

## Minutes of the Columbia Chapter of the South Carolina Roster Administrators

Meeting Date: Tuesday November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Location: Nexsen Pruet, First Citizens Building, 1230 Main Street, Suite 700, Columbia, SC

Host: Melanie Magruder

### Attendees:

1. Laurie Jennings, Nelson Mullins, [laurie.jennings@nelsonmullins.com](mailto:laurie.jennings@nelsonmullins.com)
2. Jay-Jay Flanagan-Grannemann, Law Office of Daryl G. Hawkins, LLC, [jayjay@dghlaw.net](mailto:jayjay@dghlaw.net)
3. Michael Cerkez, Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd (HSB), [MCerkez@HSBlawfirm.com](mailto:MCerkez@HSBlawfirm.com)
4. Tometta Johnson, MGC, [tometta.johnson@mgclaw.com](mailto:tometta.johnson@mgclaw.com)
5. Greta Edwards, Mike Kelly Law Group, [gedwards@mklawgroup.com](mailto:gedwards@mklawgroup.com)
6. Kathleen Clardy, HSB, [kclardy@hsblawfirm.com](mailto:kclardy@hsblawfirm.com)
7. Kim Harbison, Law Office of Daryl G. Hawkins, LLC, [kharbison@dghlaw.net](mailto:kharbison@dghlaw.net)
8. Melanie Magruder, Nexsen Pruet, [mmagruder@nexsenpruet.com](mailto:mmagruder@nexsenpruet.com)
9. Sarah Beasley, Nexsen Pruet, [sbeasley@nexsenpruet.com](mailto:sbeasley@nexsenpruet.com)
10. Mollie Roche, Nexsen Pruet, [mroche@nexsenpruet.com](mailto:mroche@nexsenpruet.com)
11. Nelda Canada, MGC, [NCanada@mgclaw.com](mailto:NCanada@mgclaw.com)

Mike Cerkez took charge of the meeting initially at approximately 1:15 p.m. and thanked Melanie for hosting, Jay-Jay for the minutes of last month's meetings, and Laurie for the meeting agenda and continuing communications since the previous meeting.

The minutes of last month's meeting were approved without revisions.

Mike mentioned that he had received permission from the Palmetto Paralegal Association (PPA) President, Kay Mein, to say a few words about this organization at the PPA meeting the following day. He was asked for a general

summary of what he intended to say. Mike said he intended to say a little about what we each do and how we all help each other with roster-related issues and invite others to join our group. It was suggested that he might leave a signup sheet at the check-in table at the entrance to the meeting place for people who are interested in receiving more information about our group. He agreed to do so.

Laurie reminded everyone about our homework assignment from last month: we were supposed to keep a list of issues we ran across relating to the rosters and compile questions, pet peeves, and suggestions for improvements. Unfortunately, no one in attendance remembered to do so. It was decided that this assignment would continue until the next meeting. Laurie requested that we each mail our lists of issues, questions, and pet peeves to her, and she volunteered to compile them into one master list for circulation and discussion at the December meeting. In the spirit of the season, it was suggested that we think of this as a reverse Christmas list: things we DON'T want in the new roster system!

Discussion of the national roster group on Linked-In ([www.Linked-In.com](http://www.Linked-In.com)) ensued. Laurie, Mike, and Melanie are already members and could invite each of us to join if we wished. They receive messages from people in large cities around the country who deal with rosters and computers each week, though Mike, who belongs to the most groups, only receives 12-14 messages per week, so it seems fairly manageable. It was suggested that we might want to just form our own group for South Carolina, though, rather than having everyone join the national group. Mike is going to investigate that possibility and verify that starting a group is free.

We discussed how the various clerks of court get the email addresses they use for roster mailings. Apparently the Master-in-Equity's office in Beaufort County still manually generates their emails and someone in Greenwood County a few years ago manually typed in all the 1300+ email addresses from the Lawyers Desk Book produced annually by the South Carolina Bar Association for their mailings. For the counties on the new system, the addresses come from the South Carolina Bar Association database, where each attorney is required to maintain a current email address.

There was a consensus that attorneys who get released from a case, conclude their involvement in one in some fashion before the case is completely closed, or become involved in a case after its inception often either forget or intentionally fail to become or be removed as attorneys of record. Since the new system only sends emails to attorneys of record, this means that attorneys who are involved in a case who aren't officially in the database as attorneys of record do not receive court notices generated by the new system!

An attorney at MGC has asked the defense attorneys' organization (the South Carolina Defense Trial Attorneys' Association (SCDTAA); at

www.scdtaa.com)) to join us in a request to Chief Justice Jean H. Toal that additional email addresses (particularly, rosters@firmdomain.com) be included in the mailings generated by the new system in addition to the emails sent to the specific attorneys of record at their Bar-registered addresses. This attorney requested information from our group before the SCDTAA meeting in mid-November, but unfortunately, we were unable to respond in time for him to take information to the Executive Session meeting he attended. More information about this can be founded in the Agenda for this meeting (attached).

