

Minutes of the AMSL Alumni Board Meeting – Approved July 6, 2021

Date: Tuesday, May 4, 2021

Time: 8:00PM EST

Via Zoom

PRESENT

Kevin Normile, Zachary Miller, Benjamin Donovan, Brendan Karl, Naomi Hatton, Andrew Bodoh, Kelsey Cameron, Tylan Rickets, Dean Milhiser, Amy Howarth, William Sullivan, Charles Mailloux, David Crockett, Luca Hickman, James Skyles, Victor Bermudez

- 1) Call to Order/Establish Quorum – 8:03PM
- 2) Opening Prayer by Kevin Normile – Peace Prayer of St. Francis
- 3) Approval of Previous Minutes
 - a. March 2, 2021
 - i. Normile: Motion to approve
 1. David Crockett Second
 - a. Passed without opposition
 - b. April 6, 2021
 - i. Tabled
- 4) Messages
 - a. President's Message
 - i. Dean's search was a success. Thank you to everybody who volunteered. We will be well served with Professor Czarnetzky as our new CEO and Dean.
 - ii. **Kevin will be working in DC for a great deal of time between now and November and it may be difficult to reach him.**
 - b. Dean's Message
 - i. I am very happy and grateful to see a great Alumni Board like this one come together and pull for the best interests of the Law School.
 - ii. The search committee made it a point to express how much it valued the input from the Alumni. It was a great help to the Dean Selection Process.
 - iii. Dean's selection process was a great success in terms of quality of the process and of the result.
 - iv. The Board is looking at merging with the University and sharing a common President. The law school will still have a chief executive with a title such as CEO.
- 5) Old Business
 - a. Dean Selection Process:
 - i. Comments on Alumni Participation in the Dean Search

- b. March for Life 2022
 - i. Bodoh: We are coordinating through Naomi to get in touch with the officers of Lex Vitae. However, we are postponing this until after final exams.
- c. Naples Alumni Participation Committee
 - i. Amy Howarth: There are no live events coming up yet.
 - ii. Pinning Ceremony
 - 1. Amy Howarth: You are all invited to submit a video for the pinning ceremony. It will be held via Zoom.
- d. Election Bylaws
 - i. Resolution to address unmarked ballots. We are using imperfect balloting software.
 - ii. Kevin: We circulated a proposed amendment. Does anybody have any objections? Any discussion
 - 1. Bodoh: **Motion** to Adopt the bylaws proposed by Andrew Bodoh via email: "Be it resolved by the Ave Maria School of Law Alumni Board of Directors, that the Elections Procedures adopted October 13, 2015, be amended as follows, with the addition of Section III(a)(x): III.a.x. In general, it will be the goal, in evaluating the imperfectly marked ballots, to preserve as much of the ballot as possible. Ballots reflecting the following imperfections should be evaluated as follows. For ballots in which a particular candidate is awarded two rankings for the same office, or for Chair positions, the ballot shall be disregarded only as to that office or the Chair positions. For ballots in which two candidates are awarded the same ranking for the same office, or for Chair positions, the ballot shall be disregarded only as to that office or the Chair positions. Any candidate not ranked shall be awarded zero (0) rank points. If a ballot awards nonsequential rank points, such as ranking a most preferred candidate and a third most preferred candidate, without ranking a second most preferred candidate, the ballot will be accepted as is."
 - a. Seconded by Charles Mailloux
 - b. Discussion
 - i. Bodoh: This language is designed to address the 4 major imperfect ballot scenarios possible in a ranked voting system. Those scenarios are when a candidate is awarded two rankings for the same office, when two candidates are awarded the same ranking for the same office, when a candidate is not ranked, and when the rankings are nonsequential. However, if electors voted everybody but one person for the number one slot for the purpose of excluding that one person, it would call

the credibility of the system into question while throwing off the calculations.

