

Access to Justice Commission  
Minutes  
July 15, 2009

The Access to Justice Commission met by conference call on July 15, 2009. In attendance were Justice Jim Burke, Justice Marilyn Kite, Judge John St. Clair, Judge Wes Roberts, Gen Tuma, Rick Lavery, Walter Eggers, Larry Wolfe, Dan Fleck, Amanda Roberts, Sleeter Dover, Leigh Anne Manlove, Stuart Day, Ray Macchia, Rennie Polidora, Devon Stiles, and Ronda Munger.

**Opening Remarks**

Justice Burke began the meeting by welcoming Stuart Day to the conference call. Justice Burke explained to the Commission that the Wyoming State Bar Foundation had nominated Stuart to replace Leigh Anne Manlove as the Foundation's representative on the Commission. Justice Burke also explained that the plan is to re-appoint Leigh Anne as a member of the Executive Branch. Justice Kite moved and Ronda Munger seconded a motion to recommend to the Supreme Court that Stuart Day be appointed to the AJC as a representative of the Wyoming State Bar Foundation and that Leigh Anne Manlove be re-appointed as a member of the Executive Branch. Motion carried unanimously.

**LSC Grant**

Justice Burke told the Commission that we were still under a "sit and wait" status with the LSC grant. He mentioned his email exchanges with Karen Sarjeant, but reported that he did not know anything new. Rick Lavery reported that Helen Barnett of LSC had solicited information from the State Bar Office. On July 13, 2009, Rick sent a letter in response to the inquiry wherein he reiterated the work of the AJC and asked LSC to select one of the grant proposals already on the table and move the process forward. Rick agreed to circulate the letter to the Commission.

**Resource Development Subcommittee**

Walter Eggers, chair of the Resource Development subcommittee (RD subcommittee), reported to the Commission that the subcommittee was moving forward with its work on the grant application to be submitted to the federal Attorney Admission Fund committee, collecting information from the counties regarding expenditure of funds for legal services, and collecting information regarding additional court filing fees as a revenue generating source for civil legal services. Larry Wolfe reported that he will be working to combine the two subcommittees' drafts into one white paper that will then be used to further the AJC's legislative work. Larry thought that he would have a combined draft in the next week or so.

**Delivery Systems Subcommittee**

Justice Burke reported on the work of the Delivery System subcommittee (DS subcommittee). That subcommittee met on July 14<sup>th</sup> to discuss a twenty-seven page written report being proffered by the DS subcommittee. Justice Burke also reported that the plan is to merge the white paper that Larry Wolfe is working on with the report of the DS subcommittee. During the call on the 14<sup>th</sup> some questions arose regarding which agency will be given the state funding if it is received, who will be supervising the legal services attorneys out in the state, and who will be coordinating the work, to name just a

few. Dona Playton and Ray Macchia were asked to provide budgetary information regarding what it would cost to provide the necessary staff and overhead to cover the unmet legal need in Wyoming. Amanda Roberts suggested the use of part-time attorneys to eliminate the need for some of the overhead expenses of running full time offices. She thought the LSC grant recipient could qualify the clients and oversee the work. Rennie Polidora advised the Commission that Montana is currently holding about \$60,000 of Wyoming's federal grant money that has been earmarked for updating the defunct legal services website. All of the details of the website money are not known at this time, but Ronda Munger will work with Rennie and Dona Playton to find out the information.

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

Judge Wes Roberts and Judge John St. Clair reported on the work of their subcommittee. They will be co-authoring a letter announcing their first meeting in the next couple weeks. Judge St. Clair is happy to be involved in this work and reports that the tribal citizens are currently without indigent legal services, except for some limited criminal defense work that is being funded by IOLTA funds. He stated that additional services need to be procured in the areas of housing, consumer affairs, repossessions, and installment loans.

### **Public Hearings Subcommittee**

Walter Eggers, chair of the Public Hearings Subcommittee (PH subcommittee), reported that the first public hearing is scheduled for July 27, 2009, at the Supreme Court in Cheyenne. Invitations have been sent to the Wyoming Legislature, Cheyenne city leaders, Cheyenne community leaders, to the county bar associations in Laramie, Albany, Platte and Goshen counties, as well as other miscellaneous individuals. Walter provided a proposed agenda to the AJC, which allowed for about 35 minutes of prepared remarks and 90 minutes of public comment. Handouts will be distributed at the public hearing and a survey will be distributed at the end of the meeting to collect feedback. Leigh Anne Manlove has arranged for a videographer to capture the Cheyenne meeting. The AJC decided that there should also be public meetings in Gillette, Evanston (in conjunction with the state bar meeting), Lander/Riverton, and Casper. Walter will distribute proposed dates and times for those locations.

### **Pro Bono Efforts**

Sleeter Dover reported on the State Bar Office's efforts regarding pro bono services in Wyoming. The State Bar officers and commissioners voted to take a very aggressive approach to the access to justice issues in Wyoming. An Ad Hoc Committee has been established to look at the pro se packets for suggested changes to simplify them; the committee will study and define the proper role and level of involvement of the state bar members in support of access to justice in Wyoming; and look at the pro bono rule and make recommended changes regarding the pro bono obligations of Wyoming attorneys.

### **Wyoming State Bar Foundation**

Stuart Day, the newest member of the AJC, reported that the State Bar Foundation will be meeting on July 29<sup>th</sup> to discuss the Foundation's role in the fund raising campaign for legal services. Stuart reported that the Foundation will have a table at the State Bar meeting in Evanston in September. The AJC agreed to share that table with the Foundation and provide access to justice information to Wyoming lawyers.

**Access to Justice Luncheon**

Rick Lavery reported to the AJC that he will be hosting the State Bar meeting in Evanston and has scheduled an Access to Justice Luncheon for Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup>. Justice Jess Dickinson from Mississippi will be delivering the keynote at that luncheon. Rick invited all of the AJC to attend and be recognized.

**Commission adjourned**