

Insurance Council Meeting Minutes

January 22, 2025 • 1:00 p.m. Central

Via Zoom

Council meeting began at 1:04 p.m. Bill Seward took roll.

In Attendance: Christopher Avery, Darin Brooks, Shannon Conway, Christina Culver, Robert Cunningham, Blair Dancy, Carla Delpit, Rebecca DiMasi, Summer Frederick, Jennifer Johnson, Katherine Knight, Jonathan Lisenby, Daniel Lockwood, Jason McLaurin, Henry Moore, Marjorie Nicol, Matthew Paradowski, Matt Rigney, Steve Schulwolf, James Willis, Young Lawyer Committee Liaison William McMichael, State Bar Liaison Alex J. Stelly, Jr., and Assistant Director Bill Seward.

Chair's Report: Rebecca DiMasi

Rebecca welcomed attendees, summarized the agenda for the meeting and reviewed the informational items included in the agenda packet.

Approval of Minutes: Jennifer Johnson

Jennifer presented the minutes from the October 16, 2024 Council Meeting. No changes to the minutes were suggested. A motion was made to approve both sets of minutes as presented. Motion seconded and approved.

Budget Report & Overview: Christopher Avery

Chris reviewed the current financial report and noted the 2025 annual sponsorships are currently tracking above budget. The new goal is \$80,000. An additional sponsorship for Wray Willis LLP was added on the call.

Discussion was held regarding the structure of the annual sponsorships and additional opportunities that may be available, such as a la carte items (branded hotel keys, Wi-Fi, etc.) and what the costs for those may be.

Scholarship Committee Update: Blair Dancy

Blair reported that there were two submissions received for the annual writing competition. Submissions were received from SMU Dedman School of Law and UT School of Law. The winners were announced, and discussion was held regarding possible reasons for the low number of submissions and lessons learned for next year. One plan is to rally interest next year with Council members performing campus visits.

Legends Award Committee Recommendations: Rebecca DiMasi

Becca provided the recommendations made by the Legends Committee and opened discussion. One suggestion made by the committee was to award a policyholder and carrier side Legend each time. This idea did not gain any traction during discussion. It was also noted that John Tollefson was given the award last year, but his family was unable to attend and is expected to attend the June seminar this year, so this may impact whether an award should be given this year. This topic has been tabled for now pending additional information.

P&P Manual Update: Christopher Avery

Chris noted the P&P manual is being updated to be more public and should be finalized by the April 2025 meeting. Private/internal process items will remain that way and be listed on the Council-only access areas of the new Section website.

CLE Tasking Sheets: Jennifer Johnson

101 Course & Advanced Seminar – Jennifer reported that most of the current to-do items are for TexasBarCLE action. We will discuss the Council dinner at a future Council meeting.

Comprehensive Overview Course – Chris Avery reported the 2024-25 on-demand course was re-launched last fall with a new added session discussing specialization exam experiences. Chris discussed modifications being considered for future offerings, such as rebranding the program as an Insurance Law bootcamp and subbing out certain sessions with new sessions.

Webinars – Steve Schulwolf reported that the planned February 26th webinar had a panelist cancel today that may require it to be postponed into March. A couple of additional webinars are in the works for this spring. Henry Moore and Blair Dancy presented the December 12th webinar to a good-sized crowd. The current practice of Section members attending free has increased participation but has also resulted in an increase in no-shows who are able to watch the recording afterward, though we have no real way of tracking the number who actually do so. Cross-marketing webinars are still a possibility pending working through some logistical issues on registration tracking by Bill Seward.

Publication Tasking Sheets: Jason McLaurin

Journal – Jason reported the winter issue of the Journal is on track for release in early March, the summer issue in June/July, and the fall issue in October/November timeline. The full timetable for a single issue is 5-6 months. South Texas College of Law has been contacted about designing future issues but needs follow-up and would not take place until Fall at the earliest.

Right Off the Press – Matt Paradowski noted that Shannon Conway has joined the ROTP editor group and may add some students. The ROTP is back on track after a short break during the holidays.

Nominations Tasking Sheets: Robert Cunningham

Bob noted the documentation included in the agenda packet. Bob is suggesting the P&P Manual be updated to use “Nominating” Committee versus “Nominations” Committee as reflected in the bylaws. The Committee will be meeting in the spring to review the applications and discuss recommendations prior to the May Council meeting discussion and development of the official slate for the June Annual Meeting vote. The two current judicial liaisons were renewed last year but additional judicial liaisons are permitted and open for suggestions. Bob reminded the current sitting Council members with terms expiring this year of the need to submit a renewal application. The email announcement regarding applications will go out on February 10-17 with a submission deadline of March 10-17.

A motion was made to accept the P&P manual changes as presented by Bob. Motion seconded and approved.

Outreach Tasking Sheets: Marjorie Nicol

General – Marjorie discussed the proposed social media policy provided in the agenda packet and the clarification of the rules for mentioning people by name in a social media post. The document will be revised to include some additional examples and refer to happy hours as networking events.

Scholarships – Discussed by Blair earlier in the meeting.

Young Lawyers – Christina Culver and William McMichael provided a brief update on the activities the young lawyers are undertaking, including assisting with the collection of papers for the 101 Course in June.

Website Rebuild Update: Katherine Knight

Katherine shared the current staging site for the new website and noted some “punch-list” items she is working on with the designers.

Katherine requested that Council members send any news to the Social Media Committee for posting and took screenshots of the Zoom Council meeting for use. The Section’s LinkedIn is now up to 540 followers.

There being no new or additional business, Rebecca thanked the meeting attendees, including State Bar liaison Alex Stelly, Jr. A motion was made to adjourn. Motion seconded and approved. Meeting adjourned at 2:33pm Central.