

**LOUISIANA COURT ADMINISTRATOR'S ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL FALL BUSINESS MEETING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2008
THE RITZ-CARLTON HOTEL
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
12:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

The following members were present:

Scott Griffith, President
Donna Carter, Vice President
Tina LeMaire, Secretary
Bobby Wilson, Treasurer

Sandra Bishop
Jo Bruce
Judge Eugene Bryson, retired
Ronnie Bullion
Meg Casler
Chip Coulter
Ted Cox
Jackie Cristina
Christine Crow
Rose Marie DiVincenti
Randy Fontenot
Tony Gagliano
Cindy Gay
Doug Holloway
Marcia Johnson
Scott Kadar
Rob Kazik
Hope LaFleur
Eve Laurent
Jessie LeBlanc
Tim Leger

Kerry Lentini
Rebecca Liles
Joan Luck
Lauren McHugh
C. Kelly McNeely
Lynn Maloy
Michael O'Brien
Dawn Palermo
Bea Parisi
Anna Paxton
Diana Pratt-Wyatt
Guy Recotta, Jr.
Terrence Sims
Carla Smith
Suzanne Stinson
Adrienne Stroble
Gabrielle Thomas
Bobby Wilson
Wanda Witherington

Guests:

Judge Ross Foote, retired
Monique Spruill, Louisiana Supreme Court, CMIS Division
Donna Brady, Louisiana Supreme Court

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 12:10 p.m. by Scott Griffith, President.

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Pledge of Allegiance: Ted Cox led the members in The Pledge of Allegiance.

Invocation: Scott Kadar led the group in prayer.

Approval of the Spring 2008 Meeting Minutes: Tim Leger moved to adopt the minutes of the Spring 2008 Business Meeting. Motion was seconded by Carla Smith. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Bobby Wilson reported to the group a fund balance of \$11,318.15. After all expenses and deposits, balance as of October 3, 2008, is \$11,955.02. Anticipated LCAA luncheon costs and reimbursement to Judicial College should result in estimated anticipated balance of \$9,930.02. Bobby noted that several members had yet to pay their dues, and urged all to be timely with payment of dues to ensure adequate funds to cover expenses. Motion to accept Treasurer's report made by Adrienne Stroble, seconded by Bea Parisi. Motion passed.

Membership Committee Report: Bea Parisi reported five new members, bringing total membership to 96.

Beth Freeman, Bastrop City Court
Lauren McHugh, Louisiana Supreme Court
Kerry Lentini, Louisiana Supreme Court (present)
Randy Fontenot, Eunice City Court (present)
Marcia Johnson, Orleans Parish Court (present)

President Scott Griffith asked that all attending introduce themselves. Following the introductions, he led the group in thanking Tony Gagliano for his years of public service and contributions to LCAA. Tony will be retiring at the end of the year.

Regarding the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) project, Tony and Kerry Lentini asked that everyone complete a supplemental survey, which focuses particularly on what languages and types of cases require interpreters in our courts. The survey could be used to help seek funding for interpreter services. It was mentioned that a recent law now mandates interpreters be made available in both civil and criminal cases.

By-Laws Committee Report: Scott Griffith talked about the proposal to change the bylaws to have officers serve for two-year terms, as opposed to the current one-year term. The Committee will draft the amended bylaws for consideration and vote by the membership.

Continuing Education Committee Report: Adrienne Stroble continues to work with representatives from LSU to establish a continuing education program, perhaps with certification attached to it. She is working with the Chair of the Public Administration Dept. at LSU and with a representative from the LSU System President's office. Funding for their proposed Center for Government Excellence did not come through. LSU would like to use their work with us as a springboard to attempt funding for the Center again next year. Adrienne is trying to set up another meeting with the LSU representatives and would like to get some of our members involved in developing the curriculum. Their goal will be to try to get a program together for the Spring Conference in Lafayette.

LCAA Workshop Report: The 2009 Workshop will be held at Carter Plantation on February 11, 12, and 13. The tentative agenda includes Pro Se Litigation, Legislative Updates, Succession Planning, and NACM's CourTools. All were encouraged to attend.

