

Minutes of Citizens Advisory Committee on Jury Selection
Friday, February 11, 2011
Jennifer Putman Meeting Room, Brookens Administrative Center
1776 E. Washington Street Urbana, IL 61802

Call to Order: Vice-Chair Patricia Avery called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Roll Call: Six members appointed from the General Public were present: Patricia Avery, William Brown, Brian Dolinar, Barbara Kessel, Jennifer Putman, Patrick Thompson. Four members appointed from the General Public were excused: Aaron Ammons, Lorraine Cowart, Joan Miller, Ken Turner. Two Court Officials were present: Judge Thomas Difanis, Public Defender Randy Rosenbaum. One Court Official was excused: Court Administrator Roger Holland. One Elected Official was present: County Board Chair Pius Weibel.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes: The agenda was approved as circulated. Minutes of the January 13, 2011 meeting were approved as circulated.

Announcements/Communications: Ammons announced that he and Judge Difanis would be guests on the "Straight Talk Live" program on radio station WBCP this Saturday, February 12, 11:00 am through noon. Ammons stated phone calls could be placed to the program at 359-9227. Kessel reported an announcement by Prof Steve Beckett on radio station WDWS that provided information about mock trials at the College of law and courthouse.

Legislative Affairs Subcommittee (Update): Avery, Putman, and Rosenbaum reported that Representative Naomi Jakobsson agreed to send to the Legislative Reference Bureau their draft of a bill amending the statute that governs compilation of jury lists. Next steps to ensure passage of the bill are identifying co-sponsors and lining up informed experts to argue in committee on its behalf. Dolinar suggested researching measures adopted in other states to enhance the compilation of jury lists. Rosenbaum offered to review other states' jury laws.

"Honor Roll" of Employers: Avery urged promotion of the previously discussed "honor roll" of employers whose personnel policies include jury service as paid time off. Members proposed contacting the College of Law to learn whether law school interns would accept the task of surveying local businesses regarding their policies for time off for jury duty. Brown proposed approaching the Chamber of Commerce for cooperation in sponsoring a "survey monkey" that could poll business members on line concerning jury duty policies.

Jury Awareness Week: Members unanimously favored Brown's proposal for a proclamation by area mayors of a "Jury Awareness Week" timed to commence with Law Day (May 1). Elements of the week could include appearances on radio talk shows, tours of the courthouse, information tabling at UIUC and Parkland College, release of the Employers Honor Roll, introduction to the public of Champaign County's Jury Commissioners, and collaboration with the women attorneys who have staged children's court dramas such as "The Trial of the Three Bears." Avery volunteered to draft a letter to area mayors inviting them to join Chair Weibel in issuing the proclamation of Jury Awareness Week.

Next Meeting: Kessel requested members consider beginning monthly meetings one hour earlier, at 4:30 pm. Members agreed on March 11 as the date of the next meeting.

Adjournment: Vice-chair Avery adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Recording Secretary Jennifer Putman