

INTERPRETER COMMISSION

MEETING SUMMARY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2006

Present: Salah Dandan, Emma Garkavi, Jeff Hall, Ann Macfarlane, Frank Maiocco, and Judge Ron Mamiya

Guests: Lourdes Portillo Salazar and René Siegenthaler

AOC staff: Robert Miera, Regina McDougall, Tina Williamson and Beth Flynn

Welcome

Justice Susan Owens was unable to attend the meeting so Acting Chair Judge Ron Mamiya called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. and introductions were made around the room.

There was not a quorum at the beginning of the meeting to approve the June meeting minutes and it was decided that a vote would be taken by email at a later date.

ACTION ITEM:

AOC staff will take a vote by email on the June minutes.

Robert Miera discussed the Commission member vacancy for the ethnic commission's representative. He received biographical information from two potential Commission members, Uriel Iniguez and Timothy Lopez, and sent meeting information to both of them. Timothy Lopez declined the invitation to serve on the Commission. Uriel Iniguez was unable to attend the meeting but sent Lourdes Portillo Salazar.

ACTION ITEM:

Robert Miera will speak with Uriel Iniguez to find out if he would like to be on the Commission or if Lourdes Portillo Salazar should be appointed instead. Robert Miera will also speak with Justice Susan Owens about making an official Commission appointment.

ACTION ITEM:

Robert Miera will confirm the December 8 Commission meeting date.

Committee Updates

Issues Committee: Since none of the Issues Committee members were present, Regina McDougall reported on the work of this committee. The table of contents for the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan was included in the meeting materials and Section IV lists the plan goals. Section VI is a template that will be distributed to local courts for their use. Regina McDougall is optimistic that a draft of the LEP Plan will be available at the next Interpreter Commission meeting.

Jeff Hall indicated that funding for the LEP Plan will be included in the Board for Judicial Administration's (BJA) funding request to the Legislature.

Ann McFarlane mentioned there are free "I speak" cards available from the Department of Justice located at <http://www.lep.gov/ISpeakCards2004.pdf>.

Judicial Education and Court Manager Education Committee: Tina Williamson reported on the DV/Ethics Workshops. The Spokane workshop went well and about eight interpreters participated. The same agenda will be used in Port Orchard and there are approximately 35 people registered for that workshop.

Discipline Committee: The Discipline Committee held their meeting by email and they decided not to set up alternate categories when interpreters become decertified. They will allow an interpreter to retire and the record of that will be maintained in the interpreter's administrative file but no inactive status will be allowed.

Testing and Training – 2006

Written Exam—Cost/Pass Rate Summary: The cost and pass rate summary of the 2006 written exam was included in the meeting materials.

Pre Oral Exam Workshop: The Pre Oral Exam Workshop is scheduled for September 23-24 at Bellevue Community College. The workshop curriculum was updated last year and that curriculum will be used again this year. Robert Miera will work on developing language-specific exercises (as the budget allows) to help people practice for the oral exam.

According to René Siegenthaler from Bellevue Community College, the number of people registered for the Pre Oral Exam Workshop is relatively low. Approximately 30 people are registered. The group consists of 19 Spanish, 5 Russian, 4 Korean and 1 Vietnamese interpreters.

Oral Exam: The oral exam is scheduled for October 14-15. René Siegenthaler reported that there are 98 candidates registered for the oral exam. The registrants consist of 59 Spanish, 21 Russian, 10 Korean and 8 Vietnamese interpreters. Four of the candidates are from out-of-state. René Siegenthaler stated the number of oral exam registrants this year is consistent with last year's number of 105.

Regina McDougall stated how much she appreciates René Siegenthaler and all he has done for the Commission and the Court Interpreter Program. Judge Ron Mamiya expressed his gratitude to René Siegenthaler for how much he has helped the Court Interpreter Commission progress over the last several years.

AOC Interpreter Program

Introduction to Interpreting Class: A new mandatory class for all newly certified court interpreters will be held in January or February 2007 for interpreters who pass the 2006 oral exam. Funding for the class was provided by the Legislature as part of the Court Interpreter Program enhancements in 2005.

One of the objectives of the class is to have a small ceremony for the newly certified interpreters and have a judge sign each interpreter's Oath of Interpreter at the ceremony.

The question was raised about the time it takes to perform a criminal background check. The interpreters attending the Introduction to Interpreting class would not become certified until their background checks are completed.

ACTION ITEM:

AOC staff will check with the Washington State Patrol (WSP) to find out if there is a quicker process than has been used in the past to receive the results of the WSP criminal background/fingerprint check.

Registered Category: There was much discussion about the registered category of interpreters—from how court officials have reacted when hearing about the new category and how they think it will work (or not) in their courts to how many continuing education credit hours will be required of registered interpreters. It was decided that the Commission members who agreed to work on this issue at the June meeting will meet to create a proposal for the full Commission.

Invitation to Support 2007 LOTS Training in Oregon: Ann Macfarlane reported that NAJIT has plans to offer testing and training in Korean, Russian, and Vietnamese next spring in Oregon. She requested the Court Interpreter Commission sponsor the training and testing and that the Commission also endorse these programs.

MOTION:

It was moved by Jeff Hall, seconded by Salah Dandan, and passed to endorse NAJIT's training as provided by NAJIT for Korean, Russian and Vietnamese interpreters and other such languages as may be provided in the future.

ACTION ITEM:

Robert Miera will check the budget to determine if funds are available to support the NAJIT training and testing financially. If funds are available, he will take a vote of the Commission members by email asking if they approve spending those funds on this training and testing.

ACTION ITEM:

Ann Macfarlane will email the members of the Commission a list of what the state of Washington would be gaining for the monetary support of the NAJIT training/testing.

Strategic Planning: Salah Dandan reported on possibly having a strategic planning meeting for the Interpreter Commission. It would be very beneficial to know the goals of the Commission when formulating policies and procedures. Salah Dandan asked the Commission members if they would like to develop a strategic plan. If so, he would need the following:

- 1) Permission to email the Commission members for feedback relating to specific questions.
- 2) A one-hour workshop/discussion.
- 3) Robert Miera's assistance before the workshop.

ACTION ITEM:

Robert Miera will speak to Justice Owens about the three questions above.

MOTION:

Ann Macfarlane moved, Jeff Hall seconded and it was passed to recommend to the Commission Chair, Justice Susan Owens, that the Commission go forward with working on a strategic plan.

Both Robert Miera and Judge Ron Mamiya thanked Regina McDougall for all her work with the Interpreter Commission.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

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