

**LOUISIANA STATE BAR ASSOCIATION
ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING
10:00 A.M. ★ Friday, September 12, 2014
New Orleans, LA**

Attendance:

Marta Schnabel, Co-Chair
Luz Molina, Co-Chair
Jamie Campbell, Southeast LA Legal Services Corp.
Douglas Carey, Southeast La Legal Services Corp.
Linton Carney, The Pro Bono Project- NOLA
Julie Ferris, Attorney at Law
LaWanda Gibson, Acadiana Legal Services Corp
Ann Gregorie, Baton Rouge Bar Association
Franchesca Hamilton Ackers, Acadiana Legal Services Corp
Kathleen McNelis, LA Bar Foundation
Sara Pic, Louisiana Supreme Court Library
Pearl Robertson, Attorney at Law
Lisa Stansky, Southeast La Legal Services Corp.
Hon. Raymond Steib, Jr., Judge, 24th Judicial District Court
Jane Thomas, Louisiana Bar Foundation
Ranie Thompson, Southeast LA Legal Services Corp.
Sharonda Williams, City of New Orleans Law Dept.
Emily Ziober, Attorney at Law

Staff:

Monte Mollere, ATJ Director
Jonathan Rhodes, ATJ Training Counsel
Linda Johnson, ATJ Technology Counsel
Nicole Louque, ATJ Administrative Assistant

Guest:

Joseph "Larry" Shea, Jr., LSBA President
Chris Ralston, Phelps, Dunbar
Sheral Kellar, LA Workforce Commission
Sascha Bollag

Welcome & Introductions

Marta Schnabel and Luz Molina welcomed the committee members and guests and thanked everyone for attending. The Committee and ATJ Staff had an opportunity to introduce themselves.

Consent Calendar

A motion by Linton Carney to approve the consent calendar, was seconded by Jamie Campbell, and passed.

ATJ Subcommittees

Disaster Subcommittee- Ann Gregorie gave an explanation of what the committee does. Updates to the manual are made each year by Christy Kane with Appleseed. Marta Schnabel added there are two parts to the disaster planning. 1) A plan for legal services 2) A plan to provide services to those who are displaced. Monte Mollere stated the volunteer form on the LSBA website has been update in included disaster volunteer information.

Funding Subcommittee- Chris Ralston gave an explanation of what the committee's responsibilities are –to focus on state and federal funding. Louisiana is one of three states that does not receive any state funding in spite of the Bar and lobbyist efforts. Marta feels the Pro Bono agencies, Legal Services and other agencies need to stay on top of local politics to that funders are reminded of the need to fund these programs.

Gap Assessment Subcommittee- Luz Molina gave an update on the subcommittee. This Subcommittee initially collected information from local service providers regarding gaps in service. The subcommittee also hire an economist complete an economic impact study. It was thought that the results of the study would convince legislature to give some money for the program. At the next meeting, the subcommittee will examine how they may be able to move forward with initiatives to fill some of the gaps they have discovered.

Marta mentioned that there isn't good local data on who is in need of legal services. Nationally only 20% of the poverty population gets the legal services that they need through legal services organizations. Marta feels that number is higher. We have tried to figure out what the percentage of LA citizens at poverty level that get access to legal aid. However, it has been difficult to get the data. Once we know what types of legal problems are not getting served then we can look at other ways to offer those services.

Some of the Gaps found were IFP's, people trying to get their children enrolled in school. There have been a number of things the subcommittee has worked on getting solved without funding.

Pro Bono Subcommittee- Linton Carney – Purpose of the subcommittee is to facilitate pro bono work. Work on the three R's of pro bono work, Recruitment, Retention, and Reward. The subcommittee is looking for new members from the private bars. Marta reminded us that volunteerism is struggling, lawyers are busy. Groups are having various degrees of success in areas of the state.

SRL Subcommittee- Kathleen McNelis- The subcommittee has three main focuses; Outreach, Evaluation and Training. Michael discussed that the SRL Subcommittee helps connect the unrepresented people without resources they will need to represent themselves or resources to get representation. It is important that the subcommittee partners with clerks of courts, librarians and other public entities especially in rural areas.

Michael recently gave a presentation about the Legal Education and Assistance Program (LEAP) at the Louisiana Library Association Conference. Librarians seemed excited about obtaining new resources and training. A supplemental program to the LEAP program is Lawyers in Libraries. We are currently working to get a lawyer in a library in all 64 parishes of LA. on October 23rd.

Louisiana Civil Justice Center- Jonathan Rhodes is the Executive Director. The program was developed post Katrina as a hotline for people to get legal help. About a year ago they started a new program to do more than just refer people to other resources. They are receiving 10,000 calls a year. Currently they have 4 staff attorneys and 8 intake specialist. One of the connections between SRL and LCJC is LCJC has set up self help desk to assist the public with legal advice. They have self help desk in Orleans and soon in Jefferson. LCJC is mentoring a handful of

young civil legal aid attorneys over the next 5 years and in turn they are helping with some pro bono work.

Technology Subcommittee- Linda Johnson- Started a new expanded group of members in January. One of the projects they finished last year with Social Media toolkits. It is a way for Legal Services and Pro Bono agencies to increase awareness about their services. This year they hope to have a Technology Training Conference to see what types of things people need training on.

Other Justice Community Issues-

Planning Conclave -Marta Schnabel – The committee is moving forward with a planning conclave in the spring. They will be bringing in a facilitator and the plan is to have a document to guide us for the next 5 years. It has been about 10 years since a comprehensive planning process has taken place. John Tull will be the facilitator to help in the planning process.

IFP – Marta Schnabel discussed that people continue to have difficulty with IFP processes throughout the state. She reminded everyone of the work done by LA Appleseed in completing a very effective white paper that essentially provided IFP is something the law allows and the courts need to comply. Yet this remains a very complicated issue. Jamie Campbell and Linton Carney have had some luck with the white paper but the issue continues to pop up in other areas. Michael recently had a discussion with the Clerk of Court in the 22nd JDC about guidelines for approving IFP's. They feel a large amount of IFP applications are being approved that do not qualify. To help with the lost in funds from IFPs St. Tammany has double some of their filing fees. For example it now cost almost \$1000 to get a simple divorce. A committee is being formed with several judges on board to try to solve the IFP problems. Marta suggests we take this issue back to BOG and ask them how we should proceed.

Justice Index- Monte Mollere thanked to Jennifer Egan, Richard Williams, Lois Simpson and Michael Schachtman for helping to correct some of the information in the Justice Index. The surveyors did respond and said they would be updating the Index with the accurate information. It has not been updated online as of yet.

LSBA CLE scholarship Vouchers – Monte Mollere – 30% discount for civil legal aid attorneys on LSBA CLE programs through December 2014. Call Nicole for vouchers.

Recognition of Civil Legal Aid Providers- While we get many awards for pro bono work the awards for legal service workers are extremely limited. Some awards Jonathan suggests are innovation award or an award for working on an extremely difficult case. This would be for next year's LJCC. The awards would need to be approved by the BOG. Kathleen McNelis made a motion to move forward on the awards and was seconded by Doug Carey.

Linton Carney reminded us to save the date for the Justice for All Ball and has raffle tickets for sale.

Motion to Adjourn