

Community Relations Committee

Judicial Conference of Indiana

February 3, 2023

Meeting Minutes

The Community Relations Committee met on February 3, 2023, by video conference. The meeting was chaired by Judge Maria Granger.

- 1. Members present.** John Broden, Stephanie Crawford, Aleksandra Dimitrijevic, Cheryl Rivera, Austin Shadle, Lori Schein, Stephanie Steele, Doug Stephens, and Maria Granger, chair.
- 2. Staff Present.** Jenny Bauer provided staff assistance.
- 3. Introduction of new members.** Maria Granger introduced the newly appointed members and welcomed them to the Committee: Aleksandra Dimitrijevic from Lake Superior Court, Stephanie Crawford from Marion Circuit Court, and Doug Stephens from Marion County Small Claims Court.
- 4. Approval of Minutes.** John Broden made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 2022 meeting and Doug Stephens seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- 5. Promoting Confidence in the Judiciary.** The Committee discussed items related to promoting confidence in the judiciary. Maria Granger reported that she worked on the Equity and Access Committee last year, which included attending a seminar in November on “The Anti-Racist Courtroom”. The seminar is a 4-day course offered by the National Judicial College on understanding how to identify racial bias in courts and learning actionable steps to address and reduce bias. She recommended the book authored by faculty member Dr. Robert Livingston—“The Conversation”, which provides a tool to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Jenny Bauer reported that the Conference of State Court Administrators recently published a policy paper titled “Courting Public Trust and Confidence: Effective Communication in the Digital Age” on how courts can build public trust and confidence through timely, accurate, and understandable communication. The paper makes several recommendations that include expanding transparency,

increasing social media presence, publishing summaries of court decisions directed to a general public audience, and continued civics education activities. Ms. Bauer highlighted that the paper mentions Indiana's broadcasting pilot as an example of making court proceedings more transparent and accessible. The committee discussed that judges could benefit from training on how to develop a social media presence, create public service announcements, and respond to public criticism within the framework of the Code of Judicial Conduct. The committee also discussed coming up with stock social media messages and updating previous PSA scripts.

- 6. Broadcast Pilot.** Jenny Bauer reported the Supreme Court reviewed the staff's final report from the broadcast pilot and the proposed amendment to CJC Rule 2.17 in early September. The proposed amendment is still under consideration by the Court.
- 7. Constitution Day.** Jenny Bauer reported that the Office of Communication, Education, and Outreach would like to push for more participation in Constitution Day this year. OCEO plans to announce Constitution Day 2023 in April and encouraged judicial officers to reach out to schools before the end of the academic year. The committee discussed putting together a list of schools that have participated in the past and encouraging more participation in the Judges Speakers Bureau (possibly with a QR code to link to the JSB website).
- 8. Other business.** Sarah Kidwell reminded committee members that the Court signed an order authorizing courtroom media coverage of adoptions year-round, in addition to the official National Adoption Day in November.
- 9. Next meeting date.** The next meeting date is scheduled for May 5.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny Bauer
Staff Attorney
Indiana Office of Court Services

Community Relations Committee

Judicial Conference of Indiana

May 5, 2023

Meeting Minutes

The Community Relations Committee met on May 5, 2023, by video conference. The meeting was chaired by Judge Maria Granger.

- 1. Members present.** John Broden, Stephanie Crawford, Chadwick Hill, Austin Shadle, Stephanie Steele, and Maria Granger, chair.
- 2. Staff Present.** Jenny Bauer, Sarah Kidwell, and David Kuhnz provided staff assistance.
- 3. Approval of Minutes.** The Committee approved the February 2023 minutes by consent.
- 4. Cameras in Court.** The Committee discussed the amendment to CJC Rule 2.17 that went into effect on May 1 allowing media organizations to request permission to broadcast court proceedings. Judge Granger reported that media requested permission to film a criminal defendant walking into the courtroom. She stated that the Floyd County judges met with local media before the May 1 start date to discuss expectations and technical requirements. Judge Broden reported that St. Joseph County's policy is posted on the court's website and includes a request form. David Kuhnz reported that the Office of Communication, Education, and Outreach worked with local media and Marion County judges to help with transition to the new policy and participated in a panel on best practices hosted by the Indiana chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists. He stated that OCEO is also working on a best practices toolkit.
- 5. Promoting Confidence in the Judiciary.** The Committee reviewed scripts for public service announcements drafted several years ago and discussed promoting the PSA's to judges as a way to promote confidence in the judiciary. The Committee also discussed possible ways that judges could create a PSA, including partnering with a local college media department and offering a "recording booth" at a judicial conference.

- 6. Constitution Day.** Sarah Kidwell reported that the Office of Communication, Education, and Outreach announced Constitution Day 2023 in a recent weekly bulletin and encouraged judicial officers to reach out to schools before the end of the academic year. She also reported that registration for the Court's press release will be in August. The Committee members discussed personally contacting judges to encourage more participation and suggested including photos from previous years with the registration message.
- 7. IJA Awards.** Jenny Bauer reported that IJA president Darrin Dolehanty reached out to her recently to ask about the timeline for the 2023 IJA community relations awards. She also reported that she and Sarah Kidwell developed the following timeline for the nomination process: July 12 announcement in weekly bulletin; August 2 reminder in weekly bulletin; August 4 deadline for nominations; August 11 committee meeting to select recipients.
- 8. Other business.** Jenny Bauer reported that Judge Broden will finish his six-year term on the committee in July. The committee members thanked him for his service to the committee.
- 9. Next meeting date.** The next meeting date is scheduled for August 11.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny Bauer
Staff Attorney
Indiana Office of Court Services

Community Relations Committee

Judicial Conference of Indiana

August 11, 2023

Meeting Minutes

The Community Relations Committee met on August 11, 2023, by video conference. The meeting was chaired by Judge Maria Granger.

