

Minutes
Committee on Expectations of the Public
Meeting of Co-chairs and Subcommittee Chairs
December 10, 2008

The Co-chairs and Subcommittee Chairs of the Committee on Expectations of the Public met at 225 Spring St., Wethersfield, CT in Room 204 on December 10, 2008.

In attendance: Hon. James Abrams (co-chair), Hon. Robert Beach (co-chair), Hon. James Bentivegna, Hon. Mark Gould, Atty. Stacey Manware, Hon. Robin Pavia, and Hon. Kenneth Shluger.

The meeting was called to order at 2:38 PM by Judge Abrams.

1. Review of subcommittee membership – Subcommittee chairs were provided a list of the members of each subcommittee. The subcommittee assignments were based on the preferences expressed by members of the committee at the full meeting on November 19, 2008. The five subcommittees are:
 - Subcommittee on Housing Matters
 - Subcommittee on Small Claims Matters
 - Subcommittee on Juvenile Matters
 - Subcommittee on Criminal/Motor Vehicle Matters
 - Subcommittee on Support Enforcement/Family Matters
2. Discussion of subcommittee charge and tasks – Judge Abrams and Judge Beach provided an overview of what the subcommittees are being asked to accomplish in the coming months. Those tasks include reviewing material that is currently available, determining what problems and questions should be addressed to assist and inform people coming into the courts, discussing ways to address problems and questions, and preparing materials (print, online, video, etc.) to assist people in the specific subcommittee area.

Discussion ensued as to ways to provide this information to people, including providing information on the back of the notice of a court date, in a video or podcast, or including it on an infraction ticket. Each subcommittee will address the issue of how to provide information, and the methods as well as the product produced by each subcommittee may vary, depending upon the population being served in each subject area. Subcommittee materials will also have to address areas where there are different procedures in different districts.

It was suggested that prior to the first meeting of the subcommittee, members visit a court where they have not been before as a way to get some sense of what it is like for a member of the public to walk into a courthouse. The subcommittee chairs will suggest this visit to the members of the subcommittees.

After discussion, it was also decided unanimously that the experiences that are common to all court appearances, such as security, should be reviewed by all subcommittees to ensure that no aspect of the process is missed. The collected information will then be compared and a common section may be drafted for use by all the subcommittees.

It is anticipated that each subcommittee will meet twice before the next meeting of the committee co-chairs and subcommittee chairs on February 10th. The goal is to have a firm idea of what the ultimate product will be by the middle of March.

The next meeting will be February 10, 2009.

Meeting adjourned at 3:50 PM.