



DMCJA Board of Governors Meeting
Friday, May 7, 2021, 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Zoom Video Conference <https://wacourts.zoom.us/j/97570254401>

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present:

Chair, Judge Michelle Gehlsen
Judge Thomas Cox
Judge Anita Crawford-Willis
Judge Drew Ann Henke
Commissioner Rick Leo
Judge Aimee Maurer
Judge Samuel Meyer
Judge Kevin Ringus
Judge Charles Short
Judge Jeffrey Smith
Judge Laura Van Slyck
Judge Karl Williams
Commissioner Paul Wohl

Members Absent:

Judge Robert Grim
Judge Tyson Hill

Guests:

Judge Tam Bui, BJA Representative
Judge Mary Logan, BJA Representative
Judge Rebecca Robertson, BJA Representative
Judge Beth Fraser, PO Committee Chair
Judge Lisa Leone
Judge Kimberly Walden
Judge Jennifer Forbes, SCJA
Patricia "Patti" Kohler, DMCMA
Regina Alexander, MPA

AOC Staff:

Stephanie Oyler, Primary DMCJA Staff
J Benway, Legal Services Senior Analyst
Vicky Cullinane, Business Liaison
Tracy Dugas, Court Program Specialist

CALL TO ORDER

Judge Gehlsen, District and Municipal Court Judges' Association (DMCJA) President, noted a quorum was present and called the DMCJA Board of Governors (Board) meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

Judge Gehlsen introduced Regina Alexander as new liaison for MPA and welcomed her to DMCJA. Ms. Alexander briefly introduced herself and thanked the Association for their work.

Judge Gehlsen thanked Judge Maurer, Judge Grim and Judge Williams as their terms are ending and this will be their last meeting in their current positions as members of the Board of Governors.

BREAK OUT SESSIONS

Meeting participants were split into five informal breakout groups, and members were invited to discuss how the probation processes in their courts have changed due to COVID, or other topics of interest. Following the breakouts, designees from each group briefly shared what was discussed in their breakout room.

GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Minutes

The Board moved, seconded, and passed a vote (M/S/P) to approve the Board Meeting Minutes for April 9, 2021. Judge Smith and Judge Maurer abstained.

B. Standing Committee Reports

1. *Rules Committee*

Ms. Benway reported that Rules had not yet approved a new set of meeting minutes, so there was no report today.

2. *Diversity Committee*

Judge Short and Judge Williams reported that there was no update from the Diversity Committee.

3. *Legislative Committee*

Commissioner Wohl reported that there was minimal new information from the report provided at the last board meeting, however a few bills of interest had a status change. HB 1294, regarding misdemeanor supervision services, passed and was signed by the governor. SB 5226, concerning the suspension of licenses for traffic infractions, has also passed and been signed, with several different effective dates throughout. Commissioner Wohl stated that the bill requires that individuals will no longer have their license suspended if the only basis for the suspension was failure to pay for a moving infraction. In addition, there will be some restrictions on when courts can send cases to collections. Individuals will be able to indicate on the citation that they are unable to pay, obligating the court to have a payment plan available to them. Commissioner Wohl believes that this will in particular will require court administrators to incorporate a lot of changes. In positive news, Commissioner Wohl shared that as part of the Blake bill, SB 5476, therapeutic courts in courts of limited jurisdiction were allocated funding to help address drug issues. HB 1320, regarding protection orders, is an extensive bill that Commissioner Wohl stated is difficult to summarize succinctly, but that it will change access to courts for those seeking protection orders, and that much more education will be required regarding this bill. Judge Smith inquired if DMCJA had submitted a veto request to the governor, specifically regarding a problematic portion of the bill that requires consent of the parties to live stream. Commissioner Wohl responded that although Judge Gehlsen and SCJA President Judge Ramseyer had sent a veto request for this section, he does not think it will be vetoed. Judge Gehlsen mentioned that there will be a trailer bill to help address some of the outstanding concerns and issues with this bill, and also thanked Judges Van Slyck and Gillings, and the DMCJA Therapeutic Courts Committee, for all of their work in helping courts of limited jurisdiction obtain additional funding. Judge Gehlsen also mentioned that \$750,000 in court security funding was allocated this year, and thanked Judge Robertson for her work on the Court Security Task Force.

LIAISON REPORTS

A. Administrative Office of the Courts AOC

Ms. Rubio was not present and did not report.

B. Board for Judicial Administration (BJA)

Judge Bui reported that the Judicial Leadership Summit will be held on June 18th, 2021 via Zoom. She mentioned that Chief Justice Steven González will be very focused on inter-branch relations this year, especially in regard to legislative efforts. Judge Gehlsen reminded members that Judge Bui will become Co-Chair of BJA starting in July.

