

DRAFT MINUTES
Connecticut Judicial Branch
Commission on Access to Justice
Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2015
2:00 p.m. at Hartford Community Court
80 Washington Street, Hartford, CT

Members present: Hon. William H. Bright, Jr., Ms. Aisha N. Banks, Atty. Thomas P. Chapman, Atty. William H. Clendenen, Jr., Ms. Heather Nann Collins, Atty. Steve Eppler-Epstein, Ms. Krista Hess, Atty. Barbara McGrath, Atty. Susan Nofi, Chief Public Defender Susan O. Storey, and Atty. Herman Woodard Jr.

Members absent: Hon. Elliot N. Solomon, Hon. Maria A. Kahn (Co-Chairs); Atty. Mark Nordstrom, Jr.

Workgroup members present: Atty. Jamey Bell, Atty. Chris Nelson, Atty. Patricia Kaplan, Atty. Jeff Dowd.

Public: One member of the public attended.

- I. Welcome: Judge Bright welcomed the members, noting that the co-chairs, Judge Solomon and Judge Kahn, were unable to attend but wanted the meeting to move forward.
- II. Review and vote on [Draft Minutes of September 30, 2014](#):
 - The members reviewed and approved the minutes.
- III. ATJ Project Updates from Chairs and Members:
 - [Modest/Moderate Means Workgroup](#): Co-Chairs Attys. Patricia Kaplan and Chris Nelson were present and told the commission that while the workgroup's work is essentially complete, based on their discussions with the leaders of legal aid and the Connecticut Bar Association, they now hope to have a new workgroup that works on developing a pilot incubator project
 - [Workgroup on Libraries and Access to Justice](#): Co-Chairs Krista Hess & Atty. Jeff Dowd reported that the Workgroup has scheduled a Justice Fair for the fall, in which court service center staff, law librarians, public librarians, legal aid providers, and the Commission will convene to discuss how the public can be helped in accessing court information and resources. The invitation-only event will be at the UConn School of Law; Chief Justice Rogers will give the opening remarks.
 - The Chairs also reported that there is now on the Branch's website a list of pro bono clinics conducted throughout the state. The link can be accessed from the "Public" tab on the homepage, and is named "Legal Clinics & Help."
<http://www.jud.ct.gov/clinics/default.htm>
 - Atty. Dowd showed the members a matrix of law library, court service centers and public information desks, law school libraries, community college libraries, and the state library, that

he created for public librarians. The matrix has locations, days and hours of operations, email and phone contact information, public computer access, on-site online legal research, wi-fi access, and lending policies. The Commission recommended that it be distributed.

- [Workgroup on Online Pro Bono Assistance](#): Chair Atty. Sue Nofi: Atty. Nofi said that reported that Workgroup members Judge Bright and Ms. Hess met with members of the CBA, at Atty. Clendenen's invitation, to gauge interest in launching the online pro bono website, a la [OnlineTNJustice.org](#) The workgroup created a brief survey that was advertised by the CBA to its members; unfortunately there was a very limited response. Atty. Clendenen, who will soon take over the reins as CBA president, expressed his full support for the initiative and said that he had reached out to Statewide Legal Services Ex. Director Atty. Janice Chiaretto to discuss the feasibility of hosting the website. There are challenges to finding the correct host, depending on the income level limitations of those seeking advice.
- [Workgroup on Videoconferencing and ATJ](#): Co-Chair Ms. Hess reported that a pilot program launched in January in which volunteer attorneys in Waterbury's foreclosure Volunteer Attorney Day program can connect via videoconference with parties to foreclosure cases in the New Britain Judicial District. If the pilot is successful, and results thus far are promising, the pilot could be adopted and replicated across the state. Judge Bright noted that the Branch is using videoconferencing with increasing frequency and some proceedings, such as habeas petitions, are heard almost exclusively via video.

- IV. ATJ Commission Report to the Chief Justice: Discussion of Recommendations: The Workgroups have submitted their individual reports, which will become the basis of the Commission's report. The report will be released to the Chief Justice by the end of March.
- V. Timeline and future meetings: The Commission will convene again in April or May, with an announcement being posted on its website.
- VI. Adjourn : The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.