



Nevada Supreme Court Access to Justice Commission

Friday, March 13, 2015 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM



Video Conference

[Carson City](#) Supreme Court Law Library, Room 107
[Elko](#) 4th Judicial District Court,
[Las Vegas](#) Regional Justice Center, 17th Floor, AOC Room B
[Reno](#) 2nd Judicial District Court, 75 Court Street, Room 220 B

Minutes

Commission Members in Attendance:

Chief Justice James Hardesty, Co-Chair
Justice Michael Douglas, Co-Chair
Ben Albers
John Desmond
Hon. Patrick Flanagan
Paul Elcano
AnnaMarie Johnson
Nic Danna
Melanie Kushnir
Julie Cavanaugh-Bill
Ira David Sternberg
Sugar Vogel
Crislove Igeleke
Connie Akridge
Jeremy Reichenberg
Hon. Connie Steinheimer
Doreen Spears Hartwell
Ron Spratt
Hon. Nathan Young

Attending Guests

Hon. Gary Fairman
Hon. Chuck Weller
Hon. Nathan Young
Kimberly Farmer, Executive Director, State Bar of Nevada
Barbara Buckley, Executive Director, Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada
Jim Berchtold, Deputy Executive Director, Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada
Shelly Newton, Clark County Law Library
Summer Youngquist, Clark County Law Library

Staff Members Present

Jamie Gradick, Rural Courts Coordinator, Administrative Office of the Courts
Angela Washington, Access to Justice Director

Call to Order/Roll Call

The Access to Justice Commission Meeting was called to order at 2:04 pm by Justice Michael Douglas and a roll call was conducted thereafter.

Consent Agenda

The consent agenda included the approval of the following minutes from previous meetings:

November 14, 2014 ATJ Commission Meeting
February 27, 2015 ONE Promise Nevada Campaign Subcommittee Minutes

It was moved and seconded that the minutes from previous meetings be approved. A vote was conducted and it was unanimously approved.

Statewide Legal Service Delivery Reports

Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada (LACSN) – Barbara Buckley provided the report for Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada. Among other matters discussed, Ms. Buckley noted that LACSN recently launched its new family law self-help center website which includes revamped family law forms used in Clark County and written instructions for each. The new family law self-help website joins the other support programs that LACSN offers, including two self-help centers, comprised of the family law self-help center and the civil law self-help center; thirty (30) free legal classes a month with the law school partnership and Nevada Legal Services; twenty (20) Ask-A-Lawyer programs a month; the Pro Bono Project volunteers and attorneys at LACSN. Also, it was shared that Lynn Etkins resigned her position at Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada and that Jim Berchtold will assume her duties.

Nevada Legal Services (NLS) – Anna Marie Johnson provided the report for Nevada Legal Services. Among other items discussed, Ms. Johnson noted that Nevada Legal Services welcomed a new supervisor who is responsible for coordinating the work of the northern and southern NLS offices. Additionally, NLS has welcomed a new full time staff attorney who will handle adult ward guardianship cases. NLS is currently working with the UNLV Boyd Law School with the Tax Clinic offered there. Lastly, NLS reported that the Tribal Law Section with the State Bar has been approved.

Southern Nevada Senior Law Program (SNSLP) – Sugar Vogel provided the report for Southern Nevada Senior Law Program. SNSLP continues to provide general legal service delivery for senior citizens that will assist them with maintaining their independence. Additionally, it was reported that SNSLP expanded their services to seniors who have been victimized through a partnership with the Clark County District Attorney's office. Also, SNSLP was the recipient of \$3,000 in Nevada's Big Give that took place on March 12, 2015. Lastly, SNSLP will host a tennis tournament fundraiser in the coming months.

Volunteer Attorneys for Rural Nevadans (VARN) – Ben Albers provided the report for VARN. VARN recently launched a new agency website that provides various information on the services offered by VARN as well as referral information. VARN hosted its pro bono award reception in February which was very well attended. Lastly, VARN welcomed two new staff members to the VARN team.

