



Washington State Bar Association

COUNCIL ON PUBLIC DEFENSE
APRIL 22, 2022, 8:30AM – 9:00AM VIRTUAL/VIDEOCONFERENCE
MINUTES

CPD voting members: Travis Stearns (Chair), Jason Schwarz (Vice-Chair), Rachel Cortez, Christie Hedman, Justice Sheryl Gordon McCloud, Paul Holland, Rebecca Stith, Abe Ritter, Larry Jefferson, Leandra Craft, Arian Norma, Anita Khandelwal

CPD Emeritus members (non-voting members): Ann Christian, Eileen Farley, Bob Boruchowitz

WSBA Staff: Bonnie Sterken

Guests: Sophia Byrd McSherry, Kevin Flannery, Christine Olson

Absent: Kathy Kyle, Judge Drew Henke, Jonathan Nomamiukor, Brenda Williams, Judge Patricia Fassett, Jason Bragg, Matt Heintz, Matt Anderson, Mohammad Hamoudi, Chris Swaby, Louis Frantz,

ABA Summit on Public Defense: Travis Stearns asked that folks attending the ABA Defender Summit to think about the learnings and how it can influence the work of the Council.

Minutes: The February minutes were approved with a correction to the attendance list.

Office of Public Defense Report: Larry Jefferson reported that he has been attending the ABA Public Defense Summit and sees parallels with the work of the Council's Standards Committee. He shared about the survey that has been sent to defenders by the Standards Committee. Larry shared that he went on a civil rights tour with members of the Legal Foundation of WA. They went to Atlanta, Montgomery, and Selma, and met with local folks who are still doing civil rights work. He shared about their efforts to improve voting rights efforts and parallels that he sees with public defenders who need to stake a stance advocating for their clients. He noted that the WA Supreme Court is going to have a symposium on reparations. Larry also reported that folks with OPD have participated in the ABA Summit and sees ways that Washington is leading. For example, a non-profit organization in Snohomish County is representing pregnant and post-partum women at risk of CPS involvement to secure services for them and avoid dependency filings.

Washington Defender Association Report: Christie Hedman announced that Ann Benson is retiring next month. They are welcoming two new employees with backgrounds in immigration law and public defense. They are going to spend time this next year visiting offices and building strong connections. They have kicked off the post-conviction project that is renamed the Redemption Project. This is a partnership with the Seattle Clemency Project. They are in the process of hiring a felony resource attorney. They are also hiring a Community Outreach Specialist, particularly looking for folks who have been incarcerated. The Defender Conference is next week, and the American Equity Group is the lead speaker along with Justice Montoya Lewis. They have also been working on amicus cases.

Rules Comments: Sophia Byrd McSherry shared about efforts on proposed General Rule 42. The CPD developed this proposal on the Independence of Public Defense. The rule specifically addresses court management issues. It is now out for comment and there are two comments published on the Court website. One is from the Court Administrators Administration that questions the applicability of some of the rule. OPD and WDA are working on a comment letter in support of the rule proposal noting that it should apply to all case types. Sophia encouraged others to submit comments and Jason Schwarz offered additional insights encouraging folks to submit their comments in support of the rule. The Council had a discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 8:57am