

LAWYERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES – MARCH 5, 2024

Present: Alexandra Jacobs, Arnold Calmann, Carlos M. Bollar, Charles M. Lizza, Dennis Gleason, Edward Hartnett, Edward T. Kole, Elizabeth Sher, Glenn Troublefield, James R. Birchmeier, Jennifer A. Hrafil, John Basiak, John Hoffman, John T. O'Brien, Joseph L. Linares, K. Anthony Thomas, Karen Confoy, Karol Corbin Walker, Kelly Crawford, Kerri E. Chewning, Kevin G. Walsh, Lisa J. Rodriguez, Shirley Emehelu, Melissa E. Rhoads, Michael A. Galpern, Patricia A. Staiano, Peter C. Harvey, Philip Sellinger, Ricardo Solano, Jr., Shoshanna Schiff, Steven M. Richman, Thomas R. Curtin, Victor Afanador, William Cook

Chief Judge Bumb, Judge Padin, Judge Hammer, Judge Wettre, Judge Day, Judge Linares (Ret.), Judge Schneider (Ret.), Judge Brown (Ret.)

The Lawyers Advisory Committee (LAC) met at the Park Chateau, where the meeting was convened by Chair. Thomas R. Curtin, at 6:00 p.m., and the following occurred:

1. The Chair, Tom Curtin, welcomed and introduced all new members.
2. The Chair invited a motion to approve the minutes of the December 5, 2023, meeting. The motion was made and seconded and the minutes were approved.
3. Chief Judge Bumb welcomed new members and thanked existing members for their service. Chief Judge Bumb announced Karen Confoy is retiring from practice, Judge Kiel is awaiting confirmation, and Judges Hillman and Arpert retired on February 29, 2024.

Melissa Rhoads provided an update regarding the local rules. Effective March 1, 2024 the pro hac vice and attorney admissions fees increased to \$250 and \$225 respectively. Appendix V was adopted at the December Board of Judges' meeting. The Rules Committee reviewed recommendations by the LAC for an Artificial Intelligence local rule and determined one is not necessary at this time.

4. Philip Sellinger reported his office collected \$160 million dollars in 2023. He also reported due to the continuing resolution, spending is frozen on anything non-essential. He updated the LAC on a recent case involving ransomware which the District of NJ (DNJ) participated in, along with other jurisdictions. He announced his office is active in pursuing civil rights cases and numbers for violent crimes continues to decrease.
5. K. Anthony Thomas reported due to the looming budget crisis, staffing is uncertain.

6. Shirley Emehelu reporting on behalf of the Attorney General stated their office values the collaboration with federal partners especially regarding violent crimes. She reported there has been a decrease in the number of shootings. There is a focus on the civil side to enforce public nuisance laws. She noted there is a movement to engage attorneys in professional endeavors, more training, and best practices in federal court and to that end, she announced the upcoming annual Judicial Conference scheduled for March 19, 2024 and the Federal Practice Bench-Bar Symposium scheduled for April 11, 2024.
7. Victor Afanador reported on behalf of the Association of the Federal Bar of NJ (AFBNJ) the following events:
 - Brown Bag lunch in Camden - focused on Civility (held 3/5/24)
 - March 6, 2024 – Meeting of trustees and board members
 - March 19, 2024 – Annual Judicial Conference
 - March 27, 2024 – 3rd Circuit Breakfast at Seton Hall
 - April 11, 2024 – Federal Practice Bench-Bar Symposium - an all-day event involving federal judges and federal practicing attorneys. The event is aimed at state court practitioners who may appear in federal court.
 - May 3, 2024 – Bankruptcy Bench-Bar Conference

Victor announced there is a committee working to create a civics learning center in the DNJ, adding there is a national push for civics education, particularly for students. The committee consists of judges, court staff, members of the Historical Society, the LAC, and the Federal Bar Association.

8. Victor Afanador reported for Keith Miller on behalf of the Historical Society announcing an event on March 12, 2024 in the Newark courthouse focused on historic criminal trials in the DNJ. Similar events in Camden and Trenton will follow.
9. Report from the Chief of Probation, exhibit attached to agenda.
10. Judge Wettre requested the creation of a subcommittee, Best Practices for Mediation based on her role as the District's mediation compliance Judge. Several LAC members volunteered, and a meeting will be scheduled.
11. Judge Padin reported on Attorney Discipline rules. She noted she has been working with members of the LAC and proposed amendments to Rule 104.1 are on the Board of Judges' agenda for their March meeting.
12. Chief Judge Bumb requested the formation of a subcommittee to explore local rules regarding Bankruptcy Appeals. Shoshanna Schiff, Chair, was joined by volunteers Patty Staiano and Glenn Troublefield. Members of the bankruptcy LAC will be asked to join.

13. Chief Judge Bumb announced Judge Wettre will receive the Judicial Sector (Federal) Award and Karol Corbin Walker will receive the Trailblazer Award at the NJ Women Lawyers Association Platinum Gala to be held March 19, 2024.
14. The next LAC meeting will be on Tuesday, June 11, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.