Mike Cerkez demonstrated via a PowerPoint presentation how he checks rosters each month using a plug-in for Adobe Acrobat. As Mike mentioned last month, it is extremely important to use the printer-friendly version of the roster, as the plug-in can't see all the information in fields that have scroll bars otherwise. In cases where there are multiple attorneys for a side, the scroll bars in boxes are common, and forgetting to use the printer-friendly version could result in missed hearings. Once the printer-friendly version of the roster is on screen, it is converted to a \*.pdf file. Mike then chooses: Plug-ins, Redacting, Markup text from dictionary, and chooses his Redacting dictionary from a list, then hits OK to search the selected roster. Even the Charleston County roster, which is usually around 400 cases and could take many minutes to search the old-fashioned way (which at HSB involved copying the entire roster into Word and converting it to a \*.pdf file and searching with an in-house program), only takes a few seconds to search using the off-the-shelf plug-in. Each item in the chosen dictionary which appears in the roster is highlighted. Mike can edit items in the dictionary (which includes attorney names, firm addresses, and attorney phone numbers, and could also include case names, case numbers, attorney bar numbers, or other data as preferred) and choose the highlighting color. He finds yellow easier to see as he scrolls through multiple lengthy rosters in a search session.

Mike was using Adobe 8.1.0, the plug-in (which he thinks HSB's IT people got directly from Adobe), a web browser (Internet Explorer), and Microsoft Word. He was not sure if earlier versions of Adobe support the plug-in he uses, and he did not know the name of the plug-in.

Mike and Kathleen mentioned that some counties only list the last names of case parties in their printer-friendly rosters to save space and paper. When you get a roster from a county for the first time, you need to test to see if that is being done. If it is, you may miss cases your firm is handling if the parties have common names and you are not searching case numbers.

Mike spoke to someone in either the Greenville or Spartanburg County Clerk of Court's office (he could not recall) about the South Carolina Clerks of Court & Registers of Deeds (CCROD) Association (at [www.scccrod.org](http://www.scccrod.org)). His contact agreed to let him know next time the organization meets. As they meet twice a year and their annual convention/seminar was in October, their next meeting is likely to be sometime in the spring.

As a tip, Mike mentioned that he had been informed by a contact at the Administrative Law Court, Susan Dickerson, that, due to a recent programming change, all rosters from that court now only contain case names. No attorney information is listed. Not even the case \*numbers\* are included. This news was shocking. Apparently the end users were not consulted at all before this change was made, and it was suggested that this change could lead to many problems for our firms.

As another tip, it was noted that the Greenville County website lists rosters that are appearing in error. At the time of the meeting, on the second page of the list of rosters, there were three jury terms listed above the 2 non-jury terms at the bottom of the page. When the printer-friendly versions of these rosters were loaded, for each of the three jury terms, the same old status conference roster from early in the year appeared. Mike and Kathleen contacted the Clerk's office and were told it was the result of a computer glitch, but no one could explain why or when it might be fixed.

It was noted that the December 15 roster for Chesterfield County contained the court date when it was originally posted (sometime in September), but when it was updated later as the term grew nearer in time, the date was removed, so people updating their searches were unsure when the attorneys needed to be in court. Laurie spoke to the Clerk's office and that was supposed to be in the process of being fixed at the time of the meeting.

Laurie again reiterated her willingness to forward any similar tips and news to everyone on our mailing list if things are sent to her upon discovery. One of the main goals of this group is for members to help one another by sharing information and insights, so we need to remember to share whatever we find out. If even one other person is helped by the information provided, the time it takes each of us to review Laurie's short, informative email is worth it.

Upcoming meeting dates, locations, and hosts were noted as follows:

December 16<sup>th</sup> at MGC, hosted by Nelda Canada

January 20<sup>th</sup> at Mike Kelly Law Group, hosted by Greta Edwards

February 17<sup>th</sup> at Law Office of Daryl G. Hawkins, LLC, hosted by Jay-Jay

Flanagan-Grannemann and Kim Harbison

As it was getting late, discussion of the additional topics on the agenda was postponed. Laurie mentioned that it is probably too soon to discuss registering the name of our organization or creating by-laws and a mission statement, but stated that these are things we should all be thinking about. Additionally, there is an "Elite Large

Firm Docketing Management" teleconference group she would like us to discuss at our next meeting if time permits.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jay-Jay Flanagan-Grannemann

Secretary

South Carolina Rosters Administrators, Columbia Chapter

12/14/2008