

**Justice Action Group Board of Directors Meeting  
February 24, 2020 — 3:00 p.m.  
Feeney Conference Room  
Cumberland County Courthouse, Portland**

**MINUTES**

Present: Saufley, C.J., Mead, J., Rich, J., Darvin, J., Eben Albert, Charles Dingman, Bill Harwood, Nan Heald, Juliet Holmes-Smith, Jamie Kilbreth, Jaye Martin, Robyn Merrill, Sue Roche, Barbara Schlichtman, and Diana Scully

By phone: Deirdre Smith and Cindy Brochu

Introductions were made.

Chief Justice Saufley welcomed the Board members and thanked them for their good work. She reported on the status of the new case management system and the fact that we are planning on rolling out the first aspects of the system in Region V at the end of 2020. She reported that the JB was working with a group of provider representatives as the development continues.

**I. CONSENT AGENDA**

(These will be considered based on the written report package and not presented at the meeting.)

A. Reports from the ACP members: Justice Mead thanked the providers for their reports and the outstanding front-line work they are doing and accomplishing so much with such limited funds. The reports will be made part of JAG's permanent record

B. Approval of Minutes: JAG Board, June 27, 2019 meeting. Minutes adopted and incorporated.

**II. WORKING AGENDA**

A. Report from the Chair — *J. Mead*:

i. Inventory review/updates: Updates will be completed and circulated.

sources  
a ii. Update on 2020 activities: Justice Mead hopes that JAG will explore of funding for JAG administrative functions in the coming year. He feels that more can be accomplished with an actual administrator serving in that role. On the court side, developing and implementing the CMS system will occupy great deal of the JB's attention and resources in the near future.

iii. Update on IOLTA Rule: The Report of the Working Group has been received, and the court will be addressing the lobbying issue soon.

- iv. Katahdin Counsel Report/Bar Registration Optional Reporting: Participation continues to be decreasing, but if a voluntary reporting component is added to the annual registration, the numbers may go up.
- v. Update on Odyssey Case Management System and e-filing: Progress continues and we expect that the first components will go live in Region V in late 2020.
- vi. **Guest speaker: Jennifer Lechner, Executive Director of the North Carolina Equal Access to Justice Commission**

Jennifer Lechner and Jennifer Simmons introduced themselves. Jennifer Lechner reported on the remarkable evolution of the North Carolina ATJ Commission and shared some creative suggestions on how to procure funding for commissions. The North Carolina Supreme Court imposed a surcharge on CLE providers, a part of which is directed to the commission for its administrative costs (\$3.00 for every hour of CLE). The North Carolina ATJ Commission receives no funding from the Legislature. Several law firms contribute to the funding. Their AOC contributes a staff person to assist with administration. They do not do private fundraising.

Justice Mead thanked the Jennifers for their presentations and noted that JAG should make funding an ongoing project and asked the Board members to consider creative approaches that do not encroach upon the funding sources that are currently serving the providers.

B. Report from the Vice Chair — *J. Rich*: Along with Juliet Holmes-Smith, Katy Rand, and Beth Richardson, Judge Rich makes up a subcommittee of the Pro Bono Committee looking at amending Maine Rule 89(c) to include volunteerism and relax its two-year limitation. He also mentioned that Beth Richardson and Juliet Holmes-Smith have been hard at work at launching the Mead Fellowship, with the kick-off coming up next month, geared towards new lawyers in Maine. There were 11 in the last count for the first class. It's in Augusta on April 1st at the CJC and focused on do's and don'ts. Judge Nivison will be there representing federal court and Justice Mead will be there.

The other new initiative is exploring new ways in which Mainer prosecutors, State and Federal might be encouraged to do pro bono work. Julie Sheridan is leading this effort.

C. Pro Bono Committee — *J. Rich & Juliet Holmes-Smith*: Judge Rich and Juliet Holmes-Smith reported on the Pro Bono Committee's goings-on. It is hoped that the voluntary reporting on annual attorney registrations will be approved by the SJC and the new VLP Justice Andrew M. Mead Fellowship for Pro Bono will be a success. The first instructional meeting of the Fellows will be on April 1 and will feature presenters including a number of judges.

D. ACP — *J. Kilbreth*: The providers expressed continuing concern about the status of the Judges' ability to advocate for funding for providers. Justice Mead reported that he hoped to get the issue resolved soon, hopefully with a clarification of the rule.

E. Legislative Committee — *C. Dingman* - ATJ Day is March 17th. Preparations are continuing based upon previous years' format. [NOTE: ATJ Day was canceled due to the corona virus pandemic.]

F. MSBA: No report.

G. MJF: Bill Harwood spoke about the retreat the MJF undertook in the fall.

H. New Business: Jamie spoke briefly about the IOLTA/Lobbying issue. Justice Mead reported that the Report of the working Group had been received and the court should be acting upon it soon.

I. Future Meetings of the JAG Board: June 18, 2020 - 3:00  
Dec. 21, 2020 - 3:00

Future Meetings of the JAG Executive Committee:

Apr. 9, 2020 - 3:00 – Portland [Cancelled]  
Sept. 14, 2020 - 2:00 - Augusta  
Nov. 16, 2020 - 2:00 - Augusta

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.