

Colorado Access to Justice Commission
Minutes
November 1, 2019

Commissioners Present: Fred Baumann (ATJC Chair), Diana Poole (ATJC Vice Chair), Jon Asher, Judge Adam Espinosa, Dick Gast, Wes Hassler, Brittany Kauffman, Liz Krupa (phone), Claire Levy (phone), Richard Murray, Lauren Schmidt, Judge Tim Schutz, David Stark, Judge Dan Taubman, Penny Wagner (phone), Sam Walker, John Zakhem

Commissioners Absent: Justice Melissa Hart, Molly Ryan

Guests Present: Emy López (JFA Access Pilot Project Coordinator), Andy Rottman (Counsel to Chief Justice Coats), Jackie Marro (ATJ Coordinator at SCAO; phone), Hanna Bustillo (Law Clerk to Justice Hart).

Colorado/Denver Bar Association Staff Present: Lindsey O'Brien, Kathleen Schoen.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the September 6, 2019 Commission meeting were approved.

Update and discussion: *JFA Access Pilot Project*

Emy López gave a live demonstration of the new website, located at <https://www.coloradosourcenetwork.com/>. The user begins by indicating where he lives, followed by the general topic area for which he is seeking assistance (e.g., public benefits, healthcare, housing, finances, and/or end-of-life planning). Next, the user provides demographic information so that the results will be tailored to his specific needs. Based on the user's inputs, the website generates a list of relevant legal resources and community referrals in his area, with DIY resources to be made available soon. Meanwhile, the website monitors user traffic, and keeps data related to the resources and organizations accessed by users via the website.

Following this demonstration, Emy shared that while the main resource partners' information has been listed on the website, there has already been an overwhelming response from local human service organizations wanting to participate in the project. In the coming weeks, the next steps are three-fold. First, the website will be shared as widely as possible; to this end, business cards with QR codes have been printed for distribution to potential website users and resource partners. Second, the project organizers will work on "training the trainer" to instruct users on navigating the website effectively. And third, a meeting to discuss future funding sources will take place Mon 11/4, and a team summit is scheduled for Wed 11/6 at Silver Key Senior Services to discuss future project expansion—namely, to widen the website's geographic reach beyond the 4th and 12th JDs, and to include additional areas of legal help beyond elder law. There was discussion about a number of issues, including funding, the fact that the user testing phase was just beginning, and the need for more time for data collection and evaluation.

Update and discussion: *Restructuring the Commission*

- New CBA appointments. Four new CBA appointments have been finalized—Hon. Susan Blanco, a district court judge in the 8th JD; Beth Crane, a private practitioner in Durango; Jason Lynch, general counsel to the Foundry Group in Boulder; and Hon. Lino Lipinsky, a court of appeals judge. Other recent appointments include Hon. Kristin Mix, a D. Colo. magistrate judge appointed by the Colorado Supreme Court, and Brittany Kauffman, an IAALS Senior Director appointed by Gov. Polis.
- New committee structure and revised committee and committee chair expectations. The revised ATJC structure will come into effect beginning Wed 1/1. Under this new structure, the Governance Committee will be disbanded and replaced by the Executive Committee, comprising the ATJC Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and two other Commissioners. The Court and Resource Committees will remain intact and chaired by the same people. The newly created Communications Committee will be chaired by Lauren Schmidt. The new Delivery Committee will serve as an “umbrella” for the other subcommittees (i.e., Pro Bono Representation, Alternate Providers and Affordable Representation, Local ATJ Committees, and Rural Services). Meanwhile, the draft Standing Committee and Committee Chair Expectations document is unchanged from the last ATJC meeting, save for added language clarifying that non-commission members are still welcome to serve on committees. Dick Gast further proposed a small edit to the draft document—changing the last sentence under the ATJC mission statement from “The ATJC’s goal is to oversee” to “The ATJC oversees”—which passed following a vote.
- CBA letter of support. The CBA has offered its continued support in serving as the ATJC’s fiscal agent.
- Colorado Bar Foundation grant. The ATJC was awarded \$2,000 in funds to be used for the JFA pilot website, or perhaps another project. Other possible grant opportunities are currently being considered.

