

UTAH STATE BAR COMMISSION MEETING

MINUTES

Friday, February 9, 2024

In Attendance: President Erik Christiansen, President-elect Cara Tangaro, and Commissioners Tom Bayles, Kim Cordova, Matt Hansen, Mark Morris, Chrystal Mancuso-Smith, Tyler Young, Traci Gunderson, and John Rees. J. Brett Chambers and Rick Hoffman joined remotely.

Ex-Officio Members: Nate Alder and Lauren Shurman. Katie Woods joined remotely.

Not in Attendance: Commissioners, Greg Hoole and Shawn Newell. Ex-Officio members Anaya Gayle and Margaret Plane, Ashley Biehl, Tony Graf, Dean Elizabeth Warner, Dean David Moore, Katie Lawyer, and Ezzy Khaosanga.

Also in Attendance: Executive Director Elizabeth A. Wright, General Counsel Maribeth LeHoux, Deputy General Counsel of Admissions Emily Lee, Utah Court Representative Nick Stiles, Utah Bar Michelle Oldroyd

1. President's Welcome and Reports

1.1 ABA Mid-Year Meeting and NCBP Meeting Report

Mr. Christiansen presented on the meeting, which he attended with Ms. Tangaro, Ms. Cardova, and Ms. Wright. Challenges to DEI was a primary topic. Mr. Alder spoke about the discussions there and the importance of the ABA.

1.2 Billy Walker Retirement and Replacement Search Status

Ms. Wright discussed the search to replace Billy Walker, who is retiring after 26 years leading the OPC. She discussed timing and the composition of the search committee.

1.3 Legislative Update

Mr. Christiansen discussed the weekly GRC meetings. He discussed HJR 8, which would allow for the substituting of judges. Courts oppose and GRC/Commission oppose the bill. There is a substitute bill with some corrections, but still didn't solve the problem for the juvenile courts. Only applies to districts with 7 or more judges. The courts concern is that rural areas will want the same right, in which case people will be able to pick their judges. JPEC already reviews and approves judges. Mr. Christiansen will be speaking with legislators today.

1.4 Spring Convention Report

Ms. Tangaro and Michelle Oldroyd presented. Already have 150 registrants. Ms. Oldroyd spoke about the judges that will be attending. Ms. Tangaro discussed the Commission meeting and dinner on Wednesday before the Convention begins.

1.5 St. George Room Reservations

Ms. Oldroyd said three of the hotels have already expanded room blocks.

1.6 State Audit Update

Ms. Wright thanked Nathan for all his work on the state audit. The auditors are done with site meetings, and the report should be done by April. Ms. Wright discussed how current numbers did not include the sandbox. The Commission had several questions, and discussed how the auditors had spoken to other state bars about their fees.

1.7 Fall Forum

Michelle Oldroyd discussed switching the Fall Forum to a two-day event. Attendance for all CLE events has been up, for both in-person and online events. The CLE department will be putting on two summer events. The June “procrastinator series” and the virtual Summer Convention in July. Fall Forum sold out last year (2023). Have begun discussions with the Little America about doing a 2-day event; they have offered a price break on rooms.

A discussion ensued about in-person CLEs and demand, as well as general pricing for CLEs.

2. Action Items

2.1 Approve recommendation for 2024-2025 License Fees

New rules require the Bar to meet with the Court each year to provide a recommendation for what all licensing fees should be for the upcoming year. Licensing needs to program the fee by April 1st, which is before we have done the budget. Mr. Hoffman stated that it costs us more than the license fee to run the Bar. Fees are \$425, and costs are closer to \$450 per active licensee. Budget and finance committee suggest raising the fees to \$450. Mr. Hoffman mentioned that fees haven’t been raised in 14 years.

The Commission discussed how fees from Tava are very high, and that it will need to be reviewed when the contract is up for renewal. Unmind is also expensive.

Mr. Christiansen stated that he understands the recommendation, but does not believe it is the time to do a fee increase. Mr. Hoffman said we have healthy reserves so we can rely on those.

Ms. Mancuso-Smith said that people ask what their fees go towards, so it would be good to include pie chart showing what the fees are used toward and show people what they get, and what services they get for free.

Mr. Rees discussed the possibility of variable fees, based on what services members would like to use, such as the wellness services.

Motion: Mr. Young moved to maintain fees. Ms. Tangaro seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

2.2 Select Dorothy Merrill Brothers Award Recipient

Ms. Woods discussed the award and nominees. Justice Hagen is suggested for the award

Motion: Ms. Tangaro moved to award Justice Hagen the Dorothy Merrill Brothers Award, Ms. Cordova seconded. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

2.3 Select Raymond Uno Award Recipient

The Committee discussed the nominees and recommendation of Hon. Shauna Graves-Robertson.

Motion: Ms. Gunderson moved to award Hon. Shauna Graves-Robertson the Raymond Uno Award. Ms. Mancuso-Smith seconded. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

2.4 Well-Being Impact Award

Ms. Woods stated the committee recommended Danielle Hawkes for the award. The

Motion: Ms. Tangaro moved to award Danielle Hawkes the Well-Being Impact Award, Ms. Mancuso-Smith seconded. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

3. Information Items

3.1 Leadership Academy: Jen Tomchak

Ms. Tomchak, who runs the Bar's Leadership Academy, presented. She stated the Academy includes people from all districts, including the rural districts. The group has meetings every month, some of which are done remotely, but there are some events they can only do in person, including a lunch with the Supreme Court, attending a Commission meeting, etc.

Mr. Stiles discussed the successes of the class of 2023 leadership academy, including roles of various committees within the Bar.

Nate and Erik talked about helping get Leadership Academy members appointed to ABA positions. Ms. Tomchak stated travel costs to Salt Lake City prevent people from participating and wanting more money to allow people to travel to SLC for events.

The Leadership Academy is requesting a \$6000 increase in their budget and hoping to get \$3000 early because they're going to go over budget for the current year.

Mr. Young stated that supporting the Leadership Academy meets the strategic goal of engagement of young people, particularly in rural areas.

3.2 Well-being Service Provider Updates: Martha Knudson

Ms. Knudson provided an update on the mental health services offered by the Bar. For Tava, there were 1,859 sessions completed (1,411 by members). There was \$46,000 spent for sessions for dependents. 415 members have started care, and 700 signed up. The usage rate for our previous service, Blomquist Hale, was at 1.5%, while Tava usage is around 5%. Each member gets 6 free sessions every calendar year. Ms. Knudson mentioned that Tava is interested in a long-term arrangement. The Commission discussed the pricing of Tava and possible ways to decrease costs, including eliminating dependents from coverage, reducing the number of sessions, and removing international members. The Commission also discussed Unmind, which has 443 active users.

3.3 Access to Justice Director Introduction and Report: Megan Connelly

Ms. Connelly, the new director of Access to Justice, presented to the Commission. She presented on the services provided by the Access to Justice office, including CLEs and trainings, the pro bono challenge, Access to Justice Summit. She discussed the skill-building opportunities in pro bono work. Other services include the virtual legal clinic,

where clients can schedule a 30-minute phone call to get legal advice. Ms. Connelly mentioned that debt collection a big area, particularly housing.

3.4 Other Items

The Commission noted the need to put together committee for Summer Convention, including planning for an in-person Convention in 2025.

Adjournment.

The Commission adjourned at 11:35 am.

Consent Agenda.

The Commission approved by consent the following items:

- Minutes of the January 12, 2024 Commission Meeting.