

Judicial-Media Committee
Minutes of meeting on May 9, 2011

Members present: Judge David Gold and Claude Albert, co-chairs; Tom Appleby, Melissa Bailey, Judge David Borden, Linda Cimino, Judge Patrick Clifford, Joe D'Alesio, Judge Robert Devlin, Jr., Melissa Farley, Paul Giguere, Judge Robert Holzberg, Attorney Charles Howard, Judge Douglas Lavine, Morgan McGinley, Attorney Alan Neigher, Eric Parker, Chris Powell, Attorney Stanley Twardy, Jr. and Judge Dawne Westbrook

Also present: Chief Court Administrator Barbara Quinn, staff liaison Rhonda Stearley-Hebert and Alice Mastrony

- I. Open Meeting – Judge David Gold opened the meeting at 3 p.m. and welcomed committee members.
- II. Minutes – Committee members unanimously approved the minutes from the meeting of February 7, 2011.
- III. Updates/Committee Reports
 - A. Events/Journalism School for Judges: Claude Albert provided the committee with a summary of the second *Journalism School for Judges* on March 8, 2011. The program emphasized social media and the courts and went well, he said. Judge Gold, who attended the program, added that it was interesting for the judges.

The next program, to be held in 2012, will be the *Law School for Journalists*. Judge Gold suggested that a possible topic would be issues involving jurors. He encouraged committee members to suggest any ideas they might have, since planning for the program will need to begin fairly soon.
 - B. Court reporters/monitors: Joe D'Alesio provided a brief update on the installation of digital audio recording equipment and the status of the implementation of the recommendations from the Committee on Court Recording Monitors and Court Reporters.
 - C. Statutes regarding identification of sexual assault victims: This was in response to an inquiry at the February meeting from member Chris Powell as to what authority exists to use pseudonyms for sexual assault complainants. Connecticut statutes regarding identification of sexual assault victims were distributed to committee members, who then discussed reasons why and why not pseudonyms should be granted in sexual assault cases.

- IV. Camera Rules – Judge Gold first updated committee members on action the Rules Committee of the Superior Court has taken on recommendations from the Judicial-Media Committee regarding cameras in court. According to Judge Gold, the Rules Committee has amended the current rule regarding arraignments and also has recommended that the Pilot Program in the Hartford Judicial District be expanded statewide. A public hearing on the proposals from the Rules Committee is scheduled for May 31.

Judge Gold asked committee members whether they believe representatives of the committee should testify at the public hearing about the recommendations. He also outlined possible procedural changes that he, Mr. Albert, Judge Patrick Clifford and Tom Appleby thought could be suggested regarding arraignments. (Mr. Appleby and Judge Clifford were co-chairs of the Pilot Program Committee.)

Committee members unanimously voted that representatives of the Judicial-Media Committee should attend the public hearing and voice the committee's strong support of the recommendations. Those who will be present are: Judge Gold, Mr. Albert, Mr. Appleby, Judge Clifford, and Judge Robert Devlin (Chief Administrative Judge for Criminal Matters).

Mr. Appleby and Judge Devlin then presented their experiences with having cameras in the courtroom during the capital felony trial of Christopher DiMeo in the Fairfield Judicial District. Judge Devlin was the trial judge; Channel 12, of which Mr. Appleby is General Manager and News Director, was the pool TV camera. Mr. Appleby showed committee members images from the trial and spoke of the positive experience that the TV crew had with the judge and staff at the courthouse. Judge Devlin told the group that there had initially been substantial objection to having cameras at the trial, but that he thought it was a perfect trial to be televised because of the great interest in the case throughout greater Fairfield County. Judge Devlin added that the cameras quickly became a "non-event" in the courtroom and jurors just focused on the evidence.

- V. Discuss topic of next meeting: Judge Gold asked members to feel free to submit ideas for the next meeting, which is scheduled for Monday, Sept. 26, at 3 p.m. at WFSB.
- VI. Committee members voted to adjourn at approximately 4:30 p.m.