

**Maryland State Bar Association**  
**MILITARY LAW COMMITTEE**

**Second Committee Meeting**  
**October 7, 2008 6:00 PM**  
520 W. Fayette St Baltimore, MD 21201

**MINUTES**

**I. Welcome**

**In Attendance:** Charles Blomquist, Justin Browne, James Butler, Ravi Kambhampaty, John Osing, John Price, Sam Riley, Tom Donnelly, William Corbin, Scott Allen, Bruce Avery, Joseph Owens. Board of Governors Tom Murphy met with Charles prior to the meeting.

- A. Charles noted that the Committee has doubled in size.
  - 1. (After the meeting, Justin provided MSBA with current list of members and requested an updated roster posted to the web.)
- B. Future Committee meetings.
  - 1. Committee agreed to hold its meeting every first Wednesday of each month.
  - 2. Next meetings:
    - a. Nov. 5, 2008 6:00PM
    - b. Dec. 3, 2008 6:00PM
  - 3. Discussed alternative locations:
    - a. John Price suggested the Bar Library.
    - b. Charles will send list of restaurants.
  - 4. Committee is open to providing teleconference services.
    - a. After the meeting, Justin confirmed free service used by Immigration Section was error free and will set this up for next meeting if there is interest.
- C. Mission Statement
  - 1. Paragraph defining Committee's purpose and objectives sent previously, included again as follows:
    - a. The Special Committee on Military Law will serve as a resource for attorneys and members of the military community who are facing issues pertaining to all aspects of military law. With several active duty bases, a military academy, and over 10,000 Reserve and National Guard members, the Committee will strive to be a relevant and helpful resource to those interested in not only the substantive aspect of military law, but also those who want to help our service men and women, and their families. Military law spans the legal spectrum, and includes military justice, the law of armed conflict, homeland security, environmental law, legal assistance, and contracts – to name but a few areas in which the committee

can focus its attention. Given the variety of issues that the Military Law Committee can engage, this year's co-Chairs are concentrating on three fundamental areas: 1) Establishing a venue for discussing, exploring, and informing the Association on substantive military law issues; 2) Exploring the impact the Base Realignment and Closure Act (BRAC) will have on Maryland and how the legal community can assist; and 3) Providing legal assistance to military members and their families.

2. Proposed mission statement:

a. "The Committee provides a forum for the open exchange of military law and matters affecting veterans and the military community by building and establishing a network of uniformed and civilian professionals, providing educational and legal assistance opportunities, and recognizing those attorneys who have contributed significantly to this goal."

i. Committee members will provide feedback and confirm final statement at next meeting.

D. Committee identified need to work with Board of Governor liaison, Thomas Murphy, on proposed initiatives going forward.

## II. Outreach Efforts

A. John Price suggested contacting delivery of legal services section to obtain names of MSBA members that responded to survey expressing interest in providing services to military servicemembers.

1. (After the meeting, Justin contacted this section for the list and to partner on programs.)

B. Student outreach.

1. Justin proposed mentorship program to UM Law Alumni Board.

2. Justin established contacts at American University and George Mason University.

3. Justin explained efforts working with Ravi Kambhampaty to establish a student network.

## III. Subcommittee Reports

### A. Awards

1. Charles presented PowerPoint slides prepared by Frank Levi.

2. Committee supported the awards program as defined with minor changes and observations.

a. The Gilmore award should be broadened to any uniformed person and include enlisted personnel.

b. The Sherman award should be broadened to include civilians who provide legal services to members of the military or their families or who have advanced the cause of military law.

- c. A suggestion was made to also include an award in the name of CPT Smathers who died a couple of years ago from injuries in suffered in Iraq. *See* <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/jesmathers.htm>;
    - i. An award in his name could be focused on Active Duty JAGs.
  - d. Goal: next month will finalize criteria, vote, and plan to approach families.
3. Need to get families' approval for use of names.
    - a. Joseph Michael Owens offered to help.
  4. Committee identified establishing contacts as the key to the awards program to assure a pool of potential candidates.
    - a. Awards subcommittee needs to identify senior ranking persons at various installations to solicit names.
  5. Subcommittee will work on drafting an application.
    - a. Basic information and paragraph justifying award.
  6. Suggestion to present the award at the annual conference.
    - a. Charles will need to assure space on annual conference program (June 2009).
    - b. Need to set planning timeline according to this deadline.
  7. Discussion about potential award – plaque, crystal, coin.
    - a. Charles proposed a Committee coin.
      - i. Committee responsive to the idea.
        - a.) Charles will present proposed coin at next meeting. (*See* attached).
  8. Discussion about bringing in sponsors.
    - a. This would help cover cost of bringing recipients to event (possibly from the field).

