



ARKANSAS ACCESS TO JUSTICE
REPRESENTING HOPE

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Arkansas Access to Justice Commission Meeting
February 17, 2023 via Zoom

Commission Members: Mark Mayfield – Chair, Judge Carlton Jones – Secretary, Rachael Borné, Prof. Kelly Browe Olson, Rep. Andrew Collins, Sharnae Diggs, Kendall Lewellen, Benetick Maddison, Skye Martin, Prof. Tiffany Murphy, Milo Mumgaard, Dequeshia Prude-Wheeler, Lee Richardson, and Judge Adam Weeks

Unavailable: Judge Kim Bridgforth – Vice Chair, Cliff McKinney, Dr. Chadwick Rodgers, Sen. James Sturch, Prof. Tim Tarvin, and Justice Robin F. Wynne

Guests: Sara Gosman (Director of Public Service & Pro Bono Program at University of Arkansas School of Law)

Staff: Jordan Bates-Rogers, Edith Chavez de Oseguera, Tameka Parker, Andrea Brady

Welcome and Introductions – Mr. Mayfield

- Mr. Mayfield called the meeting to order and asked newly appointed Commission member Mr. Maddison to briefly introduce himself. Mr. Mayfield also asked Ms. Chavez to introduce herself as she is filling in for Ms. Brenneman in the Program Coordinator position while Ms. Brenneman is deployed.
- Mr. Bates-Rogers introduced the Arkansas Access to Justice Extern, Ms. Brady, and detailed her project to conduct a fifty state survey of summons forms and redevelop Arkansas's summons form. Ms. Brady provided additional personal background.
- Mr. Mayfield asked Ms. Gosman and Mr. Mumgaard to introduce themselves.

Business Items

- A quorum was present for the meeting.
- **Approval of September 2022 Minutes** – Mr. Mayfield asked for a motion to approve the September 2022 minutes. Ms. Murphy made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Ms. Lewellen seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion passed.
- Mr. Mayfield encouraged attendance to in-person meetings, specifically the Joint Board Retreat.



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- **Changes to Operating Rules** – Mr. Bates-Rogers proposed amendments to the Commission bylaws, as noted: (1) Changes to reflect the updated staffing structure of the Commission and the support role our staff play for the Foundation and (2) A change is also included to change the timing of the election of officers. This will reduce the administrative burden on staff by allowing the Foundation and Commission elections cycles to mirror each other.
- **Motion** – Mr. Mayfield asked for a motion to approve the amendments to the bylaws as written. Ms. Murphy motioned to approve the amendments to the bylaws as written. Ms. Borné seconded. With no further discussion, the motion passed.
- **Creation of 20th Anniversary Planning Committee** – Mr. Mayfield opened this topic for discussion and asked if the Arkansas Access to Justice Foundation should be invited to participate in the planning of the 20th anniversary celebration. Ms. Martin voiced support for Foundation participation. Ms. Lewellen pointed out that if fundraising will be a part of the celebration efforts, the Foundation should be involved.
- Mr. Mayfield suggested that volunteers to serve on the planning committee should reach out to Mr. Bates-Rogers via email.

Executive Director's Report – Mr. Bates-Rogers

- **Statewide Pro Bono Portal Update** – Mr. Bates-Rogers reported the Pro Bono Portal website is live and further marketing would align with the 20th anniversary celebration marketing.
- **Courthouse Kiosk Grant** – Mr. Bates-Rogers reported that Administrative Office of the Courts funding came through in the form of a grant to place public access kiosks in courthouses across the state. Mr. Bates-Rogers also reported that Arkansas Access to Justice was in possession of the kiosk equipment and was working on the software component of the project before beginning installation in pilot counties. Mr. Bates-Rogers shared the kiosk website and answered general questions. Mr. Mayfield encouraged commissioners to support and encourage the project.

Project Reports – Ms. Chavez de Oseguera

- **CLEs** - Ms. Chavez De Oseguera reported on two successful CLEs, Record Sealing and Estate Planning, attended by 252 and 266 people respectively.
- **Language Access Survey** - Ms. Chavez De Oseguera reported on seeking feedback from attorneys, judges, court personnel, and the general public to find out the language access needs of the public to improve Arkansas' Justice Index score. Distribution of the surveys was already in progress.



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- **Unlawful Detainer Forms** – Eight judges agreed to provide feedback on these forms. Ms. Chavez De Oseguera reported coordinating to get the forms presented to Judicial Council for approval.
- **Upcoming CLEs** – March 17, 2023 – Evictions, presented by Kendall Lewellen (CALs)
- **Free Legal Answers** – 2022 Stats:
 - 688 clients helped
 - 34 new volunteer attorneys
 - 21 FLA virtual clinics
 - 84% of users were matched with an attorney
- Ms. Chavez De Oseguera noted that top categories for FLA questions were: family law, other, constitutional law/civil litigation, housing, and work/unemployment.
- **Partner Organization Updates** – Mr. Mumgaard and Mr. Richardson
- **Center for Arkansas Legal Services** – Mr. Mumgaard reported that he was prioritizing getting to know the CALs staff and their work, and diving into the 2023 budget to build upward for a strong 2024. CALs approved a \$5,000,000 budget for 2023 and reorganized management structure. In the coming year, CALs will complete a new needs assessment and expand services to underserved areas, as well as begin a new three-year strategic plan. A new senior administrative position will also be added. Mr. Mumgaard reported over 8,000 cases closed over the past year.
- **Legal Aid of Arkansas** – Mr. Richardson spoke about Super Saturday events in West Helena and Blytheville and mentioned additional volunteers could be used. He also reported that Legal Aid was fully staffed. Mr. Richardson noted that Legal Aid was expecting an influx of clients due to Medicaid and work requirement issues.

Language Access Exercise – Ms. Bates-Rogers

- Mr. Bates-Rogers introduced the Language Access exercise and asked participants to review the provided prompts and think of and prioritize court forms that needed to be translated in Arkansas. He also asked participants to complete the Language Access Survey before separating participants into breakout rooms. After breakout rooms, the participants regrouped and discussed.

Next Meeting Date – May 18-19, 2023, Joint Board Retreat in Fayetteville, AR

Meeting Adjournment – Mr. Mayfield asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Murphy motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Diggs seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion passed.