

**Justice Action Group
JAG Executive Committee**

**January 19, 2021
2:00 PM**

MINUTES

Present via Zoom: ACJ Mead, Judge Rich, Chris Lewis, Jaye Martin, Victoria Powers, Kelly McDonald, Michelle Draeger, Charles Dingman, Liz Stout, and Lowell Brown

- I. Approval of Minutes** from November 16, 2020 Executive Committee Meeting. No corrections/additions noted. Minutes adopted and made part of our permanent record.

- II. Report from Chair - J. Mead:** Justice Mead welcomed the new members, Lowell Brown, Victoria Powers and Chris Lewis. Justice Mead provided a brief history and explanation of the Justice Action Group's purpose and mission. He cited an article by Diana Scully that had been published in the not too distant past in the Maine Bar Journal that contained a more detailed account of the history and past achievements.
 - a. Checking in—how are we all doing?
 - b. Inventory updates: Justice Mead asked if there were any additions/corrections to the inventory. Pro bono committee, legislative committee and justice systems committee memberships need to be updated. Incubator program to remain on inventory even though not active.
 - c. Update on reporting pro bono hours with annual attorney registration Justice Mead will be retooling the questions on the card to make it clearer as to qualifications.
 - d. Pro bono criminal representation to be included in Katahdin Counsel recognition? Judge Rich indicated this will be discussed at the next pro bono committee meeting.
 - e. Status of new case management system and e-filing: Justice Mead reported that pilot program for the new Odyssey case management system and e-filing component are up and running in Bangor. It is running fairly well; glitches are being addressed. The planning

currently has a target date for all court locations to be fully up and running by the end of 2022.

f. Future projects for JAG: Justice Mead reported that JAG and the providers are currently directing all of their energies and resources to the challenges raised by the coronavirus and new initiatives will be raised as the pandemic abates.

g. Review Board and Exec. Committee rosters: Reviewed and will be updated.

III. Vice Chair's Report and Pro Bono Committee Report - J. Rich: The committee has not met since the last JAG board meeting. The next meeting is March 8th. The Rule 89(c) proposal has been submitted to the SJC [Post-meeting note: The SJC approved the amendment on January 20.] They are also talking about a couple of new initiatives and will also be talking about Katahdin Counsel and whether to include pro bono criminal representation as qualifying.

IV. Legislative Committee Report - Charlie Dingman:

a. ATJ Day (March 31st or June 10th) At present, there seems to be no realistic likelihood that the 2021 ATJ Day at the Legislature can take place in the Hall of Flags as it has in the past. We may have to make do with distribution of written material to the Legislators and possibly an address to the Judiciary Committee.

b. MCLSF surcharges corrective bill: The JB strongly supports this bill. This an emergency bill and the plan is to contact the Governor's office to talk about how straightforward and urgent this is. The Committee is hoping that the bill will be enacted as soon as possible.

V. ACP Chair's Report - Victoria Powers: The ACP has a meeting on January 21st.

VI. Justice Systems Committee Report - Jaye Martin: The newly renamed committee is meeting monthly. The next meeting will be on January 27th.

VII. Executive Committee Organization Updates:

- **Courts:** The courts have reached the point where all existing resources have been deployed and priority case types are filling the dockets. The courts cannot predict at this time when non-priority case types can be reached. Video remote (Zoom) proceedings are now taking place on a very regular basis and the courts are becoming quite proficient at scheduling and conducting the hearings.

The courts are now accepting email filings pursuant to a recently revised PMO. [NOTE: This is to be distinguished from e-filing, which refers to the new eCourt system described above!] Justice Mead indicated that he would request numbers on pending cases and backlogs.

- **VLP:** Liz Stout reported they are moving forward with their various programs. Most things are remote-based at this time, including some clinics. People seeking legal assistance are being assisted via phone or email. They're working on expanding their pool of volunteer lawyers. Recruiting volunteer lawyers is particularly difficult in the northern parts of the state.
- **MJF:** Michelle reported the Campaign for Justice did remarkably well given the challenges of the COVID pandemic. The MJF continues to move forward in 2021 with new and existing initiatives.
- **MSBA/Lawyers in Libraries:** Kelly McDonald reported that they put into place a new two-year plan. The focus is on diversity and the steps they're taking. The second is talking and thinking about the shortage of lawyers in rural parts of Maine. The third prong is trying to be a central repository for lawyers. They continue to do Bar Talks weekly. The MSBA will advocate for lawyers being in the upper priority tiers for COVID vaccine inoculations. He will double-check on how or whether the Lawyers in Libraries will take place this year.
- **MTLA:** Chris Lewis reported the MTLA has been preparing for a spring CLE meeting to be a half day later this year that will probably be presented in an online format. The MTLA is actively working with the judiciary to support the reopening of trials.

VIII: Other Business: None

IX. 2021 JAG Executive Committee and Board meeting dates:

JAG Board (Feeney Conference Room - Cumberland County Courthouse):

June 21, 2021 - 3:00

Dec. 20, 2021 - 3:00

Executive Committee meeting dates:

Mar. 17, 2021 - 2:00 - via Zoom

May 17, 2021 - 2:00 - via Zoom

Sept. 21, 2021 - 2:00 - SJC Conf. Room - Capital Judicial Center

Nov. 15, 2021 - 2:00 - SJC Conf. Room - Capital Judicial Center

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.