Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting of January 7, 2011

Sustainable Futures Section

Oregon State Bar

Attending: James Kennedy (Chair), Robin Bellanca Seifried (Treasurer), Dick Roy, Michelle Slater, Diane Henkels, Dallas DeLuca (Secretary), Ellen Grover, Jennifer Gates, Pat Neill, and Amie Jamieson.

Guest: J. Charles Griggs

1. **Vision of Sustainability in 2020pening Remarks** – Jim

• Do we need additional scientific education for lawyers?

• Discussed whether climate change science has any specific appeal or application for lawyers different than general population, such as for how climate change impacts Oregon economy and society.

• Discussion of issues of scientific integrity?

• Discussed the impact on public policy formulation and the possible role for lawyers to check validity of claims.

Summary of Discussion: Probably no desire by Bar for further scientific education for lawyers.

• Bar Associations: Oregon State Bar cannot take political positions, so current Bar level of support for practical aspects of sustainability is likely near maximum Bar can do.

• Outside of formal Bar association, there could be room for growth for lawyer support for rights of future generations and rights of animals and nature.

• Vision process must take care not to define and predict the future before it happens.

• Discussion of environmental ethics taught at Yale and Vermont law schools. An ethics CLE for Bar members on environmental ethics could be very helpful and popular.

• Should the Sustainable Future section address issues in the non-work sphere? Or does that detract from Section’s mission related to practice of law?

• Likely section does not have enough time or resources to do this. But, we can support this with a criteria in law firm awards.

• Do lawyers need to reconnect with nature via field trips?

• But, how does this connect sustainability and the law?

• CLEs that can link practice of law to something related to the field trip. E.g. CLE on Urban Growth Boundaries at a protected area.

• Do people have time? Recorded webinar and podcasts can help.

• Has Section articulated reason for protection of rights of future generations? Discussed possible tools for engaging section members in discussion of protection of rights for future generations by:

• Essay contest

• Articles in Newsletter

• Discussion groups

• Next year Section will have greater focus on office practices through:

• Joint programs with PLF on paperless offices.

• Rigorous criteria for Partners in Sustainability Program.

• Awards selection for Sustainable Leadership law firm awards.

• Discussion of the need for activities to reach those not as dedicated to environmentalism. Great care must be taken to appropriately explain sustainability and impacts of climate change on Oregon in highly credible ways. And the activities must have attraction outside of Portland.

2. **Reviewing SFS Mission Statement** – Michelle

• The mission statement says that the Section “Provides Expertise” – discussion of need to collect information to be on website.

• Discussion of whether this be duplicative of OLSF website.

• Section website 2 foci: law office practice and law & sustainability.

• Discussion of whether or not to change mission statement and, if so, how.

• Decided no change needed this year.

• What is the Section to be if it is to be relevant to the Bar membership?

• Inclusiveness to different practice areas and different practice types (e.g., small versus big law firms)

• More outreach to entire Bar or focus on Section members?

• Should section be less conservative in its program subject matter, with more programs that advocate a position?

• Can Section be effective and relevant through credible presentation of arguments on sustainability in newsletter and website?

3. **Strategies** – Dick

Additions to list from Dick Roy

• Outreach to other Sections

• Make website more vibrant tool

• Provide tools and training to law firms to help them change law office practices

• Participate in dialogue with legislators and Bar on changing laws to promote sustainability

• Produce Environmental Ethics CLE

• Articulate reason for protection of future generations

• Promote Green *pro bono*

• Promote sustainability in lawyers’ private lives

• Develop stronger ties to law schools

• Outreach to county Bar Associations

• Video replay of CLEs in other areas

• Strengthen coordination with Board of Governors