

Access to Justice Commission  
Minutes  
June 9, 2009

The Access to Justice Commission met by conference call on June 9, 2009. In attendance were Justice Jim Burke, Justice Marilyn Kite, Judge Scott Skavdahl, Judge Tim Day, Judge Wes Roberts, Senator Tony Ross, Gen Tuma, Denise Burke, Rick Lavery, Dona Playton, Rennie Polidora, Walter Eggers, Amanda Roberts, Sleeter Dover, and Ronda Munger.

**Opening Remarks**

Justice Burke began the meeting by providing an update on the LSC grant process. He had a phone conversation with Evora Thomas and Karen Sargent, LSC representatives, and reported that the LSC grant was in the final stages of the process. An independent committee will be meeting in the near future and it is hoped that a decision on the grant will be rendered by the end of June or at the latest early July. As it stands now, LSC will either accept one of the two proposals or the grant will be re-bid. If the grant goes through a re-bidding process, LSC estimates that a decision will come in the fall sometime.

**Resource Development Subcommittee**

Walter Eggers, chair of the Resource Development subcommittee (RD subcommittee), reported to the Commission that his RD subcommittee met by phone the first week in June and discussed several items: 1) The RD subcommittee is proposing a grant application to be submitted to the Federal Court and the Attorney Admission Fund. The fund is created with *pro hac vice* fees in the Federal Court. The RD subcommittee is planning to request funds to support the local meeting/public hearing road show. The request will also include monies for a part-time staff member to coordinate the meetings. 2) The RD subcommittee is also looking at the use of filing fees in other states to see if it would be a viable plan for Wyoming to supplement legal services monies. 3) The RD subcommittee is working on compiling a list of county expenditures for legal services. 4) Larry Wolfe is continuing his work on the white paper to assess state legal services and propose a plan to request state funding. A draft copy of the white paper will circulate in the next few weeks.

**Delivery Systems Subcommittee**

Dona Playton, chair of the Delivery System subcommittee (DS subcommittee), reported to the Commission that her subcommittee is waiting to find out what happens with the LSC funding. The two proposals that have been submitted are very different, and depending on which one is awarded the grant, or whether neither receive the grant, potentially makes a big difference in the recommendation of the DS subcommittee. Dona reported that she and Sleeter Dover attended a conference in Orlando and received a lot of good information. The conference contacts recommended that Wyoming look at bolstering the current legal services providers in the interim. The only direct legal services providers at this time are the two UW legal clinics and the Coalition. The other suggestions from the conference were: 1) Look into providing private attorneys a set

amount of money for each case, and then whatever it costs over and above that fee is considered pro bono work. This will allow some of the remote areas to receive legal services that are not currently being provided. 2) Increase the use of technology to cover some of the distance across the state. 3) Build community support with community meetings was also discussed so the Wyoming Legislature is better informed on the needs in the state.

### **Wyoming Stakeholders**

Justice Burke asked the commission members to consider what it would take to put the ideas of the subcommittees into action. He asked Leigh Anne Manlove to chair a Needs Assessment subcommittee to figure out the needs in the communities across the state, as well as assessment of how many people use email/the internet/cell phones and technology of that nature. Leigh Anne agreed to compile a list of contacts in each of the communities and call and visit with them regarding the needs of their community.

### **Contact with the Shoshone and Arapahoe Tribal Court**

Judge Wes Roberts reported that he is working on creating a subcommittee to work on tribal court legal services issues. At present time, the subcommittee is comprised of 7-8 people who are involved or interested in tribal court/state court legal services issues.

### **Supreme Court Website**

Ronda Munger reported that John Capron of the Supreme Court IT staff and Katie Jones of the Supreme Court library staff have created the initial website for the Access to Justice Commission. The website can be viewed at <http://www.courts.state.wy.us/AJC.aspx>. The website lists information about the AJC, the legal services providers in the state, and links to other useful websites.

### **Public Hearings Subcommittee**

Walter Eggers is also chairing a Public Hearings Subcommittee (PH subcommittee). The PH subcommittee is recommending it hold its first public hearing in Cheyenne. A preliminary budget has been drafted and Laramie County Community Partnership has been contacted. The LCCP was very interested in working with the AJC on this project.

### **Meeting with WTLA**

Justice Burke wrapped up the meeting by informing the AJC that he would be meeting with the Wyoming Trial Lawyers Association on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. He will provide a report on that meeting at the next AJC meeting.

### **Commission adjourned**