

Minutes of the Judicial-Media Committee's Events Subcommittee
Sept. 10, 2007

Present: Ms. Lynne Tuohy, Mr. Paul Giguere, Judge Susan Handy, Ms. Adriana Venegas-McCormick. Also attending the meeting were Judge Douglas Lavine and Mr. Claude Albert, co-chairs of the Judicial-Media Committee.

Absent: Attorney Stanley Twardy Jr., Judge Robert Holzberg, Ms. Dana Neves, Attorney Lou Pepe and Judge Michael Shay.

Agenda Item No. 1: Call meeting to order – Subcommittee co-Chair Lynne Tuohy called the meeting to order shortly after 1 p.m.

Agenda Item No. 2: Approval of minutes from meeting of July 16, 2007 – The subcommittee unanimously approved the minutes of its meeting on July 16, 2007.

Agenda Item No. 3: Continue Brainstorming on ideas for panel/program/dialogue involving judges/journalists – Judge Lavine started the discussion by explaining what he and Mr. Albert view as the subcommittee's charge. According to the judge, he and Mr. Albert envision the subcommittee planning such events as Journalism School for Judges and Law School For Journalists. He added that the Judges Institute, while being available to assist with such events, could not be a primary organizer, as it has too much on its plate already. He added that perhaps the subcommittee could start with a Law School for Journalists sometime in spring 2008, and that covering sexual assault cases might be one topic to consider.

Mr. Albert added that a Law School for Journalists does not have to be conducted at a level where participants are ready to get their juris doctor degrees. He suggested a practical, topical half-day event would be very useful. Journalists, he said, often get hung up on practical matters, such as, "Can you approach a judge during a trial?" and "Can I send the judge a note?"

Judge Handy said that the number of sexual assault cases has increased in most of Connecticut's judicial districts. Mr. Albert said that such cases present many access issues, and that judges, in trying to protect victims, tend to seal wholesale. Judge Handy responded that there needs to be some sensitivity on the media's part, and that there's a big disparity between what's lawful to report and decency toward victims.

Ms. Tuohy said she would like to expand the event geared toward journalists to include other topics, such as the recent rules changes. That subject matter then could be combined with a session on court terminology, i.e. what is "accelerated rehabilitation?" The death penalty is another area of interest, but subcommittee members agreed that the topic is so big that it deserves to be handled by itself.

Judge Lavine asked whether the subcommittee had enough time between now and the full committee meeting in December to report at the meeting what it planned to do as an event in the spring. Committee members indicated that it was. Everybody agreed that the

event should be kept simple. Judge Handy added that she would be happy to develop a section of the program to educate younger reporters about the courts. It would be helpful, she said, for more experienced journalists to give an idea of what issues young reporters are dealing with, i.e., all of the acronyms used to describe court programs.

Subcommittee members suggested that the end of March would be a good time for the program.

Agenda Item No. 4 – New Business – The subcommittee set a tentative meeting date of Oct. 16, 2007, if enough members are available to attend.

Agenda Item No. 5 – Adjourn – The subcommittee adjourned shortly before 2 p.m.