

Justice Action Group Board of Directors Meeting
June 21, 2021 — 3:00 p.m.
Feeney Conference Room-Cumberland County Courthouse

MINUTES

Present: Justice Mead, Judge Darvin, Lauri Boxer-Macomber, Nan Heald, Kelly McDonald, Liz Stout, Charlie Dingman, Dan Emery, and Robyn Merrill
By Telephone: Judge Rich, Lowell Brown, Deirdre Smith, Eben Albert, and Victoria Powers

I. CONSENT AGENDA

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

- A. Welcomes and introductions: Justice Mead welcomed the attendees and provided a brief overview of the Justice Action Group to folks who were new to the Board.
- B. Reports from the ACP members: Justice Mead commended the providers for their extraordinary work accomplished with limited resources, particularly during the COVID era. Written reports received as part of the Consent Agenda.
- C. Approval of minutes: JAG Board, December 21, 2020 meeting: No additions or corrections were noted and the Minutes were accepted.

II. WORKING AGENDA

- A. Report from the Chair (*J. Mead*): Justice Mead reported that the Judicial Branch has welcomed Chief Justice Valerie Stanfill to her new role. The courts will be working in close coordination with the bar to address backlogs and review COVID-era measures that might be maintained even after the pandemic recedes. The Justice Systems Committee continues to communicate with the JB Access Team on post-COVID Planning.

Justice Mead expressed his hope and expectation that the exploration of additional JAG initiatives will be revitalized as the courts and practice of law returns to normal.

Inventory review/updates: No additions/corrections noted.

Update on Odyssey Case Management System and e-filing CMS/eFiling: Justice Mead briefly discussed the new case management and eFiling system that is being rolled out in Region V (Bangor) as a pilot project. After the pilot program has reached satisfactory levels of performance, all aspects (including the rules governing the CMS and eFiling) will be reviewed before rolling it out to other locations. The bar (including the legal services providers and the public) will be invited to comment before any final decisions are made.

- B. Report from the Vice Chair/Pro Bono Committee (*J. Rich*): Beth Richardson is retiring on 7/2/21. She's been a very valuable member of the committee. Judge Rich thanked Liz Stout for stepping in as co-chair. Kathryn Reid will be taking over Beth's position. She's an attorney at UNUM. Pro Bono Committee continues to be a very vigorous committee. They met in March and a week ago today. Next meeting is Sept. 20th. Committee lost two state court judges (Cuddy, J. and Soucy, J.). Judge Rich wonders if they can be replaced and will speak with Justice Mead about it. Judge Rich would like one state court judge on this committee. Judge Rich discussed Maine Civil Rule 89(c) amendment. It's now in place. He hopes by the time they meet in the Fall they'll know how the amendment is working. He discussed the reporting of pro bono hours on their bar registration cards. They had a working group on this issue. He discussed new business, re rural access to justice. Juliet Holmes Smith received the Peter Troy award posthumously. Justice Mead commended her good work and reported on the DeTroy Award ceremony.
- C. ACP (*Victoria Powers*): She discussed the collaborative opportunity that happens every week/month amongst the providers. She's impressed with their coordination and collaboration to get a couple of LDs passed. She discussed the cross-training between providers regarding videos. Best providers in the country!
- D. Legislative Committee (*C. Dingman*): Charlie updated the group on the legislative funding initiatives. It is difficult to predict exactly how the final scenario will play out. He asked members to ask their legislators to support funding for civil legal services.
- E. MSBA (*Kelly MacDonald*): Kelly reiterated their three priorities. Diversity within the profession, rural availability of lawyers and a focus on membership. The MSBA has established a working group directed to encouraging lawyers in rural areas. They are looking at a model in Nebraska. He discussed the moot trial program. Funding for this program has been elusive. He said it's a worthwhile program that doesn't have a steady stream of funding. They've also been busy with legislative work this session. Justice Mead inquired about Lawyers in Libraries. He asked if this would be up and running next May. Kelly said it's still alive and still with the new lawyers' section. Kelly feels it's an important program too and wants it to come back and be revitalized.
- F. MTLA (*Lauri Boxer-Macomber*): Lauri expressed gratitude for the invitation to sit on the JAG Board and excitement about its work. She shared MTLA updates most relevant to the JAG Board. Among other things, she indicated that the organization is now weaving pro bono and access to justice initiatives into all of its leadership and committee work, as opposed to handling requests for assistance and initiatives solely under its Pro bono

Committee. She also shared that Justice Mead's pro bono reporting request correspondence was distributed to the MTLA membership, and she further conveyed that the MTLA officers intend to lead by example with respect to early reporting of pro bono hours. In addition, Lauri shared that the MTLA had recently submitted a letter to leaders of the Legislature and the Appropriations Committee expressing the MTLA's support for the civil legal service funding legislation. Finally, she shared that the MTLA had distributed a survey requesting feedback on remote proceedings and hopes to publish and present the results to the Maine Bar, the Court and the public this summer, with a focus on how the data can be used to help ensure access to the courts and justice for as many Mainers as possible.

F. MJF (*Michelle Draeger*): Lowell Brown reported on Michelle's behalf. They raised \$626,000 for Campaign for Justice in 2020 which was the second highest amount in the history of the campaign. The campaign is well over \$320K at this point, trending significantly higher than this point in prior years. The Foundation has voted to give the Dana Award to Charlie Dingman the New Lawyer Award to Sara Murphy and the Downing award to Jennifer Bailey. The Racial Justice Fund is now over \$473K and growing.

G. New Business: None noted.

H. Future Meetings of the JAG Board: Dec. 20, 2021- 3:00

Future Meetings of the JAG Executive Committee:

Sept. 21, 2021 - 2:00 - Augusta

Nov. 15, 2021 - 2:00 - Augusta

Meeting adjourned at 4:18 p.m.