

Minutes of the WDMO Federal Practice Committee  
October 15, 2009

Present in person: Brian Gaddy, Willie Epps, Denise Henning, Julia Kitsmiller, Jeff Ray, Todd Bartels, Aldo Dominguez, Chris Harlan, Rodney Nichols

Present by phone: Marsha Fischer, Michael Berry

The Federal Practice Committee for the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri (the "Committee") convened at noon on October 15, 2009 for its annual luncheon with the WDMO judges. During the luncheon, Denise Henning and Ann Thompson reviewed the Community Outreach slide show for the group, and Judge Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr. asked the other judges to participate. As the outgoing Chair, Ms. Henning also reviewed the Committee's activities over the past year, including: a review and comments to the WDMO Local Rules, looking at the District Scheduling Orders for points of uniformity, and work on preparing and editing the outreach presentation.

The Committee's business meeting after the luncheon as Chairman Brian Gaddy welcomed new member Julia Kitsmiller.

There was consensus among Committee members to keep having dial-in available to any members unable to attend in person.

The first item of business was the election of the Committee Chair for 2011 (the "Chair-Elect"). Jeff Ray moved that Willie Epps be so elected, and Denise Henning seconded the motion which was unanimously carried.

The second item of business was further discussion of the Community Outreach presentation on Federal Courts and how to implement the project. Todd Bartels agreed to be in charge of efforts to assemble a list of potential audience groups. Mr. Bartels also indicated that he would have his firm's marketing experts revise and clean-up the presentation. The Committee discussed using the presentation at divisional locations, and Aldo Dominguez reminded members that CLE would be available for presenter preparation time and that we should obtain CLE credit for any lawyers who might attend.

The Committee further discussed how to proceed with a "trial run" of the presentation. Brian Gaddy and Denise Henning agreed to present the program for the first time to test it and revised accordingly. Marsha Fischer suggested that each division setting a goal for the number of times to present in the coming year. Further discussion ensued.

Next, the Committee moved briefly to discuss its own meeting schedule. There was discussion about four in-person meetings with monthly or more frequent phone meetings at 4pm in the afternoon in between.

Returning to the Community Outreach topic, Julia Kitsmiller suggested getting the Law Clerk's Society involved as potential speakers, and she agreed to recruit volunteers from that group. She also advised that she has seen great turnouts at programs hosted by the Mid-Continent Public Library, and she suggested contacting the Library Director at the Plaza Library as well to consider having a program at that venue.

Committee members were each asked to send Todd Bartels two suggestions of community groups (focusing for now on adult audiences rather than students) who would be good audiences, and discussion on this topic concluded.

For the next item of business, Mr. Gaddy asked for volunteers to review the new time computation amendments to the Federal Rules and to consider related Local Rule changes. Jeff Ray, Julia Kitsmiller and Chris Harlan agreed to work on the project.

Similarly, Mr. Gaddy requested volunteers to compare the different Scheduling Orders in use district-wide to advise preliminarily on how different they are and what would be the best approach for listing common features and developing a standard or more standard form. Willie Epps, Michael Berry and Brian Gaddy agreed to conduct this research.

The meeting adjourned at 1:20pm after a brief discussion about the November reception honoring Judge Knox. Several members plan to attend on behalf of the committee.