

Connecticut Supreme Court Historical Society

Board of Directors Meeting

January 10, 2022

Via Zoom

Present: Jeffrey White (chairing the meeting), Steve Armstrong, Jeff Babbin, Kathryn Bare, Michael Besso, William Bevacqua, Glenn Falk, Clare Kindall, Daniel Kirsch, Matt Necci, Donald Rogers, Erick Sandler, Barbara Schellenberg, Eric Sonnenberg, Kate Stith, Matt Warshauer, Jon Weiner, Harry Weller, Laura Zaino.

I. Vice-President Jeffrey White called the meeting to order at 2:02pm, explaining that President Wesley Horton had been kept away by an unavoidable appointment.

II. Secretary's Report.

- A. **Minutes.** The group unanimously approved minutes for the September 13, 2021 meeting as they were written, on motion by Armstrong, second by Bare.
- B. Rogers stated that Connecticut History Day competition, for which the society awards two prizes, is well underway with regional competitions planned for March and state final competition planned for April.
- C. Rogers indicated that the CBA sponsored documentary *The Law Unmasked* on COVID's impact on the state's legal community remains in the works.

III. Treasurer's Report.

- A. Babbin reported that the society's bank balance rests at \$72,721.64, reflecting growth from last September's report due to the resumption of dues payments this year, after a moratorium due to COVID last year. He noted a slight reduction in "Go Daddy" website costs. **On his motion, second by Sandler, the group approved the treasurer's report.**
- B. About the plan approved last meeting for investment of some of society's money in short-term CDs, Babbin said that he had not acted yet, but regards now as a better moment to start that initiative, because interest rates are about to go up.
- C. Babbin and Weiner indicated their intention to complete the audit mandated last time by the next meeting.

IV. **Committee Reports.** White called attention to reports submitted by the program committee, the society's journal, the archives committee, the membership committee, and the social media committee in advance of today's gathering (attached), and after receiving no questions about them, moved on with the agenda.

V. Annual Meeting.

- A. For the program committee, Sandler reported that annual meeting plans remain unsettled due to uncertainty as to whether to hold an in-person or virtual meeting in the wake of the continuing COVID pandemic, and uncertainty as to who the speaker might be. His group identified a good speaker, Neal Katyal who cannot make it until 2023. He noted that the

society retains its \$2,500 deposit with the New Haven Lawn Club for space to hold a catered dinner and public lecture, but was unsure whether that deposit could be rolled over again until next year, left with the Lawn Club indefinitely, or be refunded.

- B. Discussion followed. It leaned heavily toward holding some kind of in-person event perhaps including a streaming option, especially because of the high desirability of awarding Professor Scott Gerber the Collier prize personally, giving retired members Molly LeVan and Kathryn Calibey their long-deserved recognition, and just getting together. Some members suggested, based on experience with other groups, that a regular dinner and lecture is possible with the right precautions. Several members suggested in place of a catered dinner to have an outdoor reception with “heavy appetizers” (close to adequate for a meal) followed by an indoor lecture with masks, or even no lecture at all. Others suggested pushing off the annual meeting a little later in the spring when the COVID hazard will likely abate. For any live meeting, members noted, the schedule needs to be coordinated with Professor Gerber.
- C. As for a potential speaker, the consensus focused on local authorities who will have more flexible schedules with little driving to a local event arranged at a late date, such as Appellate Court Judge Douglas Lavine to speak about the state Hate Crimes Council, or Chief Justice Robinson to discuss challenges facing the state supreme court, or society president Wesley Horton who always has illuminating observations to offer.
- D. **White asked Sandler to study the alternatives and report back to the executive committee with a recommendation.**

VI. Old/New Business

- A. Regarding the Zarella Award, Necci stated that the call for applicants typically goes out in late-spring or summer, and he indicated that he will draw up that announcement and formally request the board’s authorization of the \$5,000 award money in the near future.
- B. Regarding Law Day, White observed that member William Fish, who was unable to attend, usually handles this event. **White asked Rogers to contact Fish about any plans and indicate need to authorize a \$1,000 expenditure for the society’s prizes.**
- C. Babbin noted that the society usually appoints a nominating committee at this point for the election of officers and directors at the board meeting held at the time of the annual meeting. Bare volunteered to serve on the committee as she usually does. White stated that he will contact president Horton about appointing the panel.

XI. Next Board Meeting. The group consensus was that the next board meeting should take place before the upcoming annual meeting, whenever that is scheduled, unless society president Wesley Horton deems it necessary to hold another meeting in the interim.

XII. Meeting adjourned at 2:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Donald W. Rogers, Secretary