- ii. Donovan: This sounds like there will be more human interaction with the software than previously anticipated. I am concerned that this might cause potential issues down the line.
 - 1. Bodoh: Right now, info is collected through a survey platform, downloaded to a spreadsheet, checked, and excel formulas are used to calculate the totals. This language addresses in the narrowest possible way the procedure in case of these errors, and provides a framework for a method of resolution if any other unforeseen errors come up.
- iii. Crockett: Is there any way to fix this problem on the software side?
 - 1. Bodoh: As far as I know, not with the software platform we currently use, which we selected with an eye toward minimizing the economic burden to the law school. A more sophisticated software is cost prohibitive.
 - 2. Sullivan: What is the difference in the cost?
 - 3. Bodoh: I don't remember exactly, but it was substantial.
- iv. Normile: What if two candidates are ranked as zero?
 - 1. Bodoh: All candidates ranked as zero receive zero rank points.
 - 2. Normile: So under your language, this wouldn't result in the ballot being thrown out?
 - 3. Bodoh: This would be covered under candidates not being ranked. The ballot would not be thrown out.
- v. Crockett: What if one person receives a 2nd place vote and two people receive a 4th place vote?
 - 1. Bodoh: the ballot will be disregarded as to that office or chair position.
- vi. Normile: Perhaps we should clarify the language regarding unranked candidates versus candidates ranked with zero.
 - 1. Bodoh: The bylaws already cover this. The two are equivalent.

- vii. Donovan: Will you be curating the final tally after the election?
 - 1. The election procedures state that an alumni coordinator will be handling these issues and gives a lot of discretion to the coordinator to resolve issues.
- viii. Donovan: If somebody ranks two people the same, it will require somebody to look at the ballots manually to catch this?
 - 1. Bodoh: There may be an excel shortcut for this, but yes it does require a human to look through the data, and we have always expected for this to happen.
 - 2. Amy Howarth: Yes, I have in the past gone through the data extensively.
- ix. Sullivan: What does the SBA use?
 - 1. Hatton: The SBA uses software called “explore,” but they don’t do ranking. Each elector only gets one vote per office. So their software might not be appropriate for Alumni Board.
- x. Motion seconded by Second by Will Sullivan
 - 1. Motion passes without opposition.

6) New Business

a. Offensive Facebook Post

- i. Amy Howarth: There was a post to the Alumni Facebook page shaming a new student. I deleted it. I wanted to discuss whether or not the offending alumnus should be removed from the Facebook group.
 - 1. Normile: It is my understanding that the school owns the page and appoints the moderators. They have the power to remove people for posting offensive things to the Facebook page
 - a. Howarth: This is true, but I wanted to consult the alumni board.
 - b. Dean Milhizer: When this came to my attention, I believed the alumni board should be consulted.
 - 2. Donovan: My suggestion is to warn the guy, tell him to cut it out, or he’s off of there.
 - 3. Bodoh: An article from an independent source was shared. The article was informational and makes it clear that the new student is involved in an LGBTQ ministry through his Catholic Parish. They make this very public, and this is an issue of public interest.

- a. Hatton: The offender made a personal comment asking the new student to withdraw from Ave because he was shaming the school.
 - i. Bodoh: In that case, we should use the moderators.
 - 4. Bermudez: Is there a process by which an alumnus can be removed from the Alumni Association?
 - a. Dean Milhizer: I am not aware of such a process, but I do think there is some administrative discretion.
 - b. Bermudez: I think this person should be removed from the Association. He is a liability to our school.
 - c. Crockett: There might be murderers who haven't had their alumni status revoked.
 - 5. Milhizer: I just wanted to get a sense if there was any opposition to removing his Facebook privileges.
 - a. Crockett: We should warn him first.
 - b. Sullivan: I don't think we should even warn him. We should just remove him from the Facebook group.
 - c. Crockett: I agree. He's been warned enough.
 - d. Ricketts: I agree.
 - e. Sullivan: It was prudent to have our input, but in the future it might be good to just do what needs to be done and then seek our input afterwards.
 - f. Miller: I concur. However, it is important to make a distinction that this is happening because of the offensive posts personally attacking the new student, and not because of the original article posted, which is a matter of public interest.
- b. Ben Donovan's Strategic Vision
 - i. Donovan: I sent out a Regional Chapter Proposal. We need to expedite this because at least 3 people are anxious to start a DC chapter. About 5 years ago, I surveyed the alumni to see what they would like to see more of. We have become geographically centered around Michigan and Florida, but we have alumni all over the country who we could serve better by formally recognizing regional chapters. Some informal chapters already exist. I would like to formalize the process for creating chapters. To this end, I sent out a document explaining the proposed process. An alumnus can come to a chapter support coordinator, selected by the Board, who connects them with other alumni in their geographical area. When at least 10 people desire to join/form a regional chapter, we will approve it. Then they will be asked to forward proposed bylaws and election schedule to the board, and they will be approved. There will be no reporting requirements, although we will be available for support. We suggest they form a 501c3, and AMSL will give permission to use the school's name and logo. When chapters get big, I would like to invite representatives to

