

Minutes of the
Workgroup on Libraries & Access to Justice
2 o'clock p.m.
October 29, 2014
225 Spring Street
Wethersfield, CT

Members in attendance: Ms. Dawn LaValle, Atty. Jeff Dowd & Ms. Krista Hess, Co-chairs; Ms. Aisha Banks, Atty. Nancy Boone, Ms. Heather Collins, Mr. Joseph DiBenedetto, Ms. Ann Doherty, Ms. Curleen Elliot, Atty. Cheryl Halford, Ms. Jocelyn Kennedy, Ms. Anne Rajotte, Mr. Christopher Roy, Mr. Jonathan Stock, Ms. Julie Styles.

Members absent: Atty. Jamey Bell, Atty. Barbara McGrath.

- 1.) Welcome members: Chairs.
- 2.) Approval of [Meeting Minutes of May 27, 2014](#): The minutes were approved.
- 3.) Online Calendar Proposal
 - a. Comments from Access to Justice Commission: Co-chair Dowd said the Commission is supportive of the calendar, but wants to ensure that the clinics are listed by topic; are legitimate, reputable, and open to all parties (not just plaintiffs or defendants); and that the Branch serves as the gatekeeper to ensure those standards apply.
 - b. Explanation of Sharepoint's limitations and another option: Mr. DiBenedetto and fellow Information Technology Division analyst Kenneth Pramuka explained that a Sharepoint calendar is an older application and, after listening to what the group hopes to achieve—an easily searchable calendar that lists free legal clinics on the Branch's website—the discussion turned to other options, such as Google calendar. An impromptu look at an online Google calendar was viewed by the members; there was discussion about how such a calendar would appear on the Branch's website. Atty. Boone volunteered to ask a legal aid staff member who manages the online pro bono website, <http://probono.ctlawhelp.org/home>, to create a demonstration calendar for the group, using the existing clinic information from the demo Sharepoint calendar. There was general agreement that by creating a Google calendar would require users to click on a link or icon from the Branch's home page, which would take the user to the Google-hosted calendar. This will require discussion with the Branch's Web Board, which decides what links and items are

included on the website. Atty. Dowd will discuss it with the Board at its next meeting.

- c. Criteria: the group discussed what the criteria would be to ensure that only legitimate clinics/program are offered. Attorneys/organizations would be required to complete a request form with information similar to those attorneys who volunteer at the Branch's nine Volunteer Attorney Day programs. Those applicants are screened by Superior Court Operations.
- d. Required fields for application form for those groups that want to be on the calendar: This was part of the criteria discussion.
- e. Who decides what makes it onto the calendar? This was part of the criteria discussion.

- 4.) Results of Public Librarian Focus Group Discussion: Co-chair La Valle said that the focus group revealed similar results to the online survey done of the public librarians: That they want information —basic information — on the court system, how to find online assistance for patrons; how to help patrons; a 'clearinghouse' of information that is intuitive; training on basic legal information and how to provide that legal information without offering legal advice to patrons; visits to law libraries, courthouses and court service centers, and visits to libraries from their counterparts; publications in paper form; free resources; flow charts that will help them properly direct patrons with legal concerns; training on reference interviews; current legislation and law updates; 'cheat sheets' and other notices when laws change; reviews of their legal collections; online Q&A sites.

The group talked at length about the need to host a symposium or justice fair that would bring together public librarians, court professionals, legal aid and legal services providers, attorneys, and others involved in providing services to the public. There was also discussion about providing 2-hour trainings to public librarians on court service centers/public information desks; the locations of and reference services available at law libraries; and a general overview of the judicial system. The group agreed to work together to try to conduct such informational sessions in early spring, and it was suggested/recommended that those sessions be videotaped to allow all librarians access to the information, despite their locations or time availability.

- 5.) Recommendations to be made to Access to Justice Commission: Ms. Hess, who is a member of the ATJ Commission, will draft an application for potential pro bono events for the calendar for presentation to the Commission and its chairs; Ms. LaValle and Ms. Styles will draft a survey for the librarians to determine what specific workshops they would like to attend; Mr. Roy and Attorney Halford will assist in drafting materials for the informational workshops.
- 6.) Assign date for next meeting and assign tasks: The Workgroup will meet in early December. An agenda will be publicly noticed on the group's webpage.