

**Justice Action Group  
JAG Executive Committee  
Minutes**

**(Final Version)  
(circulated to EC on 2-17-17)**

**January 12, 2017 2:00 PM**

SJC Conference Room, Augusta Courthouse

Present: J. Mead, J. Rich, Diana Scully, Ginger Davis, Bill Robitzek, and Al Ayre

On the phone: Jamie Kilbreth, Charlie Dingman, Steve Blackwell, and Robyn Merrill.

**I. Approval of Minutes from the December 1, 2016 JAG Executive Committee Meeting.**

The Minutes of the December 1, 2016 Executive Committee were approved with a correction as noted in item "e." below.

**ACTION PLAN:** Cindy will circulate and archive an amended version of the minutes.

**II. Report from the Chair – J. Mead**

a.) At last summer's bar meeting, AMM, Elizabeth Scheffee, and Elizabeth Stout did a presentation on limited representation "unbundled services". AMM and Liz Scheffee have had follow-up conversations regarding the court taking a leadership role in furthering the use of limited representation services. AMM has made a proposal to the court to consider a program whereby a court representative would send a letter to unrepresented litigants in family matters advising them of the possibility of utilizing unbundled services and providing a contact number for a roster of attorneys who offer such services, possibly through the MSBA's lawyer referral program.

**ACTION PLAN:** AMM will report back to the Executive Committee as the proposal progresses.

b.) AMM has been invited to attend and address the attendees at a Pierce Atwood pro bono in-house recognition ceremony on January 25, 2017. Judge Rich expressed an interest in attending; an inquiry will be made. Al Ayre mentioned the possibility that there may be a tax benefit for lawyers or law firms that render pro bono services. Ginger Davis indicated she knows a tax lawyer that may be able to answer the question as to whether that write-off is still available.

**ACTION PLAN:** Ginger will speak to the individual she referenced and other members of the Executive Committee will speak informally to tax law attorneys as circumstances permit.

c.) AMM reported that Mary Kelly's new duties as the recently appointed Chief Judge of the Maine District Court will prevent her from being able to be an active member (and Co-Chair) of the Justice Systems/Court Systems Committee and she regretfully must step down. However, she spoke to Judge Peter Darvin about replacing her, and he is enthusiastic about taking over the role. The Executive Committee equally enthusiastically endorsed this change; we are pleased to welcome him in this role, and we will look for Nan Heald (the other co-chair) and Mary Kelly to bring him up to speed. The Executive Committee thanks Mary Kelly for her work to date and her commitment to access to justice.

**ACTION PLAN:** The membership rosters will be updated and Judge Darvin will be briefed by the co-chairs.

d.) Action plan element of future minutes: AMM indicated that after each item discussed at future meetings an action plan will be noted with the appropriate responsible parties.

ACTION PLAN: There will be action plans.

e.) Diana noted that AMM's reference to the history of the Executive Coordinator position was incorrect. It was actually created in 2001, not 2007, and several EC's served during that time.

ACTION PLAN: Revised minutes will be issued.

f.) The JAG inventory (now styled as the "JAG INITIATIVE and COMMITTEE STATUS INVENTORY") was reviewed. All members are encouraged to review it in detail to see if any initiatives need to be added, dropped, or modified in order to reflect all efforts currently undertaken by JAG.

ACTION PLAN: Continued monitoring

As part of the review of the Inventory, these topics were discussed:

- 2018 ATJ Conference & MSBA Annual Meeting:

It is not too early to start the discussion.

ACTION PLAN: AMM will send a letter to the individuals and organizations traditionally involved in planning. A copy of the letter will be sent to all EC members.

- "Groups 1, 2, and 3":

There was some uncertainty regarding previous rosters' references to three non-titled groups. It was clarified that these were working groups within the Justice Systems Committee tasked with looking into specific subjects:

ACTION PLAN: The groups will be described with greater clarity in future membership rosters.

- AMM inquired about a couple of bills proposed in name only to the new legislature that seem to have implications for ATJ issues. No one was familiar with the bills, but Charlie Dingman indicated his committee would monitor their progress.

ACTION PLAN: The Legislative Committee will monitor the bills and let us know if there is anything we need to be concerned about.

