

RHODE ISLAND BAR ASSOCIATION

Federal Bench/Bar Committee Meeting

Wednesday, October 23, 2013 at 4:00 p.m.

Jury Assembly Room

Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome

Pat Rocha welcomed the members of the Committee to the Fall meeting of the Federal Bench/Bar Committee. The members introduced themselves and Pat Rocha thanked Chief Judge Lisi for service as Chief and her work with the Committee, including all her efforts in making the Court accessible in a very positive manner to the public, students, parties and practitioners. On behalf of the Committee, Pat thanked Chief Judge Lisi for all her efforts and wished her well in her continued tenure as an active Judge of the Court. Finally, Pat stated that the Committee looks forward to working with Judge Smith in his new tenure as Chief Judge.

II. 2013 District Conference Feedback

Steve Richard reported that the 2013 District Conference was a success, enjoyed by lawyers and judges alike, noting that Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's presentation was well attended and included a very interesting fireside chat between Justice O'Connor and Judge Selya. Steve thanked everyone who worked on the District Conference Committee to ensure a successful event.

III. Local Rules

Chief Judge Lisi reported that amendments to the Local Rules are under consideration by the Court and she expected an order to issue regarding the amendments this Fall.

IV. Jury Instruction Project

Mike Levin reported that he had hoped there would be a demonstration of the Jury Instruction Project on the Court's website, but due to the government shut-down, the necessary resources were not available to have the presentation take place. Mike said he hopes that the presentation would occur at the Committee's meeting in January. Mike reported that the subcommittee has finalized the Civil Jury Instructions and they are being uploaded to the Court's website. It is hoped that both the Civil and Criminal Jury Instructions will be fully operational in the near term.

V. University Symposium

Howard Merten reported that the University Symposium Committee will be getting together and they have tentatively identified URI as the next location for a Spring Symposium. They are waiting to hear back from Lou Saccoccia regarding the availability of URI resources.

VI. Operations Update

Frank Perry reported his work to have *pro hac vice* motions filed electronically with the use of pay.gov, as well as the electronic filing of Civil Complaints. Frank hopes that these electronic filings will become operational in the near term. Frank also reported that effective December 1, there has been a change in the filing fees.

VII. 2014 FBA Annual Meeting

Scott Kilpatrick reported that Rhode Island is hosting the FBA Annual Meeting to be held in September, 2014 and that committees are being formed to address programs, as well as finances. Committee members who are interested in serving on the committee, should contact Scott directly. The Annual Meeting will be a three-day conference after Labor Day and it is anticipated that 350-400 people will attend. This is a terrific opportunity for the FBA to showcase Rhode Island and our courts.

VIII. Case Filing Statistics/Trends

David DiMarzio reported on the trends in civil and criminal case filings, as more fully set forth on the attached profile memorandum.

IX. Court Budget/Sequestration Update

Chief Judge Lisi and David DiMarzio reported on the court budget and sequestration. Chief Judge Lisi reported that the Public Defender's Office is fully funded; however, other court resources are monitoring on a daily basis the possible ramifications of sequestration. Chief Judge Lisi noted that it is a difficult time for court employees who are concerned with any impact on their positions, but is hopeful that the issues will be resolved and there will not be significant adverse impact.

X. Other Business

It was reported that the FBA was having a reception on Friday, December 13 at the Art Club to honor Chief Judge Lisi for her tenure as Chief Judge and congratulate Judge Smith as he begins his tenure as Chief of the Court.

Finally, Pat Rocha invited Committee members to suggest any additional agenda items for the next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia K. Rocha
Chair

Attachment

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