



ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Friday, November 8, 2019 ★ Lafayette, LA

Attendance:

Jeff Coreil, Co- Chair, Neuner Pate
Justice James Genovese
Alan Brackett, Louisiana Bar Foundation, Mouldoux, Bland, Legrand & Brackett
Hon. Jeffrey Cashe, 21st Judicial District Court
Brandi Cole, Centurylink, Inc.
Christy Kane, Entergy Services, LLC
Sheral Kellar, Assistant Secretary, Office of Workers' Compensation Administration
Greg Landry, Executive Director, Acadiana Legal Services Corp.
Alainna Mire, LSBA President Elect
Senator Beth Mizell, Louisiana State Senate
Luz Molina, Loyola University College of Law
Chris Ralston, Louisiana Bar Foundation Vice President, Phelps Dunbar, LLP
Valerie Schexnayder, LSBA Board of Governors, Mickey S. deLaup, APLC
Shayna Sonnier, LSBA Treasurer, Hunter, Hunter, & Sonnier, L.L.C.
Mark Surprenant, Board President, Southeast Louisiana Legal Services Corp., Adams and Reese
Sandra Vujnovich, Judicial Administrator, Louisiana Supreme Court

Guests:

Adrienne Wheeler, Louisiana Appleseed
Ann Gregorie, Baton Rouge Bar Association (remote)
Amanda Brown, Lagniappe Law Lab
C.C. Kahr, New Orleans Pro Bono Project (remote)

Staff:

Amy Duncan, ATJ Training & Project Counsel
Linda Johnson, ATJ Technology Counsel (remote)
Joanna Laidler, ATJ Projects Counsel (remote)
Rachael Mills, ATJ Projects Counsel
Jordan Maier, ATJ Assistant (remote)
Monte Mollere, ATJ Director

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** – Co-chair Jeff Coreil welcomed the group and attendees introduced themselves.
- II. **Consent Calendar** – The Commission approved the consent calendar items as written.
- III. **Louisiana Bar Foundation Report**
 - a. **Grants** – Alan Brackett reported that online applications for 2020-2021 grant funding have opened at www.raisingthebar.org. Applications are due December 2. The application categories remain unchanged, and include legal services providers, domestic violence programs, pro bono projects, other specialized legal services, law-related education, and

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children's legal services. Applications for the loan repayment assistance program are due early February. Full-time attorneys employed by an LBF grantee are eligible to apply. The LBF anticipates maintaining their grant budgets for the next fiscal year.

- b. **Raising Awareness** – Alan shared that at their meeting on October 25, the LBF Board of Directors voted to engage the D.C.-based group Spitfire to develop an educational plan to raise awareness for civil legal aid.

IV. Access to Justice Projects, Issues, & Initiatives

- a. **Justice For All Grant** – Amy Duncan and Amanda Brown reported on the Justice For All (JFA) Grant.

- i. Justice For All is a project of the National Center for State Courts which was created to support states in achieving 100% meaningful access to justice for all. This year, the primary funder is the JPB Foundation.
- ii. JFA recipients are typically state Access to Justice Commissions. 14 have received the grant so far; the Louisiana Access to Justice Commission was one of 3 recipients this year along with Illinois and Michigan.
- iii. The JFA process includes three phases:
 - 1. Dec-June: A statewide assessment of resources
 - a. Conducted via a formal survey, community listening sessions, and stakeholder summit
 - b. Deliverable: inventory assessment report
 - 2. June-July: Strategic planning to address gaps identified
 - a. Conducted at a second stakeholder summit
 - b. Deliverable: a strategic plan with prioritized initiatives
 - 3. July-Sept: Identification of solutions to fill these gaps
 - a. Deliverable: an implementation workplan and final report
 - b. The JFA program may choose to further fund the solutions identified
- iv. ***The JFA advisory committee will include 10-12 stakeholders representing a wide array of legal and non-legal resource providers. Members will provide guidance for the JFA activities and facilitate the regional community listening sessions.
- v. Senator Mizell noted that data from this project could be extremely helpful in furthering support from legislators for legal assistance because it directly speaks to the need of their constituents. She emphasized that it will be critical for the project to reach rural Louisianans, both with the statewide assessment survey and with the resulting solutions.

