

**Justice Action Group
JAG Executive Committee
January 31, 2019 – 2:30
Feeney Conf. Room, Cumberland County Courthouse, Portland**

MINUTES

Present: J. Mead, J. Rich, Diana Scully, Charles Dingman, Bill Harwood, Nan Heald, Juliet Holmes-Smith, Jaye Martin, Eric Columber, Charles Dingman, Susan Roche, and Jodi Nofsinger. Jennifer Lechner joined the meeting to discuss staffing and funding for ATJ Commissions.

I. Welcome to Eric Columber, Esq., 2019 President of the MSBA (or designee)

Deferred to next meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes from the Nov. 28, 2018 JAG Executive Committee Meeting. No additions/corrections noted. Minutes approved.

III. Report from the Chair – J. Mead

- a. Inventory updates – No additions/corrections noted.

IV. Staffing and Funding for ATJ Commissions – Jennifer Lechner –

Jennifer Lechner, the Executive Director of the North Carolina Equal Access to Justice Commission (and former Executive Coordinator for JAG!) spoke to the members of the Executive Committee about staffing and funding issues. Jennifer is a nationally recognized expert on these topics. During her ten year tenure in North Carolina, the commission funding increased—due largely to innovative and organized efforts—from \$25,000 to more than \$800,000.

Jennifer offered numerous suggestions and approaches to staffing and funding (including an ATJ surcharge on CLE programming!). The Executive Committee found her presentation both informational and inspirational in equal parts. A copy of her PowerPoint presentation is being circulated with these Minutes. An invitation has been extended to Jennifer to address the entire Board during its June 27 meeting in Portland.

V. Vice-Chair’s Report/Pro Bono Committee Report – Judge Rich

- a. Judge Rich reported that Beth Richardson is putting together the pro bono celebration this fall. Beth anticipates the cost will be under \$25,000 and she is looking for law firms to help underwrite the celebration. [NOTE: Judge Rich, Justice Mead, Juliet Holmes-Smith, and Beth will be meeting in March to discuss the event planning.]

- b. Judge Rich reported that the Pro Bono Committee is very active, still meeting every other month. Katahdin Counsel participation continues to be a topic of conversation. Progress is still being made on the annual registration/reporting pro bono hours proposal which should be ready for presentation to the SJC in the near future.

VII. Legislative Committee Report – *Charlie Dingman* – Charlie updated the committee on progress on the legislative funding initiative. An effort will be made to have the proposal included in the Governor’s budget; failing that, a bill will be submitted in the ordinary course. Representative Barbara Cardone has been particularly helpful in the process.

VIII. ACP Chair’s Report – *Jamie Kilbreth* -No report, Jamie not in attendance.

IX. Executive Committee Organization Updates:

- Courts: Justice Mead reported that the Judicial Branch is still very occupied with planning for the implementation of the new case management/ e-filing system. Efforts will be made to make it as accessible as possible for Maine’s many self-represented litigants.
- ACP : No report
- MJF: Diana Scully reported that the first board meeting of the year is tomorrow. William Harwood, the incoming President of the Board of Directors was present, and the MJF will be looking to its volunteer committees to undertake a wide range of tasks.
- MSBA/Lawyers in Libraries: No one available to report
- MTLA: No one available to report.

X. Other Business:

XI. Confirm 2019 JAG Executive Committee and Board meeting dates.

JAG Board (Feeney Conference Room - Cumberland County Courthouse):

June 27th – 3:00

Executive Committee:

March 21st – 4:00 – Portland – Feeney Conference Room

Meeting adjourned at 4:00.