

# Louisiana State Bar Association Criminal Justice Committee Meeting

Friday, April 30, 2021  
3:00PM to 4:00PM

Chair Jean Faria, Attorney at Law

## *Attendees:*

Darren Allemand, Jefferson Parish District Attorney's Office  
Veronica Bard, Court Watch NOLA  
Sheriff Greg Champagne, St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office  
Adam Crepelle, Southern University Law Center  
Monica Doss, Rapides Parish District Attorney's Office  
Norma Dubois, Jefferson Parish District Attorney's Office  
Jennifer Eagan, Louisiana Supreme Court  
Judge Jules Edwards, (ret.) 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court  
Scherri Guidry, Lafayette Public Defenders  
Barksdale Hortenstine, Orleans Public Defenders  
Mithun Kamath, Orleans Parish District Attorney's Office  
Quintillis Lawrence, Ossie Brown  
Simone Levine, Court Watch NOLA  
Katherine Mattes, Tulane University  
Jared Nelson, Liskow & Lewis  
Judge Nicole Sheppard, Orleans Civil District Court  
Madalyn Wasilczuk, Louisiana State University

## *Staff*

Mariarenee Contreras, Access to Justice Projects Counsel  
Amy Duncan, Access to Justice Training & Projects Counsel  
Jordan Maier, Access to Justice Assistant

## **Minutes**

- I. Welcome and Introductions** – Jean Faria welcomed the group.
- II. Approval of Minutes** – Minutes from meeting on February 12, 2021 were approved as written.
- III. Committee Appointments/Reappointment** – Jean announced that members who had not yet communicated their preference as to whether they wish to remain on the Committee should do so immediately. Appointments will be made in June by incoming LSBA President Minor Pipes.
- IV. Mental Health & the Criminal Justice System**
  - a. Mental Health Association of Baton Rouge Conference: The Criminal Justice Committee presented two trainings at the Mental Health Association of Baton Rouge Conference on April 13, each of which had ~100 attendees and received

great feedback. The Mental Health Association expressed interest in continuing the collaboration next year. Sheriff Champagne and Dr. Katherine Mattes reported that the sessions went well despite the challenges of presenting virtually. Barksdale Hortenstine noted that the attendees' interest in this information underscored the importance of cross-training between medical providers and attorneys.

i. Norma Dubois asked about the possibility of starting a mental health court in Jefferson Parish.

1. Quintillis Lawrence and Judge Jules Edwards noted that St. Tammany has a long-standing mental health court; Jennifer Eagan added that they have a very successful in-house grant writer who just secured a \$1.2 million grant from SAMHSA. Norma to reach out to Jennifer for more information.
2. Other mental/behavioral health courts: Rapides, Lake Charles; AOT courts starting in Covington, Baton Rouge
3. Judge Edwards noted that a mental health court should have a mental health treatment provider (Jean: also a social worker) on staff in order to advise and oversee the directed treatment.
4. Barksdale noted that in Louisiana, mental health courts fall under the state Drug and Specialty Courts program, which makes it difficult to serve people who have severe mental health issues but no co-occurring drug abuse. Norma seconded that their office has run into this issue as well.

b. November Mental Health Training: Judge Nicole Sheppard shared information on a CLE being developed for November, entitled Mental Health and Crime Causation. She asked whether the Committee would be interested in cosponsoring.

i. Judge Sheppard offered to work with the Committee regarding content for the seminar. Judge Sheppard will send agenda to Amy; Amy will coordinate the Committee's involvement. Katherine offered to assist with getting medical speakers.

c. Mental Health Summit Planning: Jean opened the discussion for hosting a mental health summit or similar trainings.

i. Katherine Mattes floated the idea of putting together several smaller trainings rather than a summit. She mentioned she had recorded a legal podcast which was reportedly successful at reaching rural attorneys/judges, who frequently listen to similar content while driving long distances.

a. Potential topics: competency, insanity defense, AOT, etc.

ii. Jennifer noted that much greater coordination is needed between leaders, not just within the courts. Katherine Mattes and Sheriff Champagne agreed, commented that barriers like HIPAA make it difficult to share treatment needs across agencies.

iii. Barksdale, Katherine, Quintillis, and Norma volunteered to work on developing the summit. Mariarenee also shared a PowerPoint with a suggested format for the summit, tracing a mentally ill person's journey through the community, medical system, and criminal justice system.

V. **Next Meeting** – Friday, September 3, 2021 at Noon – CANCELLED rescheduled October 27, 2021.