



Colorado Access to Justice Commission

May 1, 2009 Meeting

Minutes

Present: Charles Garcia, Bernadette Gonzales, Diana Poole, Jon Asher, Ilene Bloom, Hon. Dan Taubman, Fred Baumann, John Zakhem, Hon. Gale Miller

Teleconference: Unavailable

Guests: Kathryn Dahlke from CLS, Kathleen Schoen, Cheryl Law, Greg Martin

- 1. Minutes** – The minutes from the March 6, 2009 meeting were approved.
- 2. ATJ Conference:** Bernadette Gonzales reported on the conference. The planning committee is looking at October 23-24, 2009 (all day Friday, half day Saturday). DU is a possible location for an auditorium and a few classrooms. Another potential option is the Auraria campus but they cannot commit to specific rooms until August. The University Club is holding date for us in the College Room for dinner on October 23rd. We do have a contract. Auraria can also put together a dinner. Another option may be for a buffet or appetizers and drinks only to cut down costs. Potential speakers are tentative. There is a good chance an elected official will make a keynote lunch speech. Dan has approached Karla Gray (retired Montana Supreme Court Justice) to speak at dinner. There is a draft agenda which needs more work. The committee is considering substantive sessions on pro se litigants and how judges can deal with pro se litigants, a panel from local committees regarding accomplishments and challenges, different aspects of pro bono delivery such as Second Season of Service and the Supreme Court Pro Bono Initiative. At dinner, we'd also like to have an awards presentation by the CBA Availability of Legal Services Pro Bono Awards. The Law Club may entertain at no cost. Ideas for the sessions on Saturday include technology matters and a presentation regarding messaging and the use of advertising campaigns to increase awareness. We will need to keep costs down to increase attendance and can look for sponsorships and donations from local committees. Bernadette has put together an initial draft of a budget. Bernadette has also spoken with 17th Judicial and Lauren Brown agreed to make a donation to the conference from proceeds of a fundraising event.
- 3. ABA Equal Justice Conference** – This conference will be taking place May 14th through May 17th in Orlando. Ilene, Kath, Jon, Fred and Bernadette are attending.
- 4. Pro Bono Delivery** – Kath provided a statewide overview of pro bono delivery. Please see handout. The ways pro bono is delivered include: 1) The traditional way

where bar associations started a pro bono program which hire pro bono coordinators, 2) special niche area of law pro bono programs which also have in house attorneys, 3) CLS major pro bono projects – CLS employee acts as the pro bono coordinator in offices. Kath stated that the pro bono delivery system is basically covered across the state with coordinators and that the biggest gap is with volunteer attorneys. There are a few firms/corporations that have in-house coordinators or committees to work with firms/in house attorneys. Kath spoke with coordinators who all said the numbers of eligible persons have increased dramatically and that there are many new people who have no knowledge of how the systems work at all. Pro bono coordinators have no time to even match up volunteers with clients. Some reported great participation but low numbers of participation in other areas. The ABA came out with a new report after surveying lawyers and 81% of lawyers said they did some sort of pro bono. Jon Asher highlighted that we need to look at different strategies such as idea of mandatory reporting and importance of getting cases out to volunteers quickly. Judge Taubman suggested we survey the firms that fulfilled the Supreme Court Pro Bono Initiative to get more specific details regarding where they get cases from and more specific data regarding pro bono hours. It would be helpful to get this info to determine the “value” of the hours. Judge Taubman renewed his suggestion regarding a statewide program for reporting and recognition of pro bono services for each attorney. Fred suggested Commission may be able to assist with coordination and uniformity of pro bono services. It appears the issue needs some coordination. Kath suggested that there is also a need to look at ways to improve limited representation. Please send pro bono polls to Cheryl Law. Ilene suggested an ad hoc committee.

5. Committee reports:

a. Local Support: Dan reported on the activities of the local committees. Steve Flynn from Colorado Springs reported that they hosted a consumer law presentation. Boulder reported on immigration issues and the significant increase in requests for sealing of records. Aaron Clay reported on new stresses due to economy and that Carol Viner has come over to do presentation on bankruptcy and foreclosures. Ilene reported that the Denver committee is setting up a project to help youth who are aging out of foster care.

b. Public Information: Charley reported that students are submitting applications for the BarBri Scholarship and that Kathryn Dahlke has volunteered to work on the website. Justice Hobbs has committed to presenting at the orientations at the law schools. Pilot mentoring program will be up and running when school commences in fall. There was a nice article in Law Week Colorado about the mentor program. Jamie Cotter will be coordinating the law school side but the committee is still looking for a volunteer to help coordinate the law firm side. Charley also reported on the Donate a Day program to support PISA through which PISA is asking people to donate a days worth of salary to the program.

c. Resource Committee: Fred suggested may be able to use ABA report to stimulate funding. John Zakhem reported on efforts to preserve earmark for Family

Violence Fund. The subcommittee that is lobby team (Fred, Jon, John and Michael Valdez) had a bleak meeting with the Chief Justice and Jerry Marroney. They outlined the Commission's long term plan with them of securing a permanent funding source for CLS. The committee also started interfacing with the Joint Budget Committee and every member except the two new members have been introduced to access to justice. Representative Marostica has stated he was supportive of access to justice issues. The committee does not expect that the line item will be deleted from budget. The committee should circle back and get people ready for the long term goals of the Commission. Everyone thinks next year's budget process will be much worse. Committee also wants to create a piece to hand out to funding targets and should work with the Legal Aid Foundation on this.

d. Second Season of Service: Twelve people have registered and two people are working with CLS on housing work. John Zakhem suggested we prepare a testimonial to send to others who may want to participate.

6. Supreme Court Pro Bono Initiative: The recognition ceremony was well attended.

7. Additional Matters: Judge Taubman attended the Roadmap to Justice Conference at Stanford. Check out www.roadmaptojustice.org. There was a focus on using resources of law school professors interested in access to justice issues.

Next meeting: July 10, 2009 at the Colorado Supreme Court