

Meeting Minutes: Animal Law Section Council, End-of-year Meeting

The Section Council held its year-end meeting at 7:00 PM on May 18, 2010 at The Dogwood Restaurant. In attendance were Chair Gary Norman, Chair-Elect Jan Berlage, Secretary Susan Hankin, Treasurer Maricruz Bonfante, and members Cheryl Leahy and Bob Malone. We were joined by Caroline A. Griffin, Chair of the Mayor's Anti-Animal Abuse Task Force.

The meeting commenced with Caroline Griffin's presentation on the work of the Anti-Animal Abuse Task Force. We discussed some of the legal issues involved in the work of the task force and how the Section Council might work with the task force. One issue that received some attention, (in that it is related to legislation on which we commented during the recent session of the Maryland General Assembly), was the difficulty enforcing mandated counseling for offenders. After the speaker departed or was in the process of departing, there was a discussion and a debate whether the Section should work on creating educational related programs, projects, or activities for such populations as school children on such issues as proper treatment of animals.

Chair Gary Norman then gave a report of the Section Council's work over the past year, highlighting the establishment of the Roberta L. Cepko Award and the success of Mid-Atlantic Animal Law Symposium.

Roberta L. Cepko Award: The Section Council created the Roberta Cepko Award to recognize "a lawyer, judge, or legal scholar who, consistent with the purpose of the Section, has facilitated the development of overall public awareness and best practices in animal-related law, policy, and education." A document outlining the nominations guidelines and selection process was circulated, commented on, and finalized in February (a copy is attached at the end of these minutes). We discussed how to implement the call for nominations and decided that we wanted to include this award as part of the MSBA's award nominations process. Jan will inquire about how to do this at the meeting of incoming chairs, and those attending the annual meeting will try to seek information about this process as well.

Mid-Atlantic Animal Law Symposium: All agreed that the Mid-Atlantic Animal Law Symposium, held on April 9, 2010, was a huge success. The symposium was well attended, very informative, and attracted national attention. The symposium had around 90 attendees, covered a wide variety of topics, and had many excellent speakers, a number of whom came from parts of the country well outside the Mid-Atlantic. The discussion of the importance of laws affecting animals included practical and scholarly components, and the symposium provided an excellent opportunity for networking. Particularly, Senator Raskin provided a presentation on his work with the Section. That presentation was recorded at the law school and

replayed. We need to continue, consistent with bar policies, to work with Senators and Delegates, such as Senator Raskin, on issues. All agreed that holding another symposium should be a priority for the Section.

We discussed whether the next symposium should be held in 2011 or 2012. Note that, while this question was not resolved, the date of the next symposium will be looked on, in a positive light, to take place in 2011. Formally, that will constitute the new business of the incoming Section Council. All agreed that the next symposium, like the first one, should aim to be inclusive of a variety of issues and viewpoints, but not in a way that alienates the core of individuals likely to attend an Animal Law symposium.

Other Old Business: request for meeting re the Center for Animal Testing, The John Hopkins:

We discussed some of the legal issues surrounding animal law testing and what the best forum might be for a debate on the topic. We agreed that, if we have another symposium in 2011, it would be a good venue for presenting a variety of views on the topic.

Looking forward: Before the meeting concluded, Chair-Elect Jan Berlage set out his ideas for the coming year. He favors setting up committees to divide up the tasks of the Section, hopes to have a meeting fairly early on to get a head start on our work, and is hoping to work in partnership with other MSBA sections for some of our programming. All were encouraged to attend the Annual Meeting program in Ocean City if they are able to do so.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM.