

Member of the Month by Ellen R. Cohen [for second qtr 2010 issue]

Susan P. Potter

“I like being able to help people navigate legal issues and transactions that seem complicated or foreign to them,” says Susan Potter of Press, Potter & Dozier, LLC, a Bethesda law firm. Susan, who focuses on commercial legal transactions, helps her clients negotiate contracts and transactions involving real estate sales and leasing, business partnerships and joint ventures, buying and selling businesses, commercial loan transactions, and employment, consulting and severance agreements. She also represents people starting new businesses. She helps them to become organized with the right form of business entities and works with them, together with their accountant, to get what is necessary to start their business.

“I try to handle whatever issues might pop up down the road,” says Susan, adding that she frequently brainstorms with several colleagues whose advice is often valuable as well. Susan and her partner Fred Press started the firm in 2003. In the six years of its existence, it has now grown to include a total of six attorneys.

Susan particularly enjoys helping her clients “understand the ramifications of contracts they are entering into. I try to anticipate what could happen down the road and make things as clear as possible,” she says. “At the beginning of a business relationship, people are optimistic. They get along well with each other, and they are hopeful about the future. Now is the time to get a good agreement on how things may operate or even wind down years later. You want a clear road map detailing everyone’s responsibilities and outlining how disputes, when they occur, will be handled.” Because she likes troubleshooting, Susan enjoys helping people navigate through difficult areas, trying to make sense of it all.

A WBO member for about three years, Susan likes WBO’s camaraderie and diversity of women. “I like meeting women who have successful businesses and hearing the ideas behind them. I like getting to know their stories and finding out how they got where they are,” she says. Because she helps clients who have small businesses while also having her own business to run, she finds WBO a good resource for individuals she may need to call on for her own business.

Originally from Harrisburg, PA, Susan has been here for 20 years. “I came right after law school and never left,” she says. When she is not working, Susan enjoys spending time with her children. “We like sporting events (baseball, hockey, football), skiing and snowboarding,” she says. She likes to see live music locally and loves to travel. Favorite destinations have included New Orleans, Playa Del Carmen in Mexico, Belize, the Outer Banks and the Bahamas.

If you need to speak with an attorney about business issues, visit www.presspotterlaw.com and then call (301) 913-5200 to schedule an appointment with Susan P. Potter. You may also e-mail her at spotter@presspotterlaw.com.

Ellen R. Cohen is a free-lance writer and editor whose "editorial advertising" helps her clients advertise their goods and services in a variety of ways. She can be reached at (301) 984-7444.