come to board meetings in a non-voting capacity to represent their chapters. I would like 2/3rds of the board members to approve this. Recension of a chapter would require 3/4ths of the board to approve, We will have a chapter map on our website for alumni to find their chapter.

1. Bodoh: I see a few issues that can be resolved with school buy-in. First, Ave Maria is a trademarked name.
 - a. Donovan: Amy does have a document and this issue has been addressed.
2. Bodoh: Also, the document does not make clear whether the school is giving the alumni association the whereabouts of the alumni, and how that intersects with FIRPA laws.
 - a. I understand and appreciate this concern. We will research this issue.
3. Bodoh: How will we effectuate complimentary mailing?
 - a. Donovan: email.
4. Donovan: I have already provided documents to people who want to start a regional chapter in DC, and I am talking to people in Michigan, Tampa and Salt Lake City.
5. Rickets: What is your vision for level of board involvement?
 - a. Just initial approval of the chapter and support when it is requested. Otherwise, I want them to operate autonomously.
6. Rickets: What is the feasibility of a midwestern chapter as opposed to a Chicago chapter?
 - a. This depends on the logistics and organization of the regional chapters.
7. Kelsey Cameron: I would like to see a conversation between the DC chapter and the Board regarding the March for Life, for example.
 - a. Donovan: that makes sense.
8. Sullivan: I think this is a great idea and makes a lot of sense. What do we need to do to get it going?
 - a. Donovan: I will make a motion and then I will ask Mr. Normile to sign the document and we will post it.
9. Normile: The 3/4ths vote requirement to abolish a chapter seems like it can be overridden by a majority vote to change that requirement pursuant to Robert's Rules of Order.
 - a. Rickets: Perhaps we could change the bylaws to avoid this problem.
 - b. Normile: That's what we would have to do.
 - c. We can talk about setting up a bylaws committee at a later date after we preserve our intent in this document.
10. Donovan: **Motion** to approve the regional chapter proposal.
 - a. Cameron: Second

b. Rickets: Motion for Roll Call Vote.

i. Bermudez: Seconded

c. ROLL CALL VOTE

i. Normile: Yes

ii. Karl: Yes

iii. Miller: Yes

iv. Bodoh: Yes

v. Milhizer: Yes

vi. Howarth: Yes

vii. Cameron: Yes

viii. Bermudez: Yes

ix. Crockett: Yes

x. Donovan: Yes

xi. Hatton: Yes

xii. Hickman: Yes

xiii. Mailloux: Yes

xiv. Rickets: Yes

xv. Skyles: Yes

xvi. Sullivan: yes

d. MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY

c. Bermudez: What is our progress in finding somebody to fill Dean Jennifer Lucas-Ross's position?

i. Milhizer: We have two finalist candidates. A hiring committee has made recommendations. I want to meet with the hiring committee. This was delayed with the Dean Search process. I will likely meet with them before the end of the week and then I will be able to make a decision.

1. Bermudez: Will you and Amy meet with the SWFL Bar association regarding co-hosting an event with the school in the fall, or should I wait for the new Dean?

a. Howarth: I may not be the last-stop person, but I can help you coordinate that if you send me the information.

7) Setting Next Meeting

a. 6/1/21 @ 8PM

8) Closing Prayer – By Ben Donovan, Our Father