

Minutes of the Columbia Chapter of the South Carolina Roster Administrators
Meeting Date: Tuesday June 23rd, 2009

Location: Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, LLP
1320 Main Street, 17th Floor, Columbia, SC
Host: Laurie Jennings

Attendees:

1. Laurie Jennings, Nelson Mullins, Laurie.Jennings@nelsonmullins.com
2. Jay-Jay Flanagan-Grannemann, Law Office of Daryl G. Hawkins, LLC, JayJay@dghlaw.net
3. Michael J. Cerkez, Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd (HSB), MCerkez@hsblawfirm.com
4. Nicole Wright Frey, HSB, NFrey@hsblawfirm.com
5. Julie Colgan, Nexsen Pruet, rosters@nexsenpruet.com
6. Karen Jones, Nexsen Pruet, rosters@nexsenpruet.com

Your secretary arrived 10 minutes late (as she did not receive an invitation, due to the President's distribution list snafu, described below), so she is unable to accurately state a start time for the meeting. It is believed that old business was reviewed at the start of the meeting.

Laurie mentioned that she had deleted her contact group for SCRA by accident and Kim Harbison had provided a CD with the full membership database to replace it. Kim was unable to attend the meeting due to office commitments, but we should have CDs of the membership database available for attendees at the July meeting.

Laurie mentioned the recent email that went out to attorneys with cases pending in Florence County announcing a seminar the Clerk's office will be holding there on July 7th regarding the CMS system. Michael has received permission from his firm's management to attend the seminar, and he has discussed it with the contact person at the Clerk's office, Melissa McCutcheon, who says that everyone is welcome, not just attorneys. There were some concerns due to the general nature of the invitation that the material to be covered may be stuff we all already know due to our use of the CMS system in the counties already using it for their rosters and public indices. Michael will be driving down to the seminar; anyone interested in attending and perhaps car-pooling should contact him immediately. He will write up a summary of the training when he returns and send it to Laurie for distribution to our membership, along with scans of any handouts received. Perhaps he will have an opportunity to recruit some new members from that area of the state while he is in Florence!

Jay-Jay mentioned that Kim has emailed Julie Armstrong, the Clerk of Court for Charleston County, the current President of the South Carolina Clerks of Court and Registers of Deeds Association (<http://www.sccrod.org>), but has not heard back from her about the possibility of representatives of SCRA either attending their fall meeting or

speaking there. Jay-Jay had done further research at the organization's website (which has been expanded significantly since the last review) and discovered that the York County Clerk of Court, David Hamilton, is actually the head of the Convention & Meeting Committee, so Kim is going to try to contact him as well. He and Ms. Armstrong are also co-chairs of the Technology Committee, so they are definitely the folks we need to speak with. Hopefully we will have more news next month!

At this point, Julie Colgan from Nexsen Pruet explained that she and Karen Jones were attending the meeting because Melanie Magruder is no longer with their firm, and they need to investigate how to best meet the firm's needs in the roster area. Julie asked a number of pointed questions and explained that she needs to justify to the firm's leaders why roster checking should be done in whatever fashion she decides to recommend, and since she comes from a business background, she wanted sound business reasons to justify hiring someone to perform this work, rather than apportioning it to other staffers.

Much discussion of centralized roster checking versus having individual attorneys, paralegals, secretaries, or practice teams check their own cases ensued. We all feel that the money spent on our salaries, or those portions of our salaries for the time we dedicate to roster searching, is easily justified when weighed against the possibility of a malpractice claim if a hearing or trial is missed and claims or cases are thrown out of court.

Michael stated that he feels firms need to consider roster searching personnel part of the bottom line cost of doing business. He and Nicole mentioned that their firm is seriously considering hiring a third full-time person to do roster searches. Michael is primary, and Nicole is his backup, but she will be going out on maternity leave soon, and there is no one to fill in should Michael call in sick or take vacation time. Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd is willing to hire a third full-time person to train to do this job to ensure there is someone available to do it properly every day of the year. That speaks volumes about the importance they place on the job.

We also discussed how all of those present at the meeting believe centralized searching is best for their firms, but Jay-Jay tried to explain why McAngus, Godelock, & Courie has each paralegal search their own cases to offer a different viewpoint. All members present also explained that they also handle the calendaring/docketing of all items turned up in the roster searches, which has been a separate function performed at the team or attorney level at Nexsen Pruet.

Julie mentioned that Nexsen Pruet has the Elite docketing software, but she estimated that only about 3% of the attorneys use it, so she seemed quite interested in hearing that most of us use Outlook for our docketing/calendaring.

Once we convinced that she was probably best off hiring another direct report (which, as a manager, she was hoping to avoid), Julie also asked what sort of qualifications she should look for in someone to do this job. Each of the attendees made suggestions, then most of us gave some background information about our own training and personality traits that make us good at this job. Suggested qualifications included: some paralegal training or familiarity with the legal system and legal terminology, Internet search expertise (which was very helpful to our members over the last few weeks, when the Judicial Department website was down for about a week and the Horry County website was down intermittently for about 2 weeks, as we had to find alternate routes to the individual counties' roster websites), a pleasant telephone demeanor (as many follow-up calls to Clerks' office can be required at times), computer competence (as most of us are using the Adobe redacting plug-in for roster searching now), and an exacting attention to detail.

Julie mentioned that she had a lot to think about after our lengthy discussions; we hope to hear about what she has decided to recommend, and what the firm's leaders decide as a result, at a future meeting!

Our tip this month related to Charleston County's court schedule for the Fourth of July holiday, so it is moot as of this writing. (For those who are interested for historical purposes, however: Charleston County roster meetings are usually held on Friday mornings. Since the court was closed for the holiday on Friday July 3rd, a roster meeting was held the morning of Thursday July 2nd for the week of July 6th. The jury roster update listing cases for which attorneys needed to appear at the roster meeting was posted by Wednesday morning, allowing 24 hours' notice to the attorneys called.)

Michael related that he had forwarded information on our organization to a fellow Haynsworth employee in the Charleston office upon hearing of her election as President of the local legal support professionals' organization there. His email to her, including attachments, is attached hereto for reference.

Laurie asked Julie how Nexsen Pruet has set up its rosters@nexsenpruet.com email address; Julie stated that she had their IT Department make a separate email account, with "rosters" as an individual user, and had them set permissions such that she and Karen have dual access to the account, each with full rights. She stated that she has set up similar accounts for the firm's Intake Department and the other departments she manages as well so that other members of a team can see the status of their co-workers' files when those co-workers are unavailable for any reason.

Our next meeting is scheduled for July 21st, 2009 and, pending approval by firm management, will likely be held at Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd, PA and hosted by Michael and Nicole.

We are still seeking other locations for future meetings. Remember: lunch does *not* need to be provided; we just need a conference room, but would prefer to have a computer, Internet hookup, screen, and teleconference capability if possible. Please

contact Laurie at the email address above if you are interesting in hosting a future meeting. Thanks!

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

Respectfully submitted,

Jay-Jay Flanagan-Grannemann

Secretary

South Carolina Rosters Administrators, Columbia Chapter

07/05/2009