

APPROVED Minutes
Access to Facilities Implementation Committee

Tuesday, January 14, 2014

Community Court
80 Washington Street
Hartford, CT

The Connecticut Judicial Branch Access to Facilities Implementation Committee met on Tuesday, January 14, 2014 at 10 a.m. in Community Court in Hartford, Ct.

Committee members in attendance: Atty. Stephen Ment, Chair; Ms. Isabel Alvarez, Mr. Daniel Irace, Mr. Richard Byam, Mr. Robert Kilpatrick, Ms. M. Jill Hoskins, Atty. Richard Loffredo, Mr. James Morgan, Ms. Debra Novaco, Atty. Brandon E. Pelegano, Mr. Gary Salisbury, Atty. Roy Smith Jr., Ms. Janet Zigadto, Chief Judicial Marshal Relford Ward, Chief Judicial Marshal Russell Downer Jr.

Committee members absent: Ms. Virginia Apple, Mr. Robert Burke, Ms. Jamey L. Harris, Ms. Jeanne Roberge, Ms. Denise Beaulieu.

Others in attendance: Ms. Cassandra Williams; Atty. Maureen Finn, Legal Services advisor; Ms. Heather Nann Collins, support staff; Jen Loo, Manager of Admin. Services for the Office of the Chief Public Defender; Chief Inspector Jim Hankard, Office of the Chief State's Attorney.

- I. **Welcome:** Atty. Ment called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.
- II. **Introductions:** Atty. Ment welcomed the members and introduced three guests, Ms. Williams, who was filling in for Ms. Beaulieu; Mr. Loo, and Mr. Hankard. Mr. Loo and Mr. Hankard were invited by Atty. Ment to learn about the Judicial Branch's signage and wayfinding initiatives currently being undertaken across the state under the leadership of this committee. Public Defenders and Prosecutors share courthouse space, and they may be interested in adopting some of the Branch's signage recommendations.
- III. **Approval of November 20, 2013 meeting Minutes:** There were no corrections to the minutes. Atty. Loffredo made a motion to adopt the minutes, it was seconded and approved by Ms. Novaco, Ms. Hoskins, Mr. Morgan, Atty. Pelegano, Mr. Salisbury, Atty. Smith Jr., Ms. Zigadto. There were no Nay votes.
- IV. **Report on the Tolland, Litchfield, and New Britain Judicial Districts**
 - **Atty. Smith** reported that he met with Vernon's Chief of Police to talk about signage. Also, the City of Vernon purchased new street signs directing visitors to the courthouse and to parking; additionally, the Branch has ordered 28 new interior signs to be erected in the Tolland JD courthouse in the coming weeks.
 - **Atty. Pelegano** reported on Litchfield, where new signs, created by Mr. Salisbury and others at COLP, are being placed in various offices in the Judicial District, including Juvenile Matters, the GA at Bantam, and the JD in Litchfield center. The Committee thanked Mr. Salisbury for his designs and dedication in producing signage so quickly. Atty. Ment noted that the installation of signs helps Judicial Branch employees, too. For example: members of the public don't

have to ask judicial marshals how to find offices, rest rooms, etc. There are sign holders being installed, which will contain the paper signage available in the internal database and bearing uniform font, color and size, and the Branch seal. Atty. Pelegano provided the group with a book of photos of the before and after views throughout the JD. The improved signage has received excellent reviews from court users, including members of the bar.

Atty. Ment also reported that he and Atty. Pelegano reached out to the Litchfield Historic District Commission to discuss the lack of a sign telling court users how to find the handicapped-accessible entrance into the JD courthouse. The Commission maintains some control over signage placement and other aesthetics to protect the integrity of the historical district. Attys. Ment and Pelegano will give a presentation to the Commission on Feb. 6, 2014, to explain why a sign is needed, and provide some examples for signs that may be acceptable and appropriate in the context of the district.

- **Atty. Ment** reported on the continuation of building assessments, telling the Committee that the New Britain JD is the next chosen location, thanks to the approval of the administrative judge and with cooperation from the chief clerk and other staff. The JD building in New Britain is relatively new, so there are few issues expected in it, but the GA, in Bristol, is an older building and may require more updating. A kick-off meeting will be held in the upcoming weeks.

V. **Report on the 90 Washington Street Project:** **Atty. Loffredo** reported that there was a preliminary assessment done in the building, which houses family court, family support magistrates, the JD's Court Service Center, family relations, clerk's offices, etc. While the building is relatively new, its functions have changed to accommodate caseflow. There are frequent complaints about a lack of directional signage and traffic flow. COLP will design signage that will be erected to help improve traffic flow; there will also be signs in languages other than English (most likely Spanish). The building is somewhat unique in that its functions change on a daily basis, i.e., short calendar one day, trials another, etc. The assessment group believes that purchasing sign holders to allow for the daily change out of paper signs will likely be the best solution on the building's bottom floor, which hosts a weekly Volunteer Attorney Day, as well as family support magistrate court, and on the main floor. This is an ongoing, active process to try to give the public the information they need to navigate places and processes.

VI. **Report on Subcommittee on Online Directions and General Information:** Ms. Apple was not in attendance, but **Atty. Ment** reported that he had spoken with her regarding directions generally, and the identification of parking lots on the online map of Hartford's JD that are in fact not open to the public. That has been modified. **Mr. Irace** reported that the online directions to Waterbury do not include information on handicapped accessible parking, while other JDs do have such information. This can be rectified with proper identification. Also, two people reported that online directions to the Ansonia/Milford JD are inaccurate. This will be reported to Ms. Apple and that subcommittee will address the concerns.

VII. **Update on the creation of a signs database:** **Mr. Salisbury** reported that the database has been created and that within the next week, all Judicial Branch staff members with computer access will be allowed to download or order COLP-designed signage. Users will be guided by style standards developed by the Committee to ensure professional, accurate, readable signage becomes the norm, even when such signage is not permanent. Further, the signs can be created to quickly fulfill sporadic needs, such as meetings open

to the public and wayfinding signage. Atty. Ment thanked Mr. Salisbury and his crew at COLP, and Mr. Ryan Preble of the Branch's Information Technology Division, who worked so quickly to develop the database. Atty. Ment also noted that the designs and the concept were approved by Chief Court Administrator Judge Patrick L. Carroll III.

- VIII. **Working Group Report on Wayfinding:** Atty. Smith and Atty. Ment met with a New Haven municipal group that is taking suggestions for signage requests. The city of New Haven received a federal grant to improve its signage and a consultant has been hired to conduct surveys of needs identified by the public. It is hoped that the city will consider using some of its funding to improve certain signage around Branch facilities and directional signage to Branch facilities. Atty. Smith also said he has talked with Meriden officials, who suggested that the Branch purchase signage; however, the Branch shares a courthouse facility with that town's police station. Outreach will continue.
- IX. **Other Business:** Atty. Ment told the Committee that the new Branchwide "Welcome to our Facility" sign, developed with the Committee's assistance, has been posted in many courthouses across the state and is slated to be installed in all facilities as quickly as possible. The sign tells people certain rules and what to expect, including information about security screening. Mr. Kilpatrick told the Committee that signage that includes the Branch's mission statement has been ordered and will be distributed to chief clerks for display.
- X. **Scheduling of the Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 11, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. in the Conference Room at Community Court, 80 Washington Street, Hartford.
- XI. **Adjournment:** Atty. Ment made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Atty. Loffredo, and voice approved by the members.