding and their importance to the upcoming legislative session.
7. Recognition of outgoing Board Members: The Chair presented plaques to each of the outgoing Board Members and thanked them for their service and dedication:
Hon. Sam Medrano
Hon. Kelly Moore
Hon. Pat Pirtle
8. Outgoing Chair: Judge Penny Roberts expressed her gratitude for being allowed to serve as the chair of the judicial section and recognized the outstanding contributions of the manager of the Sections department of the State Bar, Tracy Nuckols. Judge Roberts then introduced the incoming chair, Judge David Evans from Ft. Worth.
9. Incoming Chair's Remarks: Judge David Evans outlined his vision for the upcoming year

and encouraged members to become involved in section work by volunteering for committee service. He also recognized the out-going Chair Penny Roberts for her service to the judiciary.

10. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.