

# **Connecticut Supreme Court Historical Society**

## **Board of Directors Meeting**

September 24, 2019

Lawyer's Lounge, Connecticut State Library, Hartford, CT  
Minutes (as corrected)

Present: Wesley Horton (President), Jeff Babbin, Bill Bevacqua, Kathy Calibey, Honorable Greg D'Auria, Bill Fish, Stanton Krauss, Molly LeVan, Donald Rogers, Erick Sandler, Barbara Schellenberg, Jon Weiner, Jeff White, Mike Widener, Kendall Wiggin, Laura Zaino, Peter Zarella

I. President Wesley Horton called the meeting to order at 2:00pm and asked attendees around the table to introduce themselves.

II. **Minutes** (prepared by outgoing secretary Jeff Babbin). The group approved minutes unanimously with one correction (to add Molly LeVan to those attending) on motion by Calibey, second by Zarella.

III. **Treasurers' Report.** Babbin reported that the balance in the society's accounts rests at \$81,089.68, a stable level, and that a complete written report will follow.

#### **IV. Announcements.**

- A. Horton reported that society member and board member Judge Henry Cohn will receive a Distinguished Graduate Award from the University of Connecticut Law School Alumni Association on October 15, 2019.
- B. In addition, Horton observed that ex officio board member Kendall Wiggin will retire from his post as Connecticut State Librarian on January 1, 2020, and commended his work on the Board and as State Librarian. Wiggin indicated that his successor has not been identified yet. Widener remarked that the occasion of Wiggin's retirement was a good time for the society to update its records in the state archives. Horton asked Rogers and Wiggin to ascertain the current state of the society's archives and to arrange the deposit of appropriate additional materials from the secretary and treasurer, in particular.
- C. Rogers reported that Association for the Study of Connecticut will hold its fall meeting at Central Connecticut State University on November 2, 2019 on the topic of Woman Suffrage and Women's Rights in Connecticut History, and promised to circulate the announcement among the society's board members.

## V. Committee Reports and other Reports.

- A. **Program Committee.** LeVan reported that the society's fall meeting will be held at the Hartford Club on October 23, 2019, with featured speaker Attorney Paul DeForest Hicks about his book, *The Litchfield Law School: Guiding the New Nation*. The event is free and open to the public, as is parking. Refreshments will be served at 5:30pm and the talk will commence at 6:15pm. Discussion developed as to whether the society should invite Connecticut History Day student prize winners, but the group decided not to do so, due to the long drive involved. (See attached report)
- B. **Connecticut History Day.** On motion by Rogers, second by Weiner, the group approved prizes for 2020 Connecticut History Day, that is a \$500 prize each for the best junior and best senior division entries in any category involving law and constitutional history in Connecticut, the same arrangement that the society has awarded in the past two years. (Bevacqua abstained due his role in coordinating Connecticut History Day.)
- C. **Connecticut Supreme Court History.** Editor Barbara Schellenberg indicated that plans for the next year's journal are in the works, with three articles expected by Justice Maria Kahn on judicial branch interpretive services, Jeannette Zaragoza De Leon on last year's talk on the *Amistad* trial, and Michael Besso on the historical understanding of judicial decision making in Connecticut. An article on civil rights history in Connecticut is hoped for, but not expected at this time. (See attached report.)
- D. **Annual Meeting Plans.** LeVan reported that the program committee plans to schedule the annual meeting for early April in New Haven as before in order to accommodate potential speaker schedules, and asked for suggestions for speakers. Horton urged members to send speaker suggestions to LeVan.
- E. **Membership.** New board member Laura Zaino reported that the society's membership rests where it has been in the past few years, a total of 113 members, including 80 attorney members, 11 academics, 14 sustaining, 3 sponsoring law firms and 5 benefactors. The group brainstormed about ways to boost membership, including offering first-year free membership, reaching out to appellate clerks, and approaching law students. By consensus, the group agreed with Zarella's recommendation for each board member to solicit three new members. In passing, Horton promised to recirculate the 2015 Long-Range Planning Committee report to stir up membership recruitment ideas. Horton asked board members to submit suggestions for attracting more society members to him by December 1, 2019. (See attached report.)
- F. **Law Day.** The group agreed to run next spring's Law Day program, if Chief Justice Robinson is agreeable. All concurred that last year's program went very well, except that last year's program committee had difficulty attracting entries for the essay and art prizes, perhaps because they were targeted toward college-age, rather than middle and high school students. Horton appointed a committee consisting of Judge Kim Knox, Fish and

Weiner to plan the Law Day event for next May. On motion by LeVan, second by Krauss, the group approved \$2,000 expenditure for the two \$1,000 prizes.

G. **Collier Award.** White reported that the Collier prize announcement has been widely circulated, and that the closure date for the nominations is December 1, 2019.

H. **Speakers for Constitution Week.** Horton proposed that the society participate more actively in Constitution Week surrounding the September 17 anniversary of the U.S. Constitution's convention completion in 1787. Justice D'Auria observed that the state supreme court gets frequent speaking requests for this event. The idea of Connecticut Constitution Week also got raised. Horton asked Bevacqua to look into this.

V. **Next Meeting.** Horton set the next meeting for the society's board of directors for **Monday, January 13, 2020**, at 2:00pm in the Lawyer's Lounge, Connecticut State Library.

VI. Meeting adjourned at 3:05pm on motion by Krauss, second by Babbin.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald W. Rogers  
Secretary