- 1. Members present.** Murielle Bright, Judi Calhoun, Stephanie Crawford, Aleksandra Dimitrijevic, Chadwick Hill, Michael Morrissey, Jason Mount, Bill Nelson, Sean Persin, Austin Shadle, Stephanie Steele, Douglas Stephens, and Maria Granger, chair.
- 2. Staff Present.** Jenny Bauer, Sarah Kidwell, and David Kuhnz provided staff assistance.
- 3. Approval of Minutes.** The Committee approved the May 2023 minutes by consent.
- 4. IJA Awards.** Jenny Bauer reported that the Committee received four judge nominations (Allen Superior Court, Dave Dreyer, Kim Dowling, and Sean Persin) and two journalist nominations (Indiana Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists and Vic Ryckaert-WRTV). Judge Persin asked that his nomination not be considered to avoid an appearance of impropriety. The Committee discussed the nominations and selected Indiana Pro Chapter of SPJ for the journalist award and Kim Dowling for the judge award. Ms. Bauer will notify the award recipients and invite them to the IJA luncheon on September 14.
- 5. Feedback on Cameras in Court Best Practices Guide.** Dave Kuhnz highlighted that the Office of Judicial Administration put together the draft best practices guide on Code of Judicial Conduct Rule 2.17 which allows media cameras in court. He requested that committee members send specific feedback to staff before the end of August. Mr. Kuhnz reported that OJA staff will present a session on cameras in court at the Annual Meeting of the Judicial Conference in September and expects the guide to be distributed after the conference. The Committee discussed the draft document and commented that it covers the right things. The Committee also discussed pool coverage by media outlets, requests

from movie production companies, and third-party distribution of courtroom media coverage.

- 6. Constitution Day.** Sarah Kidwell reported that registration for Constitution Day is now open and closes on August 18. She explained that judges who register will be included in OCEO's press release about participating judges and schools. Staff will send a reminder to Committee members about registration.
- 7. Adoption Day.** Sarah Kidwell reported that Adoption Day is officially on November 18 and judges are encouraged to celebrate any time during the month of November. OCEO will send out details in a future weekly message.
- 8. Other business.** The Committee also discussed the following items:
 - The updated Judges Speakers Bureau list is posted on the committee website. Jenny Bauer will send out the link.
 - Magistrate Crawford volunteered to assist with drafting new public service announcements for judges to film at future conferences.
 - Magistrate Shadle suggested sending the Zoom link to the committee members a second time closer to the meeting date.
- 9. Next meeting date.** The next meeting date is scheduled for November 3.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny Bauer
Staff Attorney
Indiana Office of Court Services

Community Relations Committee

Judicial Conference of Indiana

Meeting Minutes for Friday, November 3, 2023

The Community Relations Committee met on November 2, 2023, by video conference. The meeting was chaired by Judge Maria Granger.

1. **Members present.** Kelly Benjamin, Murielle Bright, Judi Calhoun, Chadwick Hill, Gary Miller, Michael Morrissey, Jason Mount, Cheryl Rivera, Gary Schutte, Stephanie Steele, and Maria Granger (chair).
2. **Staff present.** Jenny Bauer, Sarah Kidwell, and Dave Kuhn provided staff assistance.
3. **Approval of Minutes.** The Committee approved the August 11, 2023, minutes by consent.
4. **Cameras in Court.** Dave Kuhn provided background on the change to Rule 2.17, highlighted the best practices guide that is online, and advised of the presentation at the September conference. Many judges complimented the September presentation to around 100 attendees stating that it was one of the best from the conference, that tenseness around cameras in courts was relieved after attending, and that engaging media from the beginning and having them at the presentation was great. Judge Steele hadn't considered cameras in courtrooms because of streaming but is enthusiastic about it. This will be interesting to monitor as more requests come in to different courts.
5. **Adoption Day.** Sarah Kidwell reported that Adoption Day is coming up in November and details on coordinating with the Indiana Adoption Program was sent in the weekly message.
6. **Outreach photos for State of the Judiciary, January 10, 2024.** Sarah Kidwell reminded judges that the Chief Justice is requesting photos from outreach efforts to be sent in. These could be from National Adoption Day, problem-solving court graduations, school group visits, etc. Please send photos of you and fellow judicial officers doing outreach in your communities to Sarah.Kidwell@courts.in.gov
7. **Constitution Day Recap.** Several judges that participated in Constitution Day (on or around September 17, 2023) enjoyed their time with students. Judge Steele remarked that students were curious why judges were mean and reinforced that serious might be misunderstood for being mean. Judge Bright had students come to the courthouse and all took turns banging the gavel. Judge Granger's visit involved changing the rules in a game to lead students towards reasoning why rules are important. All are encouraged to participate next year.
8. **Judges Speakers Bureau.** Many members are already listed, but those that are not will be included with their office number and emails. Judge Granger highlighted that it was a good experience for her recently speaking at a conference and that being on this list would help extend our outreach. OCEO staff will work on making list more accessible online.
9. **Next meeting dates.** Meetings for 2024 will be held via Zoom on Fridays at 1:00 p.m. (Eastern). The quarterly meetings will take place on February 2, May 3, August 2, and November 1.

10. **Thanks.** The Committee presented Jenny Bauer with a certificate for her over 20 years of service on this Committee. Congrats, Jenny!

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Kidwell and Dave Kuhnz
Office of Communication, Education & Outreach