

FEDERAL BENCH/BAR COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY, APRIL 28, 2008 at 4:00 p.m.
JURY ASSEMBLY ROOM

MINUTES

I. Spring '08 CLE

George Lieberman announced that recent CLE programs on certification to the Rhode Island Supreme Court, removal and remand practice and choosing between Superior and Federal Court were all well received.

Future CLE programs may address:

- 1) differences between state and federal rules of evidence dealing with experts; and
- 2) differences between state and federal jury voir dire processes.

II. Annual Meeting Program

Panel discussion on federal court practice tips with Judges Lisi and Smith and Magistrate Judges Martin and Almond – June 13th from 2-4 p.m.

III. High School Outreach

Steve Richards gave a status report on the High School Outreach program. The program has more than doubled in size. Demand has been so high that schools have been turned away. The program has been trying to get state court judges involved. The committee has conducted events at well over a dozen high schools with 12-30 students per event. Judge Almond was recognized for his involvement.

IV. Local Rules Review Committee

Jeffrey Schreck reported on the Local Rules Review Committee. He reported that 2008 is an “off-year” in terms of rules amendments. David DiMarzio noted that he had not received any comments on the recent amendments, but suggested that the Court would be forwarding suggestions. The current emphasis of the rules committee is on publicizing recent rules amendments and highlighting the most significant of the recent changes.

V. 2008 District Conference

Judge Lisi reported that the committee has identified the speakers. The conference is approved for a full-day of CLE credit.

VI. Membership Development

Brooks Magratten reported on efforts to increase membership and suggested that committee members bring associates to future meetings.

VII. Courthouse Centennial Celebration

Judge Lisi and Brooks Magratten both commented on how well the January, February and April symposia of the Centennial Celebration have gone. The next event will be a naturalization ceremony on June 16th. No other events are planned over the summer. The Centennial Celebration will resume October 8th with an appearance by the First Circuit Court of Appeals and will conclude on November 21st with the final gala.

VIII. University Symposia

Brooks Magratten stated that the committee has been in touch with several local colleges interested in participating in university symposia for next year.

IX. Fact Finding Commission re: declining federal filings

Anthony Muri noted that there has been a slight upswing in federal filings for the District of Rhode Island since his group began studying the issue. The commission is determining whether they have enough information to begin drafting findings or if they need to study the issue further.

X. Attorney Best Practices Project

Brooks Magratten stated that the goal of producing a best practices volume detailing the preferences of the judges in the district court would not likely be addressed until next year.

XI. Projects for '08-09

Brooks Magratten sought ideas for next year.

XII. Miscellaneous

David DiMarzio announced that the federal court would be changing the way that published transcripts would be handled re: PACER. The changes will take effect on May 15th. A more extensive notice will be sent out before changes take effect.