

Connecticut Supreme Court Historical Society
Board of Directors Meeting
Lawyers' Lounge, Connecticut State Library, Hartford CT
January 9, 2023

Present: Wesley Horton (President), Jeffrey Babbin, Kathryn Bare, Henry Cohn (remotely), Honorable Greg D'Auria, Glenn Falk, Pamela Nagy, Matthew Necci, Donald Rogers, Erick Sandler, Deborah Schander, Kate Stith, Jonathan Weiner, Jeffrey White, Laura Zaino, Peter T. Zarella.

I. President Wesley Horton convened the meeting at 2:03pm.

II. **Secretary's Report.**

- A. **The group unanimously approved minutes for the September 19, 2022 meeting on motion by Rogers, second by Babbin.**
- B. Rogers reported that the magazine *Connecticut Explored* will devote its fall 2023 issue to law in Connecticut history, for he has submitted an article on Yale & Towne's historic trademark defense, and for which another author will submit an article on P. T. Barnum's 1832 libel trial. He invited members to contact him about submitting articles of their own.

III. **Treasurer's Report.**

- A. Babbin reported that the society's bank balance rests at \$68,426.19, a drop from September's balance due mostly to a deposit made at the New Haven Lawn Club for the society's annual meeting, although about thirty memberships and one law firm sponsorship have come in. He indicated that the society's budget still remains on tract. **On motion by Weiner, second by Justice D'Auria, the group approved the report.**
- B. Given rising interest rates, Babbin brought back the idea of investing some society assets in a long-term U.S. Treasury I Bond, a short-term U.S. Treasury bill, or a certificate of deposit at Bank of America. After discussion, **Babbin moved that the board authorize the treasurer and assistant treasurer to consult and invest up to 50 percent of the society's financial assets in a certificate of deposit, a treasury bill, or a combination, reporting back as to what is done. Seconded by Necci, motion passed unanimously.**
- C. Babbin suggested again to change the society's fiscal year from calendar-year to a July-to-June schedule, but the board **took no action**, due to paperwork and minimal benefit.

IV. **Committee Reports.**

- A. **Connecticut Supreme Court History.** Editor Cohn reported that drafts of four articles are due in mid-January to move the journal's spring 2023 Vol IX issue forward. Asked if the issue might be ready for the April annual meeting, he responded that he would try, but that scheduling is tight. Last year's problems with the printer, he stated, hopefully have been resolved. Asked also how many copies will be printed, Cohn promised to check. As for whether the journal appears online, Schander was present to state that the society

signed a contract with EBSCO to do so, but it is unclear whether any issues are uploaded. It is also uncertain whether PDFs of early issues exist. All of this needs to be checked out.

B. **Membership Committee.** Zaino stated that membership renewal requests for 2023 have gone out, but that paid memberships (not including complementary memberships for appellate court clerks) will likely shrink. She was not certain of the total number. She urged a close look at membership issues in the Long-Range-Planning discussion.

C. **Program Committee.** Sandler submitted the following report.

1. He indicated that the **date for the spring annual meeting has been moved back to April 19, 2023 at the New Haven Lawn Club** to accommodate planned speaker **Neal Katyal**, former Acting U.S. Solicitor General. Discussion focused on the dinner accompanying the meeting, given much dissatisfaction with last year's light meal. The group agreed to keep the meeting at the Lawn Club, but authorized Sandler to arrange for a better meal at a modestly increased cost.
2. Asked by Justice D'Auria about plans mentioned in the report for a June-July event, Sandler indicated nothing specific yet. Discussion then suggested a reception before June 15, when folks will clear out for the summer.

D. **Archives Committee.** In his absence, Sonnenberg submitted a written report indicating ongoing work to collect board records for deposit in the society's State Library archive.

E. **Law Day.** In his absence, Fish's written report showed efforts underway to organize a Law Day event with judge as speaker and with a simplified essay topic—"Cornerstones of Democracy: Civics, Stability and Collaboration" to encourage student participation.

V. **Long-Range Planning Committee Report—Preliminary Discussion.** With thanks from Horton for his committee's effort, White presented a report with ten recommendations which he offered as preparation for a workshop of board members to be held in February or March.

A. His report's key point, he explained, is the opening line that "The Society is alive, well, but challenged." By this, the report means that programs remain sound, journal is strong, and budget is stable, but also that membership is declining, administration is uneven, website is not kept up, and membership renewal process is antiquated. Initial discussion suggested other strengths such as the society's good reputation for monetary support of programs, students and scholars, but also identified weak spots, such as no real media presence, lack of a director for administrative tasks, unclear sense of what "product" the society offers to the public, and especially, lack of success in reaching out beyond the appellate bar to get legal practitioners, teachers, students and the public as members.

B. With these ideas in mind, **White proposed, and the group agreed, to hold a workshop in March** to map out a plan for moving forward, with date to be set via Doodle poll.

VI. **Nominating Committee.** Horton appointed a committee of Bare, Cohn, Zarella and himself to nominate officers and board members for election at the annual meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 3:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Donald W. Rogers, Secretary