Technology Committee Report: Tim Leger has agreed to work with the CMIS staff to bring technological improvements to LCAA members. Currently being considered is Sharepoint, a Microsoft application that creates an interactive website. Tim noted that member information (such as email addresses, phone numbers, etc.) can be uploaded, and then members can logon to Sharepoint and link the information to their personal calendars. Mass emails, blogs, articles, new legislation and ideas are examples of things that could be shared through the website. A logon and password is needed to gain access. In question is if or how much the members would make use of the Sharepoint project. Anyone wishing to serve on this committee should contact Tim directly.

Code of Conduct Committee Report: Dawn Palermo reported that the Committee met this morning to review and edit the existing LCAA Code of Conduct, using the NACM Code of Conduct as a guide. As not all Committee members were able to attend the morning meeting, the amended version will be forwarded to all Committee members for review and comment, and the approved version will be sent to President Griffith for distribution to members and posting on the website.

Update on New Judges Training Program: Judge Ross Foote addressed the group regarding a new judge training session scheduled for November 12. Judge Foote said that in this new program Administrators will play an integral part. The program will try to shift the focus of judges to be public servants working in a team setting. The November 12 meeting will be mandatory for all new judges. Rather than judicial training, focus will be on organization, team work, and what the role of the Court Administrator is with the Judge. He asked that all Administrators accompany their new judge, and also bring any new members of the judge's staff. It has not yet been determined if Supreme Court can also pick up expenses of the Administrators for attending this program. Judge Foote acknowledged the goal of elevating the role of Administrators in the judicial system on a local and state level. Hope LaFleur, Jo Bruce, and Suzanne Stinson are members of the committee that created this year's training program. Any ideas for new judge training should be directed to these committee members.

NACM Report: Scott Griffith announced that Carla Smith is now on the NACM Board. Carla encouraged all present to join NACM for the many benefits membership can provide. Suzanne Stinson is President-Elect of NACM, and will be inducted at the Boston conference, which will be held July 7-12, 2009. The mid-year conference will be in Portland, OR; theme for that conference is “Purposes and Responsibilities of the Courts.” Carla also mentioned that the NACM publications “Court Manager” and “Court Communique” will now be digitized. Next year’s NACM conference will be held in New Orleans on July 20-24, 2010. Suzanne Stinson encouraged all to attend and volunteer to help put on and run this conference. All volunteers will receive a discounted registration fee (early bird registration minus \$50). Contact Carla Smith or Suzanne Stinson to enlist as a volunteer. Scott noted Suzanne Stinson is also on the board of NCSC.

National Center for State Courts Report: Suzanne Stinson said the NCSC website (www.ncsconline.org) is a valuable resource for court topics and acts as a clearinghouse for lots of resources across the nation. She asked the members to go to the website and provide feedback on their navigation of the site.

Continuity of Operations Planning: Addressing the issue of hurricane recovery, Chip Coulter asked for a show of hands to see how many members were still feeling the effects of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike. Those members were asked to sign a sheet with their contact information so that Chip could talk with each of them individually about their present needs. The fact that Hurricane Ike affected the entire state, causing Supreme Court to lose \$100,000 of equipment in Winnsboro, emphasizes the need for a backup site outside of the state.

Chip presented a handout for the LDJA Security Project. NCSC is working with the Louisiana District Judges Assn. (LDJA) to identify security needs and make recommendations for improving security in district courts throughout the state. Five District Courts participated in Phase One – 4th JDC (Monroe); 10th JDC (Natchitoches); 14th JDC (Lake Charles); 21st JDC (Amite); and 24th JDC (Gretna). Chip asked that all results of the report be kept confidential. Phase Two of the project is an online security survey. An email with a link to the survey will be sent to Chief Judges, Court Administrators, and Clerks of Court in all district courts later this week. The survey should be completed by October 17.

The importance of generators from a security perspective was discussed. It was noted that not all courts had generators large enough to meet their needs in a power outage. Chip suggested that Homeland Security may be a possible source of funding to purchase generators when viewed as important to secure continued operations.

Judge Jerome Barbera, III, heads the Security Committee; Judge Madeline Landrieu heads the Disaster Recovery Committee.

