

Minutes

Access to Facilities Implementation Committee

14 November, 2012

9:00 a.m.

80 Washington Street, Hartford, Connecticut

The Connecticut Judicial Branch Access to Facilities Implementation Committee met on Wednesday, November 14, 2012 in the first floor conference room in Community Court at 80 Washington Street, Hartford, CT.

Committee members in attendance: Atty. Stephen Ment, Chair, Ms. Virginia Apple, Mr. Robert P. Burke, Mr. Richard Byam, Ms. Jamey L. Harris, Mr. Robert Kilpatrick, Ms. M. Jill Levine, Atty. Richard Loffredo, Mr. James V. Morgan, Ms. Debra Novaco, Atty. Brandon E. Pelegano, Ms. Jeanne Roberge, Mr. Gary Salisbury, Atty. Roy Smith Jr., Ms. Janet Zigadto.

Members absent: Chief Judicial Marshal Russell Downer Jr. and Chief Judicial Marshal Relford Ward; Mr. Troy Brown, Ms. Sandra Lugo-Gines.

Others in attendance: Atty. Maureen Finn, Legal Services Advisor to the Committee, Ms. Heather N. Collins, support staff.

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Atty. Ment.

- I. Welcome and introductions: Atty. Ment welcomed the members and announced that Atty. Maureen Finn, of the Branch's Legal Services Unit, has been added as legal advisor to the Committee.
- II. Approval of October 11, 2012 Draft Minutes: There was one addition to the draft minutes: Atty. Loffredo requested under Item III, "Site for Pilot Judicial District/facility", that Chief Judicial Marshal Relford Mitch Ward be added as a member of the Subcommittee. The change was made and the revised minutes were approved by the members who attended the October meeting.
- III. Recent Activities: Atty. Ment reported to the Committee that since its last meeting, he:
 - Consulted with the Office of the Chief Court Administrator and the Tolland Administrative Judge, the Hon. Elliot N. Solomon, for permission for the Implementation Committee to begin the Judicial District Pilot Project in the Tolland JD.
 - Met with the Chief Clerks at their regular monthly meeting to discuss the Committee's charge, provided them with a synopsis of the Committee's first meeting, and discussed what the Committee hoped to accomplish.
 - Emailed the several dozen Branch staff members who served as local contacts/assessors for the original A2F Committee, conducting informal signage assessments in each of the judicial districts, letting them know about this Implementation Committee's charge, the final A2F report (if they were unaware of its existence), and the work that is getting underway with the pilot projects. The local members were also told that they may be called upon to assist in the implementation of the report.
 - Met with Superior Court Operations Executive Director Atty. Joseph D. D'Alesio to discuss the A2F recommendation regarding the use of electronic displays of court dockets, which would replace the current mode of posting paper dockets.

IV. Report on the Judicial District Pilot Project Subcommittee:

- The Chair, Atty. Rich Loffredo, said the Subcommittee has met once thus far and begun mapping out an implementation plan for the pilot in the Tolland Judicial District. The members are: identifying and removing outdated/inaccurate signage in public spaces; working with the Legal Services Unit to determine what, if any, signs are required by state or federal law; assessing what signage exists and what signage is needed that does not exist; going to contact the Branch's Interpreter & Translator Services Unit to determine what is the most commonly used language, other than English, in the judicial district in order to ensure that new signage will be relevant to the population; working on templates for printable, paper signage that could be stored in an internal database for use by the entire Judicial Branch, with printing (including Braille, where appropriate) by COLP. The members also took an informal tour of one of the JD buildings after the last meeting and removed six outdated/obsolete paper signs.

V. Report on the Subcommittee on Online Directions and General Information:

- Ms. Apple chairs the Subcommittee, which has thus far met one time. Ms. Apple reported that the Subcommittee: has divvied up a number of tasks, with each member assigned to determine and test the accuracy of vital phone numbers in every judicial district for use on the newly redesigned *Directions and General Information* webpages; members are driving to two sites within each JD, utilizing the online directions that are currently posted on jud.ct.gov, to determine their accuracy. The new *Directions* web page will use larger cities and towns in the directions (as in, Coming south from Hartford, as opposed to Coming from the north), Ms. Apple said, and will include GPS coordinates, inset maps with the JD buildings/offices identified, information about public transportation and parking, as well as links to the judicial district's Contact people for the Americans with Disabilities Act. The design that had been previously developed in the original A2F Committee was tweaked a bit and approved by the Branch's internal Web Board, which makes decisions on all web content. Further, the entire Branch web site is being redesigned and is imminently launching its initial pages. Finally, Ms. Apple noted that the Branch's website recently received an award for its content and ease of use.

VI. Other business:

- Atty. Ment and the Committee discussed the ADA component of signage and Atty Finn will review what the law dictates with respect to Braille and other ADA accommodations. It is anticipated that, in order to ensure accuracy and uniformity and to save money and time, an internal database will be developed with an extensive array of available signage created in a particular template. Mr. Salisbury said that with respect to imprinting Braille on signs, COLP has completed another Braille project with another state agency and the process was fairly seamless.
- The committee discussed the need to develop a notice to be posted on every facility door where the public is subject to metal detectors and/or hand searches by judicial marshals. The A2F Committee found in its report that there does not currently exist a standard sign and the Implementation Committee agreed that there should be one, in English and Spanish, to tell visitors to facilities what security measures are in place. The chair will draft a recommendation and submit to the members prior to the next meeting.
- Finally, Atty. Ment said that the Committee should know that there are many people within the Branch who will be monitoring this Committee's work, and who are eager to see it succeed.

VII. Next meeting: Atty. Ment thanked the members for their dedication. The Subcommittee chairs said they will meet with their members in the next few weeks and it was determined that the larger Committee can wait until January (2013) to regroup. The next meeting will be at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 15th, in the first floor conference room at Hartford Community Court, 80 Washington Street, Hartford, CT. An agenda is forthcoming and will be posted on the Committee's website.

VIII. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.