- b. **National Celebrate Pro Bono Week**

- i. **Lawyers in Libraries** – Judge Cashe reported on the success of this year's 6th annual Louisiana Lawyers in Libraries week, which took place October 21-26 and featured 139 events in 62 parishes. Judge Cashe emphasized that such programs offer critical legal access for people without internet. Amanda Brown confirmed that they plan to include librarians on the JFA resource survey and advisory committee, in recognition of the important role they play in public outreach.
- ii. **Entergy LA.FreeLegalAnswers.org clinic** – Rachael reported that for the second year in a row, the Entergy legal department conducted a clinic during Celebrate Pro Bono Week to answer online questions for LA.FreeLegalAnswers.org users. The event was again successful and may be expanded to occur more regularly in the

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future. The Committee also discussed the potential for having law school clinics partner with attorneys to work on answering questions.

- c. **ATJ Developing Leadership Intern Program** – Rachael Mills shared updates on the program, which was renewed for 2020. Entergy is returning for its second year as a sponsor, in addition to Phelps Dunbar, Adams and Reese, and Baker Donelson.
- d. **Distinguished Pro Bono Fellows Program** – This program identifies those who are willing to donate 20 hours of pro bono service a month and partners them with a legal service or pro bono provider. Participation is not restricted just to retiring judges and lawyers. Mark Surprenant requested that in order to continue the program, each Commission member identify one potential candidate for the program, particularly those from the western and northern parts of Louisiana.

V. Access to Justice Commission Committee Reports

- a. **Funding Committee** – Chris Ralston reported on the meeting with Commissioner of Administration Jay Dardenne, who expressed support for the inclusion of funding for civil legal aid in the governor’s budget for this year. Dardenne also shared specific suggestions regarding ways to increase visibility of civil legal aid. The funding committee will determine their priorities for the year at their upcoming meeting.
- b. **Language Access Committee** – In its advisory capacity to the ATJ Commission, Prof. Luz Molina, Language Access Committee Chair, informed the Commission regarding the two reports this committee produced a *Translator and Interpreter Survey Report* and an *Attorney Survey Report*. Prof. Molina provided updates on the state of language access in Louisiana. She noted that as Louisiana courts are now responsible for the payment of interpreters, and the Supreme Court is working on creating protocols to engage interpreters and establish a meaningful complaint process. The Commission moved to adopt both reports acknowledging that that recommendations be withheld and incorporated into a forthcoming report on best practices. Additionally, Sandra Vujnovich mentioned that the Court will also announce their replacement hire for the Language Access Coordinator position shortly and that individual will continue to work with the Language Access Committee.
- c. **SRL Committee** – Judge Cashe shared the draft agenda for the upcoming SRL Provider Summit, scheduled for January 31 at the Jackson Barracks. The agenda will include issues such as domestic violence as well as issues specific to active duty veteran members of the military. The Committee is developing a survey to review SRL forms, identify items to include on uniform forms, and identify the best ways to disseminate the forms to the public (whether via libraries, clerks of court associations, SRL websites, etc.). The survey will be distributed to judges, clerks, court staff, and self-help desk volunteers. Judge Cashe noted that SRLs who have found forms on the SRL websites (hosted by the LSBA) are filing them correctly, a testament to the value the websites provide.
- d. **Technology Committee** – At its September meeting, the Committee decided to focus on building out content for a new staff training software for legal service and pro bono providers, to be purchased by LSC. The Committee is also considering writing a report on e-filing and court unification from a technology perspective, and launching a pilot project with a court already using e-filing.

VI. Access to Justice Committee Subcommittee Reports

- a. **IFP Committee** – Jeff shared that as a new member of the Louisiana Law State Law Institute Subcommittee on IFP, he was asked for input regarding names other others who could be invited to join the subcommittee. Those people have been invited. Jeff also encouraged the chair to invite Clerks of Court. The subcommittee will likely first meet in 2020.

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b. Louisiana Justice Community Conference – Amy shared the successes of the 16th Annual Louisiana Justice Community Conference, which featured such speakers as ABA President Judy Perry Martinez (keynote), Valerie Schexnayder and Amanda Barnett (welcome remarks), Joyce Raby with the Florida Justice Technology Center (featured speaker), and Katie Lasky (special presentation on #MeToo movement). Additionally, the conference was all the more successful due to the concurrent programs it featured, including the CINC pre-conference, PRIME PBI Portal Training, Website Stakeholders Meeting, LIFT Networking Event, Justice For All Grant Kick-Off Event, and substantive law task force meetings.

VII. **Open Discussion** – Monte shared Chief Justice Johnson’s announcement that she will serve as co-chair for the remainder of the 2019-2020 bar year. The Commission thanks Justice Genovese for his service as co-chair and warmly welcomes Chief Justice Johnson back to the Commission.

VIII. Adjourn

a. Next meeting Friday, February 7, at Supreme Court in New Orleans