C. District and Municipal Court Management Association (DMCMA)

Judge Gehlsen announced that this would be Ms. Kohler's last meeting as DMCMA liaison as she is retiring. She went on to thank Ms. Kohler for all of the work and collaboration she has done on behalf of the judicial branch. Ms. Kohler briefly reported that DMCMA had completed hosting the final "Silence = Acceptance" workshop and that the association was very proud of the work they had been doing in regard to racial justice. Ms. Kohler shared that Kris Thompson, Whitman County, will become the new DMCMA President.

D. Misdemeanant Probation Association (MPA)

Ms. Alexander reported that Stacie Scarpaci, previous MPA Liaison, asked her to thank DMCJA for their recent financial contribution to the MPA conference. Ms. Alexander shared that the conference was a success, and that she was pleasantly surprised how well it worked to hold the conference via Zoom.

E. Superior Court Judges' Association (SCJA)

Judge Forbes reported that the legislative session was especially busy this year, as she was Co-Chair for the Superior Court Judges' Association Legislative Committee, but that she will not serve in that role next year, as she will be President-Elect. Judge Forbes agreed with the previous comments from Commissioner Wohl that the protection order bill, HB 1320, will require substantial energy over the next year. Superior courts are particularly focused on the Blake decision, and have been working extensively with stakeholders to develop plans for resentencing defendants. She estimated that this will be a substantial undertaking, as there are approximately 50 years-worth of convictions requiring vacations, with more than 5000 people in prison who will have to be resentedenced, and all courts are competing for limited resources. Judge Forbes shared that SCJA is currently focused on creating a triage program to establish priorities. She welcomes DMCJA members to submit information about the impacts of the Blake decision on courts of limited jurisdiction for an upcoming presentation to Chief Justice González.

F. Washington State Association for Justice (WSAJ)

Mr. O'Halloran was not present and did not report.

G. Washington State Bar Association (WSBA)

Mr. Peterson was not present and did not report.

ACTION

1. DMCJA Rules Committee Proposal to adopt new ARLJ 14

M/S/P to approve the Rules Committee recommendation to forward the following proposal to the Supreme Court Rules Committee:

- a. Proposed new ARLJ 14 – requiring training for court administrators

2. Board Vacancy – Judge Tyson Hill appointed to Grant County Superior Court

M/S/P to approve Judge Mindy Walker's appointment to the board.

DISCUSSION

A. Board Vacancy – Judge Tyson Hill appointed to Grant County Superior Court

Judge Gehlsen reported that Judge Tyson Hill has been appointed to Grant County Superior Court, leaving his DMCJA Board position vacant. She shared that she intends to appoint Judge Mindy Walker, from Jefferson County District Court, to the vacant seat, and briefly shared some information about Judge Walker's background and qualifications. M/S/P to move this item to Action on today's agenda.

B. DMCJA Social Media Accounts

Judge Gehlsen shared that the Public Outreach Committee has expressed an interest in establishing and managing social media accounts on behalf of the Association, particularly a Facebook page, and requested that any members with concerns or questions raise them so that Public Outreach Committee members can appropriately prepare to present at the next board meeting. No questions were raised, however members may contact Stephanie Oyler, DMCJA primary staff, to note any issues they would like to pass along to the Committee.

INFORMATION

Judge Gehlsen brought the following informational items to the Board's attention.

- A. Amendments to GR7, subsection (b), taking effect on February 1, 2021.
- B. Court Review Essay – “Why Judges Should Not Mistake the Norm for the Neutral” by Justice Debra Stephens & Judge Veronica Galván.
- C. WA Supreme Court Symposium Announcement – “Beyond Bars: The Increased Incarceration of Women and Girls of Color.”
- D. DHS Announces New Guidance to Limit ICE and CBP Civil Enforcement Actions In or Near Courthouses
- E. Estimated ARPA Funding Distribution to Counties and Cities
- F. Court of Appeals Unpublished Decision – State v. Stevens County District Court Judge & Stevens County District Court
- G. [BJA Innovating Justice Award](#): To nominate someone for this award, please use the attached Award Nomination Form. Nominations will be received on an ongoing basis and should be received by June 1, 2021 to be considered for the next selection process.

OTHER BUSINESS

Judge Gehlsen shared that \$1,800,000 in CARES funding is still available from AOC, and that several larger courts had applied and received funding for multiple projects while smaller courts are not applying as frequently. She asked that members from smaller courts, especially, consider applying for funding to address any backlogs due to COVID-19. Judge Gehlsen also mentioned that information about ARPA funding has been distributed, but since these funds will go directly to cities and counties, courts will need to make requests directly to their local jurisdictions.

The DMCJA Annual Business Meeting, held in conjunction with the Annual Spring Conference, is scheduled for Monday, June 7, 2021, from 12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. held via Zoom video conference.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:18pm.