### **III. Vice-Chair's Report - J. Rich**

J. Rich reported. J. Kilbreth arranged breakfast with Jackie Studer at IDEXX. She continues to be very interested in the private sector providing support. J. Rich thought her perspective as a business person brings insights that could be very valuable to JAG and ATJ. She thought her team at IDEXX would be able to contribute in some fashion. Her idea would be to have IDEXX simply adopt a specific provider/project and then use their resources, financial/expertise to work hand in hand with whichever provider they choose.

J. Kilbreth spoke on ways to engage in-house counsel from IDEXX. He thinks some thought needs to be given from the providers' perspective and then we may approach others like UNUM, etc. J. Rich said some efforts have already been started.

J. Kilbreth indicated that the ACP was going to have a discussion on how this would work then approach Jackie Studer again and ask if she'd be interested in joining the board. He thinks another meeting should be set with Ms. Studer, perhaps end of January.

**ACTION PLAN:** Providers will brainstorm on how this will work and then someone will meet with Ms. Studer.

#### **IV. Pro Bono Committee Report - J. Rich**

ABA survey almost ready to go out. Sara Wolff did a fabulous job laying the groundwork for it. A notice about it will go out next week and the survey should go out the following week. AMM indicated JB is posting notice of the survey on our website and asking for participation. Jared des Rosiers was going to talk to larger firms' pro bono people getting together to consider ways to encourage pro bono work among the larger firms.

**ACTION PLAN:** The Committee will be meeting again on March 27, 2017.

#### **V. Justice Systems Committee Report**

AMM indicated that some of the subcommittees' work slowed down during the Fall due to uncertainty and personnel changes, but it is anticipated that it will ramp up again.

#### **VI. Legislative Committee Report - Charlie Dingman**

a.) Planning Report: Charlie talked about the work plan he provided to us. The current question is funding for a concise, well-prepared document that can present the findings of the Economic Benefits Study in a compelling and accessible document that could be offered to legislators in advance of the 2017 ATJ Day at the Legislature, April 4, 2017.

It was determined that the MJF currently has funds earmarked for JAG that will likely cover the preparation and printing costs.

We need design professionals to assist us with the preparation of such a glossy document. Providers will need to provide content. Someone—yet to be determined—will need to draft the language. Perhaps a contractor could perform all of the wordsmithing and graphic design. However, it seems clear that we will need someone knowledgeable about civil legal services to be part of the text preparation. **NOTE:** It should also include references to the Legal Needs Study.

**ACTION PLAN:** The Legislative Committee will look in earnest for a production firm to prepare the document expeditiously. Other members of the Executive Committee suggested possible resources. (Steve Blackwell offered to see if the University of Maine offered such services.) Also, providers should start considering personal stories (and photos?) of recipients of civil legal services that might be appropriate for inclusion in the document.

b.) ATJ Day at Legislature, April 4, 2017: The committee continues to refine its plan for an expanded and enhanced ATJ day.

#### **VII. ACP Chair's Report- Jamie Kilbreth**

The ACP had no formal report as much of the providers' concerns were addressed in discussions regarding other agenda items.

## **VIII. Economic Benefits Study - S. Blackwell**

The Gabe study is complete. It will be circulated after a printing anomaly is resolved.  
ACTION PLAN: AMM will see if he can resolve the document anomaly.  
[NOTE: It was successfully resolved on January 13.]

## **IX. Website and Logo discussion**

a.) Is anyone working on logo proposals?

ACTION PLAN: Diana will follow up on this and try to get things moving. She will report at the next EC meeting.

## **X. Executive Committee Organization Updates:**

- Courts - nothing to report
- ACP - nothing to report that hasn't just been covered  
ACTION PLAN: J. Kilbreth will confirm to Cindy who from the providers will be attending the next two EC Meetings.
- MJF - development director has been hired. Mathew Scease. Worked at Natural Resource Council of Maine.
- MSBA - nothing to report
- MTLA - nothing to report that hasn't just been covered

## **XI. Other Business:**

## **XII. Set Future Meetings of JAG Exec. Committee and Board**

### **THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED 2017 DATES ARE CONFIRMED:**

#### **JAG Board (all meetings in the Feeney Conference Room on the 1st floor of the Cumberland County Courthouse):**

June 6th @ 3:00  
December 7th @ 3:00

#### **Executive Committee (all meetings in the SJC Conference Room on the 4th floor of the Capital Judicial Center, Augusta at 2:00 p.m.):**

Jan. 12th  
March 16th  
June 26th  
Sept. 7th  
Oct. 30th  
Nov. 29th

Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:00 p.m.