

THE NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION
COMMERCIAL & FEDERAL LITIGATION SECTION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Commercial & Federal Litigation Section held in accordance with the rules of the New York State Bar Association on February 13, 2018.

Members Participating in Person

Mitch Katz, Chair
Robert Holtzman, Chair-Elect
Laurel Kretzing, Vice-Chair
Sandra Rampersaud, Treasurer
Matt Aaronson
Tom Bivona
Sam Blaustein
Alan Brody
Hon. Melissa Crane
Deborah E. Edelman
Hon. Helen Freedman (Ret.)
Richard Friedman
Ignatius Grande
Hon. Marguerite Grays*
Tony Harwood
David Holanan**
Gregory Laspina
Nicole McGregor*
Hon. Karla Moskowitz
Michael Rakower
Hon. Joseph Risi**
Natasha Shishov

Members Participating by Phone

Jamie Sinclair, Secretary
James Bergin
Suzanne Galbato
Laura Sedlak
Jim Wicks

**indicates non-executive committee member*

*** indicates guest speaker for the meeting*

Section Chair Mitch Katz called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and introduced Justice Risi, the newest commercial division judge in the State of New York who was just appointed to the Queens County Commercial Division. Justice Risi is a Judge of the Court of Claims and Acting Supreme Court Justice.

Guest Speaker: Justice Grays (Queens County Supreme Court Commercial Division)

Justice Grays provided an overview of the Queens County Commercial Division. Justice Grays advised that the Commercial Division's docket in Queens is heavily weighted with corporate dissolution and construction cases. The Queens Supreme Court currently has three dedicated Commercial Division judges: Justices Risi, Livote and Grays. Due to the Court's high case load, the Court stresses moving cases expeditiously and adheres to the Commercial Division rules. The Court also encourages early mediation of cases. Justice Grays's law clerk handles most telephone conferences, which cuts down on motion practice before the Court. Justice Grays also noted that practitioners are advised to appear for court conferences well prepared and fully familiar with the facts and history of the case. A discussion ensued regarding the current trend towards encouraging younger lawyers to appear at court conferences in the commercial division.

Motion to approve January 4, 2018 Minutes

The January 4, 2018 were unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report

Sandra Rampersaud summarized the 2017 treasurer's report and advised that the current surplus is \$167,168, (which is effectively \$127,168 after the \$40,000 commitment to the courts is extracted). The Section should continue its focus on increasing membership. Income from meetings over the past year came to \$114,289, which was largely attributed to the Scheindlin Event and the Spring Meeting.

Evening at Thurgood Marshall Recap

This second annual event was held on January 23, 2018, the night before the Section's Annual meeting, and included a cocktail hour, tours of the Court and remarks by Chief Judge Robert A. Katzmann. The event was held at the Thurgood Marshall Courthouse from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m and approximately 50 people attended.

Smooth Moves Program Update

This year's Smooth moves program will be held April 10, 2018 at the Lincoln Center Stanley Kaplan Penthouse where former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder will be presented with the George Bundy Smith Pioneer Award. The program will also include special tributes to Judge Smith and Judge Shila Abdus-Salam as well as a CLE program titled "Strengthening the Rule of Law by Fighting Discrimination." Panelists will include Justice Cheryl Chambers, Judge Fern Fisher, Professor Angela Davis, and others. This new CLE program will meet the Diversity and Bias new CLE requirement.

Annual Meeting Update

The Annual meeting was held January 24, 2018 at New York Midtown Hilton where the Section presented Justice Ramos with the Fuld Award and Michael Miller following the two morning CLE programs.

Spring Meeting Update

Chair Elect Robert Holtzman advised that this year's Spring Meeting will be held at the Sagamore Hotel at Lake George May 4-6, 2018 and programming is currently underway. Members are encouraged to register for the weekend.

Other Business

The Section has several upcoming CLE events including Legal Ethics in the Digital Age (March 13, 2018), the Use of Social Media and its Legal Ethics (March 21, 2018) and the Smooth Moves Program (April 10, 2018). The Section is also planning a CLE program on the basics of Commercial Division Litigation and a webinar series on the basics of trial practice and procedure.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:45 p.m.