Washoe Legal Services (WLS) and the I-80 Project - Paul Elcano provided the report for Washoe Legal Services and the I-80 Project. WLS received money from the LAV Grant for domestic violence. Also, WLS started a capital campaign to raise \$300,000 to purchase the building they are in and as a result, raised the money and retired the second mortgage on the building. The I-80 Corridor Project is fully

implemented with a full time attorney in Elko, a part time attorney in Lander, a part time attorney in Pershing, a full time attorney in Humboldt, and a full time attorney in Lyon. The project was a result of seed money from an IOLTA grant in the amount of \$60,000; WLS raised \$240,000 in conjunction with the seed money. Also, WLS worked with county commissions and members of the judiciary in all counties and is very appreciative of the support of the judiciary in those counties.

Rural Collaboration Report – Legal aid organizations were asked to provide information on programs or project collaborations that took place since the last meeting of the Access to Justice Commission. Ben Albers of VARN reported that he has spoken with AnnaMarie Johnson of NLS and Paul Elcano of WLS regarding his intention to seek filing fees from specific northern rural counties. This report led to a discussion of a need in the near future for a unified approach to seeking filing fee allocations.

Discussion Items

Attorney General Military Pro Bono Program

Nic Danna of the Attorney General's Office provided an overview of its new pro bono program, directed by the Attorney General's Office of Military Legal Assistance. The program was developed after legal service needs for active duty service members were identified. The program will provide for the Attorney General's office to serve as a clearinghouse for pro bono cases of active military members to be directed to either pro bono attorneys in the state, legal aid organizations or other pro bono resources. The AG Military Pro Bono Program has secured commitments from larger law firms as well as other private attorneys in the state. More discussion took place regarding the program and those issues that the program anticipates addressing now and in the future.

2014 & 2015 Statewide Support Funding

Barbara Buckley started the discussion on the state support funding discussion item with the suggestion that the ATJ Commission adjust future award allocations to respect the limitations that organizations may have with receiving and disbursing funds. It was moved and seconded that the award allocation for 2015 be adjusted to reflect that award percentages intended for disbursement to statewide support be provided to those organizations that are willing and able to provide such an award. The matter passed. There were two abstentions.

Reports

Statewide Self Help Centers

Barbara Buckley provided the report on the Statewide Self Help Center Subcommittee. The goal of the subcommittee was to formulate best practices and to determine how existing self-help committees can assist other rural areas. Meetings led to several observations, including:

1. In the rural areas of the state, there are no self-help centers, no dedicated websites or forms;
2. After discussions, it appeared that Judges wanted more assistance with helping people complete forms as many were concerned with the amount of time that clerks spend providing assistance with forms;
3. The greatest need discussed is family law and second greatest need is eviction.

The members discussed selecting a new chairperson for the subcommittee.

IOLTA Program/Nevada Bar Foundation Report

Connie Akridge provided the report for the Nevada Bar Foundation. The Nevada IOLTA Program will be one of several recipients of money from the Department of Justice and Bank of America settlement. Two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) will be taken off the top of the entire settlement award for Nevada and other states. The Nevada Bar Foundation anticipates receiving award funds soon. Additionally, Nevada will receive 0.38% of the nineteen million dollar settlement.

UNLV Boyd Law School PILA Report

Crislove Igeleke provided the report for PILA. Ms. Igeleke reported that the PILA Auction honoring the Hon. Elizabeth Gonzalez was a big success and netted \$45,000 in funds for its scholarship program. Further, it was reported that other mixers and social events are being planned and the members of the Access to Justice Commission would be very welcomed to attend.

Public Speakers Bureau Update

There was not a Public Speakers Bureau update provided at this meeting.

Other Business

Discussion regarding the success of Nevada's effort to reach those in need of legal assistance took place at the conclusion of the meeting. Attendees provided information on the State Bar of Washington and its effort to grant paralegals as limited licensed practitioners.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:43 pm.