## **B. Webpage**

1. Sam provided an update on efforts to update webpage.
2. Milt and Sam reviewed various pages and determined that ABA's LAMP page provided an excellent layout to emulate.
3. Goal is to make the page value-added.
4. Page will include:
  - a. Welcome
    - i. Mission statement
    - ii. Could include news (uncertain about sources)
      - a.) Justin: Google and other websites provide automatic newsfeeds
  - b. Resources
    - i. CLE links
    - ii. Articles
  - c. Awards
    - i. Page will have a description and nomination form
  - d. Networking

- i. Directory of attorneys willing to provide assistance to JAG or servicemembers and their families
  - a.) Goal is also to provide servicemembers who do not have access to JAG with a means to access legal assistance if a crisis emerges
  - b.) Should be broken-down my practice area

### **C. Membership**

- 1. James Butler presented PowerPoint presentation on the pilot membership initiative whereby people can become affiliates of the committee without paying the full membership fee and not receiving MSBA benefits other than being associated with the Committee.
  - a. Committee embraced the program with the following observations:
    - i. Concern expressed about the language in the third bullet on the 10<sup>th</sup> slide. Members want the language clarified. The purpose of this point is that Committee membership status for non-Maryland licensed attorneys should not be construed as a license to practice in the State.
    - ii. Foresee challenges associated with including non-MSBA attorneys in the program (unless they are military members).
    - iii. Could establish a sponsorship program,
      - a.) Private entities (*e.g.*, insurance companies, firms) could provide funding for people to become members.
      - b.) Justin working with Ravi to do this for students via a mentorship program, to be piloted at UM Law, if approved.
- 2. Charles attending Maryland Defense Force event in November to introduce the Committee and solicit members.

### **D. Budget**

- 1. MSBA allocated Committee \$2295 as seed funds.
  - a. Money to be used primarily for meetings.

### **E. Legislation**

- 1. Members proposed a legislation subcommittee.
  - a. Charles will reach out to Mark Young to see if interested in getting involved.
    - i. Potential opportunity available at UM Law Veterans conference in spring 2009. *See* Part III.F.3.

### **F. Educational offerings/Events**

- 1. Lt. Gov. Address
  - a. Committee discussed possible locations
    - i. UM Law School

- a.) Westminster cost prohibitive (After meeting, Scott Allen sent contact info for future reference)
    - ii. Statehouse
    - iii. Fort Meade
    - iv. 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment Armory
      - a.) No conference rooms
  - b. (After meeting event confirmed for Dec. 9, 2008, 6P.M. at the President's Conference Center East 1 (11 Bladen Street Annapolis, MD 21401)).
  - c. Advertising
    - i. Need to contact military installation post publications, local bar groups, task forces, county/base alliances.
      - a.) John Osing agreed to contact BRAC task forces and alliances.
      - b.) (After the meeting, Justin working with MSBA on advertising efforts).
      - c.) Volunteers need to contact installation post publications and other resources.
- 2. Judge Brown proposed a CLE program for the annual conference: Military Litigants and Witnesses in Civilian Courts: Challenges for the Bench, Bar, and Deployed Military Member.
  - a. Melissa Kucinski volunteered to help.
  - b. Committee supportive of the program.
  - c. Planners need to book space at annual event and propose to the annual event programming committee ASAP.
    - i. Concerns about competitiveness re: timing/location.
- 3. Justin establishing contacts with University of Maryland School of Law to support their spring program: Challenges Facing Veterans in the VA System and the Real World.
  - i. Incorporates training component (appealing veterans' benefits decisions).
- 4. Charles proposed a golf outing at Fort Meade or Aberdeen.

#### **G. BRAC**

- 1. Opportunity to form subcommittee.
- 2. Can connect with existing task forces/alliances to assess impact on municipalities, courts, surrounding communities (*e.g.*, businesses) etc., provide guidance, and inform the MSBA membership of developments.
  - a. Justin has list of contracts. John Osing will contact to invite to Lt. Gov. address (and invite to join the Committee)

#### **IV. Meeting Adjourned**