

Minutes
Public Service and Trust Commission
Pro Bono Committee
April 2, 2013

The Pro Bono Committee met on Tuesday, April 2, 2013 at 3:00pm at 231 Capitol Avenue, Hartford in the Attorney Conference Room.

Those in attendance: Honorable William J. Bright, Jr., Chair, Attorney Steve Eppler-Epstein, Attorney Sylvia Rutkowska, Attorney Catherine Mohan, Attorney Mark Nordstrom, Attorney Jonathan Shapiro, Attorney Sharon Dornfeld, Attorney Dwight Merriam, Attorney Alfred Casella, Attorney Jan Chiaretto, Attorney Mark Dubois, Attorney Timothy Johnston, Hon. Timothy Keeney, and Attorney Melissa Wyckoff for Attorney Alice Bruno.

Attorney Joe DelCiampo from Judicial Branch Legal Services was also in attendance.

The meeting was called to order at 3:06 pm.

1. The Committee voted to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2013 Pro Bono Committee meeting with the following correction to #2: Attorney Bonnie Mangan's name was incorrectly cited and therefore removed. The minutes should correctly name paralegal Claudia Magnan as the person who is working on the pro bono video with Attorney Eppler-Epstein. With the preceding correction, the minutes were approved. The following members abstained: Hon. William Bright, Attorney Melissa Wyckoff.
2. Judge Bright reported to the Committee on the status of the proposed Limited Scope Representation (LSR) rule changes. Judge Bright reported that a lawyer and a judge from Massachusetts attended the February 25, 2013 meeting of the Rules Committee to talk about their experiences with LSR and answer questions and address concerns of the Committee. Subsequently, the Rules Committee voted to approve the LSR rules on a 1-year pilot basis in two family court locations to be determined by the Chief Court Administrator. Judge Bright further explained that the provisions surrounding limited appearances would only allow for limited appearances to be filed for court events, whereby prohibiting the filing of limited appearances for court issues such as custody or visitation, or for a period of time, or a specified retainer.

Judge Bright further reported to the Pro Bono Committee on the status of the retired attorney rules which would permit attorneys who had retired from the practice of law, to engage in pro bono work, similar to the rule that was adopted for in-house counsel. The retired attorney rules, which still had to be approved by a vote of the judges, would allow a retired attorney to retain their retired status, while still affording them the ability to perform pro bono work under the

supervision of a legal services organization, court-based program or a private attorney.

The Committee also discussed how the new rule regarding retired attorneys would impact retired in-house counsel, and the Committee agreed that the pro bono work would still need to be tied to a legal services entity for malpractice purposes. Judge Bright acknowledged that there might be a gap in the rule for retired in-house attorneys and proposed establishing a workgroup under the Pro Bono Committee dedicated to reviewing existing and proposed Practice Book rules and Rules of Professional Conduct.

The Committee also agreed that there are fundamental changes to the practice of law including a growing movement to certify non-lawyers to provide legal assistance to indigent clients. The Committee segued this discussion into a more broad discussion about the role of law students in pro bono and suggested that the Committee invite incoming UCONN Law School Dean Tim Fisher to a meeting of the Pro Bono Committee to discuss the possibility of licensing 2nd year law students.

3. Judge Bright reported to the Committee regarding the Pro Bono Institute (PBI) conference he attended last month where he sat as a panelist with Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman and others regarding the various tactics that courts can implement to promote pro bono service. Several innovative ideas were discussed by the panelists including an initiative undertaken by the state of Minnesota where retired, former judges were drafted to work with legal aid to provide training to pro bono lawyers. Additionally, other state courts issued challenges to their lawyers to see how many attorneys would step up to perform pro bono work. Judge Bright also reported that all of the states at the PBI were grappling with the same issues as Connecticut, including an increase in the numbers of self-represented parties and the need to create additional resources and tools to adequately handle the increased volume.
4. Attorney Eppler-Epstein reported to the Committee that progress was being made on the creation of the pro bono video, but there was still more work to be done before a final product was available. Attorney Eppler-Epstein will arrange a meeting with the videographer to solidify a schedule for completion.
5. Judge Bright reported to the Committee on the status of regional bar meetings. A regional meeting will take place with the Windham bar association on Monday, April 8th; however, the New London and Danbury county bar associations reported that such a meeting might not be productive due to the small size of the bar and the lack of a large firm presence. The Tolland bar association will schedule a bar meeting with Judge Bright and Justice Rogers as Justice Rogers' schedule permits.

6. Judge Bright also reported to the Committee on the status of formal recognition for pro bono attorneys. Judge Bright solicited input from the Chief Administrative Judges for civil, family and juvenile matters and all agreed that it was very important for pro bono attorneys to be recognized and have access to information they needed from the clerk's offices such as copies, etc. The Committee discussed different ways that pro bono attorneys might identify themselves to the court so the court is aware that they are present on a matter pro bono or they participate in court-sponsored pro bono programs.

The Committee also discussed the need for formal recognition of pro bono service on a larger scale and discussed such options as a reception with Justice Rogers. Prior to implementing any formal recognition programs, the Committee would like to determine what types of recognition would be most meaningful to the bar.

7. Judge Bright discussed the formation of new working groups under the Pro Bono Committee's ongoing initiative. The Committee discussed and agreed upon the formation of the following work groups:
 1. **Recognition** – this workgroup will study and recommend effective, concrete ways that the Branch and the Bar can formally recognize the contributions of pro bono attorneys;
 2. **Rules** - this workgroup will study and recommend ways to increase awareness of recent rule changes through marketing and communication with the bar and will further recommend additional rule changes (RPC and PB) to further the global cause of pro bono service;
 3. **Follow-up Summit** – this workgroup will examine the existing body of work on pro bono outreach, post-summit 2011 and will study ways to reinforce the goals and philosophies of the Pro Bono Summit and make recommendations to further build upon the broad foundation established by this event;
 4. **In-house Counsel** – this workgroup will study the unique relationship between in-house attorneys and pro bono service including effective outreach and communication, rules, and the impact of retirement on in-house attorneys in Connecticut and their ability to (continue to) perform pro bono services in the absence of in-house status;
 5. **Law Schools** - this workgroup will study recent changes in law school curriculum in Connecticut and in other states, and will recommend ways to increase and foster pro bono involvement by law students.

Pro Bono Committee staff will email the Committee members to determine preferences for work group assignments. Judge Bright will designate chairs once selections are made.

In addition, a suggestion was made to add Attorney William Clendenen, incoming Vice-President of the CBA as a member of the Pro Bono Committee.

Lastly, staff will obtain updated statistics from the voluntary pro bono reporting survey as part of the annual electronic attorney registration process. The stats will be provided to Judge Bright for dissemination.

8. The next meeting of the Pro Bono Committee will be held on Tuesday, May 14, 2013 at 3:00p.m.
9. The meeting was adjourned at 4:17p.m.