Election of Officers for 2020 [AFFIRMED]

- Chair: Fred Baumann
- Vice Chair: Diana Poole
- Secretary: Richard Murray

Committee Reports—minutes from each committee due the Monday prior to each ATJC mtg.

- Governance Committee. Fred Baumann stated that the committee plans to meet with Chief Justice Coats toward the end of the year to discuss choosing and funding ATJ initiatives. The new State Court Administrator, Steven Vasconcellos, will also be involved.
- Resource Committee. Claire Levy discussed the committee’s recent meeting about seeking legislative funding. Originally, the committee wanted unrestricted funding to provide for the general civil legal needs of indigent clients. However, Gov. Polis is rumored to have asked his aides to prepare two possible budgets—one with across-the-board 5% cuts, and another without. As such, the committee wants to avoid competing with other initiatives (e.g., full-day kindergarten), and feels that the ATJC needs a “champion” aside from the Joint Budget Committee to advocate for its funding asks.

- Pro Bono Committee. Dave Stark indicated that the Succession to Service project is going well—the website will be finished this month, and the project will launch in January with the goal of matching senior lawyers with pro bono providers statewide. The LEJ incubator project is also taking off—the new cohort starts Mon 11/11 and will be trained in operating a solo practice aimed at serving the “middle 65%” of clients who have demonstrated financial need but do not qualify for free legal aid. Right now, LEJ has 501(c)(3) status, a part-time executive director, and is looking for sustainable funding sources. With respect to ABA Free Legal Answers, the committee is connecting with CLC to gauge firm interest in adopting the program. The committee is also exploring the creation of a pilot program to allow non-lawyers to assist with eviction proceedings. In general, the committee is very concerned with increasing pro bono participation, which in recent years has gone down, not up. Some of the commissioners discussed how it might be time to think about mandatory *reporting* of pro bono hours for attorney regulation (without imposing an hours-based quota).
- Courts Committee. Penny Wagner stated that the pro se e-filing project is going extremely well and has now expanded to several other counties. In addition, the plain language form project started on Tue 10/1 in the 1st and 5th JDs. So far, the pilot is limited to domestic relations forms, and the committee is conducting surveys with MVL to acquire data. Meanwhile, 17 locations hosted a Legal Resource Day during Pro Bono Week this year. In addition, the changes to applying for MIFP status are expected to be adopted soon, the committee is exploring potential projects for its upcoming SJI grant application, and the County Court subcommittee is working on an ATJ study.
- Local Support Committee. [See minutes from the last meeting.]

Other Business

Brittany Kauffman discussed a new IAALS initiative—the US Justice Needs project—designed to conduct a broad national survey of 10,000 individuals (i.e., of all income levels, census regions, rural/urban residences, ages, races, genders) in order to gauge their legal needs. The overarching goal of the project is to understand the legal “access gaps” in our communities (i.e., how Americans went about fulfilling their legal needs within the past five years, their satisfaction with that process, and whether their legal issues were fully resolved). This IAALS initiative is a collaboration with the Hague Institute for Innovation in Law (HIIL), and IAALS will also partner with a survey panel company to reach populations without internet access. The IAALS project organizers are especially interested in internet access as a means of obtaining legal information and advice—and, interestingly, the survey will be administered online, although HIIL has historically done this house-to-house and in-person. The survey will be administered in the spring, the data will be available in the spring/summer, and the final report will be released in fall. IAALS plans to frame the survey broadly enough to capture those folks who ordinarily would not identify their issues as “legal.” Further, at this time, IAALS plans to use the data to establish a national baseline, rather than capturing numbers on a state-by-state or local basis.

Adjourned.