Continuity of Operations Planning (continued): Jo Bruce and Suzanne Stinson are working with Judge Landrieu on disaster recovery. Jo noted that her disaster plan “worked like a charm” for Hurricane Gustav when Baton Rouge was hit hard. She acknowledged that a problem most courts were still dealing with was offsite backup of data. With the results of their survey, West hopes to be able to provide full offsite data storage to the Courts at affordable rates. The results may also be used to get additional funding to aid all courts with offsite storage. Any questions concerning this project should be directed to Jo.

Several Administrators shared stories of their hurricane experience. Chris Crow (1st Circuit) was able to continue phone service through the 2nd Circuit’s phone system using crisis services through AT&T. For continued operations, she has a small laptop, wireless printer, wireless scanner, and satellite card. Even without electricity she can charge her equipment using her car battery and never lost internet connection while her courthouse was down for a week. Tina LeMaire discussed problem she had determining who actually had ultimate authority to shutdown the courthouse. Scenarios varied across the state – in some Police Jury or Parish President had authority to close (as owners of the building); some had Judge issue an order to close the building; some had Judge issue order to close only Court. Jo Bruce recommended this be addressed in individual disaster plans in advance of need. Jo also offered assistance to anyone interested in setting up an 800 number.

CMIS Report: Monique Spruill reported for Chris Andrieu. Monique talked about the Louisiana Court Connection (LCC), a case management system designed for city courts. The pilot sites for this program are City Courts of Baton Rouge, Thibodaux, Lake Charles, and Lafayette. LCC will enable local justice users (clerks, judges, prosecutors, etc.) to manage city court cases more effectively and efficiently. Automation of court-related functions such as indexing, random allotment, tracking of costs and fines, etc., improve processing of city court cases. Funding for operations could come from subscription fees charged for access and downloads. Anyone with suggestions regarding this new system were encouraged to contact Monique at 504-310-2564 or m.spruill@lajao.org.

Nominating Committee Report: Carla Smith recommended Lynn Maloy, Baton Rouge City Court, for the position of Treasurer. Bobby Wilson will become Secretary. Tina LeMaire will become Vice-President. Donna Carter will become President. Suzanne Stinson moved, seconded by Tim Leger, to accept the nominations by acclamation.

Special Presentations

A. Louisiana Protective Order Registry (LPOR) Update

–Patsy Taylor, LPOR Director

–Ramona Harris, LPOR Research Associate

Attendees received a handout entitled *Guide to Louisiana Protective Order Registry*, containing a quick reference sheet for domestic violence statutes, required form information, and checklist of mistakes commonly made when using LPOR forms. Also included was contact information for staff and a product order form for manuals and software. Presenters stressed the importance of making judges aware of the registry and the forms used for reporting.

B. Louisiana Code of Governmental Ethics

–Courtney Jackson, JD, Louisiana Board of Ethics

Presenter touched on several sections of the Ethics Code:

42:1113A -- Prohibited transactions

42:1115 – Gifts (noted changes effective 8/15/08 regarding complimentary admissions)

42:1115.1 – \$50 limit on food/drink at a single event

42:1111 – Prohibited income

42:1119 – Nepotism

42:1121 – Past employment

Ethics Quarterly Newsletter is available without cost. It was noted that advice given by staff is not binding upon the Board. All requests must be submitted in writing to the Advisory Board. Contact the Board of Ethics at www.ethics.state.la.us; (225)763-8777 or 800-842-6630.

At this point in the meeting, Donna Carter represented a plaque to Scott Griffith in recognition of his service as LCAA President.

C. Solving Workplace Conflict

–Anna Paxton, Louisiana Supreme Court

–Yolanda Bouchand, Louisiana Supreme Court

Presenter gave the following steps for conflict resolution:

1. Uncover the conflict; identify that there is a problem
2. Allow the person to speak and release emotion
3. Listen objectively and without reaction
4. Maintain a positive attitude
5. Support opinions and feelings with facts and behaviors

Conflict can be perceived as positive or negative, depending on how it is handled. Conflict can offer the opportunity to make work conditions better. Emotion must be eliminated in order to identify the problem and reach a proper solution.

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Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made by Bea Parisi. Seconded by Rose Marie DiVincenti. Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by : Tina LeMaire
Secretary

Date: March 19, 2009