

**FEDERAL PRACTICE COMMITTEE  
United States District Court, Northern District of Iowa  
Meeting Minutes**

**May 6, 2020 at 12:00 PM**

*Meeting was held via phone conference due to COVID-19 Virus.*

**Attendees:**

Jeana Goosmann, chair, Judge Williams, Judge Roberts, Tim Hill, Justin Lightfoot, Pat Parry, Stu Cochrane, Robert Phelps and Paul DeYoung.

**1. Motion to approve February 5, 2020 minutes**

The February 5, 2020 meeting minutes were approved.

**2. POWER ACT presentation by Northern District of Iowa, June 24, 2020 at ISBA Annual Meeting**

The CLE Director reached out to see if the Northern District could put a webinar presentation together for the month of August or September due to the COVID-19 Virus.

Jeana Goosmann mentioned Judge Mahoney offered to present.

Paul DeYoung explained he reached out to Bren Howard from Iowa Legal Aid to get her on board to help coordinate. Bren is the new manager of the Volunteer Lawyers Project. Paul was made aware of the requirement to have tribal representation on a bi-annual basis. Paul has been trying to contact a representative from Iowa Legal Aid or one of the tribes but has not been successful. Paul mentioned Chad Freese as a contact from tribal court. Paul has been working with Judge Mahoney to contact a victim coordinator or tribal judge.

Jeana offered to connect Paul with Tribal Judge Maurice Johnson. Justin Lightfoot also shared Lisa Williams as a contact.

**3. CLE – Possible NDIA CLE on Thursday, May 21, 2020 at 4:00 PM**

Jeana asked Committee members for input on postponing the NDIA CLE due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Committee members discussed options on holding the CLE and allowing time for advertising. One of the recommendations was to plan the event for September.

Tim Hill reminded Committee members there is a co-presentation with the Federal Practice Committee and Historical Society for the release of the History Book, also scheduled for September. Tim raised the question of which event was more pressing.

Judge Williams said he has is not aware of the History Book being published and it may be postponed due to the virus. Publication may not occur until late fall to 2021. Judge Williams suggested moving forward with the CLE in September and mentioned scheduling the courtrooms in a way to help allow for social distancing.

Rob Phelps reached out to Hilary prior to the meeting, requesting a status update on the History Book. The History Book will probably go to publisher in July.

Tim asked for input on focusing the presentation on best practices in front of court considering social distancing requirements. Tim suggested working with the Northern District's IT staff on the most effective way to run hearings with currently software capabilities.

Judge Williams provided the following information on hearings: civil cases are all done telephonically, and civil trials have been continued with the goal of trying cases beginning June 1. Northern District is currently developing ways for hearings to occur remotely. The CARES Act permits flexibility for hearings. Sentencing and revocation hearings are primarily done live. Lawyers are appearing remotely with defendant consent. The witness box has been moved to provide distance from the court reporter.

Judge Williams added to Tim's recommendation, the CLE presentation is a remote learning opportunity to promote how we conduct jury trials. It would also be an opportunity to allow input on improvements to currently procedures. Judge Williams posed the question of putting together a CLE presentation for the third week of May using a platform such as Zoom and making the plan available to participants in advance to allow input and recommendations.

Rob offered to host at the Cedar Rapids Federal Courthouse. Rob said he would follow up with IT staff to see what platform would work best to host. Rob will also put together a draft agenda and announcement for the webinar and send out to Committee members for review.

Judge Williams suggested holding the CLE event on May 21 at 4:00 p.m., as originally scheduled, to allow time to review the input, recommendations and potential implementation of new ideas before the jury trials open on June 1.

Rob said the draft plans could be emailed out to the entire bar.

Judge Roberts suggested adding to the presentation to ask for input on how the civil attorneys are using technology to overcome obstacles with the COVID-19 Virus.

Judge Williams gave the example of attorneys and prisoners using technology to review discovery, and Judge Williams and Judge Roberts offered to co-present.

#### **4. Other Discussion**

None

- 5. Next meeting pending confirmation of Judicial Conference schedule**  
Wednesday, August 5, 2020 at 12:00 PM.

Meeting Adjourned 12:45 PM.