



Access to Justice Board Meeting Minutes December 13, 2019, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm

Washington State Bar Association, 1325 4th Ave, #600, Seattle, WA 98101

Call: 1-866-577-9294; Access: 52140#

Present: Sal Mungia, Judge Laura Bradley, Esperanza Borboa, Hon. David Keenan, Michelle Lucas, Mirya Munoz-Roach, Hon. Frederick Corbit, Francis Adewale, Terry Price, and Lindy Laurence

WSBA Staff: Diana Singleton, Carolyn MacGregor

Guests: Caitlin Davis, Alex Doolittle, Will Livesly-O'Neill, Catherine Brown, Jim Bamberger, Jorge Barón, and César Torres

October Minutes: The minutes were approved without edits.

Chair's Report: Sal has asked that at least one Board member stay after meetings to be available to speak with guests about ideas for meeting agenda items. Sal thanked Alex Doolittle for serving as co-chair for the DSCo committee and acknowledged Merf Ehman as incoming co-chair. He also thanked Laura Bradley for agreeing to co-chair the Tech committee. He noted that the priorities-setting committee will be sending out a survey and requests that Alliance members please respond in a timely fashion.

NW Immigrant Rights Project Update: Jorge Barón reported on three items:

1. Public charge – The Trump Administration has been proposing changes to Public Charge policy that would cause immigrant families to fear accessing health care, nutrition, and housing programs. Multiple federal courts have blocked President Trump's Public Charge regulation from going into effect. . More information can be found at ProtectingImmigrantFamilies.org.
2. Fee waivers and fee increases on naturalization applications – the Trump Administration is trying to make it harder to obtain fee waivers. Earlier in the summer, the form was changed to do away with the option of means-tested benefit; now just income and financial hardship are qualifying criteria. This went into effect on Dec. 2nd. A California case blocked the proposal. The long-term proposal would increase fee for applying for a green card from \$1200 to \$2200. There is a proposed 83% increase to naturalization fee, with no option for fee waivers. The deadline for comment was extended to Dec. 30.
3. DACA – There is supposed to be a Supreme Court decision next spring. Some people are applying for early renewals in advance of decision.

Benefits Law Center: Alex Doolittle presented and showed short video (<https://youtu.be/a5Ov-XGxGGI>).

Alex shared that BLC started as a small program in 1997. BLC thinks carefully about clients' needs and is very malleable in meeting them. The center helps with any social security issue: paperwork, applications and appeals. Some folks are clients for up to 7 years! The approach is very holistic and relationship-centered—they refer to other organizations to build a wheel of support with client as hub. In 2006 the disabled homeless advocacy project was started; 2008-14 was a rocky time through recession and recovery.

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Justice Bus hatched in 2012; patterned after Seattle mobile city hall. Started in South King County and works in spaces where folks are already receiving social services. Received grant to pay for traveling attorney but not bus. Needed to build relationships with local organizations providing mental health services, shelter, and food. In 2018, they found an Access bus for \$2k and retrofit for \$50k. Every person in office connected with two organizations to educate about services—word of mouth is most effective. Launched in 2019, the Justice Bus is an expansion to brick and mortar space of service partners. BLC is matching work to State Plan goals and gathering data to share with partners on east coast (systems advocacy). May join with Tenant Law Center on bus to provide housing assistance. They also work with Fairfax hospital and public defenders with clients set for release.

Progress Report on 2017-2020 ATJ Board Priorities: Judge David Keenan leads the workgroup that is looking at past priorities and considering setting new priorities for 2020-2022 and/or modify existing ones. A proposal for new priorities is being delayed to accommodate outreach survey feedback. A survey will be sent out next week to Alliance leaders.

Committee and Liaison Updates:

WSBA Board of Governors: Judge Laura Bradley reported that there will be a special meeting on Monday to review anti-harassment and anti-retaliation policies. The BOG will also be reviewing policy on non-dissemination of regulatory info. The LLLT program dues will increase by \$29. A decision in 2015 to add three additional board members from the community was never acted on and there is a new proposal to do away with these spots; ATJ will submit comment on this matter.

Legal Aid Fundraisers and Communicators (LAFCO): Lindy Laurence reported that LAFCO will be meeting at WSBA next Thursday from 12-1.

AOC's Court User Workgroup for Limited Jurisdictions: Judge Laura Bradley reported on what the Court User Workgroup for Limited Jurisdictions is working on. They were going to go with developing something using the best of the breed but it's now looking like they may contract with Tyler Systems. They are hoping to determine how to get systems to talk to each other and plan to pilot the program in various courts in and around Pierce County.

AOC's Court User Workgroup for Superior Courts and JISC: Terry Price reported on the Superior Court's move to update to 2017 software which will likely cause some disruption. He reported that JISC will be hosting a farewell reception for Justice Fairhurst. Justice Madsen will replace Justice Fairhurst as the chair of JISC. A question was asked on the status of the Court's approval of the Updated Technology Principles. The Board has not yet heard. Jim Bamberger will be meeting with Justice Stephens and can ask her about the status when he meets with her.

Minority and Justice Commission: Esperanza Borboa reported that the Commission is supporting the proposed court rules to address ICE in courthouse. She shared that there will be a farewell reception on 12/18 for Justice Fairhurst.

Coalition working on the problem with ICE in the courthouse and the Equal Justice Coalition: Francis Adewale reported on the coalition having submitted draft rules and they are open for comment. He noted that the Board should discuss this further at their next meeting. Jim Bamberger noted that he understands that the WA AGO is suing the Administration on the courthouse access issue. There are also developing bills requiring monitoring that could be proposed this session.

Pro Bono Council: Mirya Munoz-Roach asked Catherine Brown to share updates): Catherine shared that the VLPs working on developing and delivering on plans for using the pro bono expansion grants. She shared they have submitted a proposed change to RPC 6.5 which the Board supported earlier; it's open for comment now. She also shared that some VLPs are organizing clinics around the state to offer legal services concerning legal financial obligations.

Equal Justice Coalition Update: Will Livesly-O'Neil shared that the Coalition is going through a transitional period. Kirsten Barron is the new chair and the chair-elect position is currently vacant. They are working on the 2021 budget development request, and a stakeholder meeting is scheduled for March 2020.

Funding Reports:

- **Federal:** César Torres shared that there is a continuing resolution with regard to the federal budget, but he anticipates that there will be a moderate increase in federal funding.
- **State:** Jim Bamberger with OCLA reported that the supplemental session starts on 1/13; no request was put in for civil legal aid. There was a request from the executive branch for funding for re-entry project which is unrelated to civil legal aid funding Jim reported that VOCA funding for the Sexual Violence Legal Services based at the YWCA has been pulled to start the Sexual Violence Law Project which will be housed at Legal Voice.
- **Legal Foundation of WA:** Caitlin Davis shared that it is currently grant season, and it has been a year of stability for the Alliance for Equal Justice. Most grantees received flat funding. \$500k was granted to the Alliance for tech support and a suite of services for operations. They are looking a salary parity for pro bono programs. \$75k was set aside for race equity grants. The Campaign for Equal Justice has reached \$1.8 million in fundraising. The Endowment for Equal Justice is trying to raise \$20 million by 2020 to fund a permanent account for civil legal aid. A fundraiser concert at the Triple Door brought in \$80k!

Other Updates: Sal reminded Board members to donate to the Campaign for Equal Justice this year; 100% participation is needed.

Jim Bamberger will be meeting with the Dept. of Children, Youth, and Family Services to expand quality and availability of legal services for children.

The meeting adjourned at 11:52.