

CONNECTICUT SUPREME COURT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MINUTES

Board of Directors' Meeting - March 16, 2010

President Wes Horton called the meeting to order at approximately 2:45 p.m., following a ceremony in the Supreme Court celebrating the restoration of the bas-relief portrait of Justice William Hamersley. Other Board members, committee chairs, and guests present were: Kit Collier, Paul Giguere, Mike Widener, Michael Shea, Molly LeVan, Kathy Calibey, Judge Henry Cohn, John Farley, Judge Jon Blue, Sheila Huddleston, and Justice Zarella (ex officio).

In the absence of the Secretary, Sheila Huddleston was called upon to take the minutes of the meeting.

Mr. Shea reported that the Society has received over \$7,000 in membership dues, and the checks for those dues have now been deposited in the Society's bank account.

Mr. Farley reported that there has been a definite decline in membership. A possible cause of the decline is the general condition of the economy. Mr. Farley suggested that two upcoming events, the annual meeting and the publication of Volume IV of the journal, may offer opportunities to encourage former members to renew their memberships. He suggested that we send the journal to members who have not renewed as an enticement.

Mr. Farley also briefly discussed the results of the membership survey. He reported that the response rate was considered good. Thirty-four responses were received. The conference in which the Society collaborated was one of the events most appreciated by members, and Mr. Farley suggested that it may be time to look for new opportunities to collaborate with other groups. He also noted that some responders suggested broadening the Society's focus to include, more generally, Connecticut judicial history, rather than focusing exclusively on the Supreme Court. Mr. Horton commented in response that the annual meeting and the journal have included presentations and articles that go beyond an exclusive focus on the Supreme Court. Mr. Farley also suggested that the Society might consider a more inward focus as well, such as investing money in developing archives.

After Mr. Farley's presentation, Mr. Shea moved that the Society send copies of Volume IV of the journal to former members who were on the 2009 membership list to encourage them to renew their membership. Mr. Collier seconded the motion, which passed unanimously, with the proviso that Ms. Huddleston will investigate the cost and confer with Mr. Horton if the cost is not insignificant.

Justice Zarella suggested that the Society should seek to expand its membership by actively recruiting members from Fairfield and New Haven Counties. Various possibilities were discussed, including holding programs in other parts of the state and perhaps coordinating to offer programs when the Supreme Court sits in locations other than Hartford. Mr. Horton indicated that he will also consider appointing co-chairs from those counties for appropriate committees.

Ms. LeVan reported that the annual dinner will be held on Tuesday, May 11, at the New Haven Lawn Club. Jeff Benedict will be the speaker. His topic is "Pulling Back the Curtain on the *Kelo* Case." The cost of the ballroom rental, the provision of a cash bar, and dinner will amount to approximately \$52 per person, assuming attendance of about 125 individuals. The Society has agreed to allow Mr. Benedict to bring several guests, and the cost of their dinners is factored into the cost per person for paying members. Last year's dinner cost \$55 for members and \$65 for nonmembers. Ms. LeVan recommended that we charge \$60 for members and \$70 for nonmembers this year. Mr. Shea moved to approve the recommendation, Mr. Collier seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

It was also recommended that the Society advertise the dinner in the *New London Day*. Mr. Collier suggested that, in light of the presentation on the *Kelo* case, we might also want to advertise in real estate periodicals. It was observed that there is an advertising budget for the annual meeting.

Ms. Huddleston reported that Volume IV of the journal will have four articles: an article by Professor Larry Goodheart on Swift and capital punishment; an article by Bruce Stark on the court system and court records of Swift's time; an article by Judge Cohn on Swift and divorce; and an article by Wes Horton on the size and composition of Supreme Court panels over the centuries. She is currently in the process of copyediting and formatting the articles for publication and intends to send them to the printer before the end of this month.

Mr. Widener identified two immediate objectives for the Archives Committee: first, to update the resources page on the Society's website, and second, to solicit an overview of repositories of archival materials within the state, asking an archivist at each repository to provide a description of what the collections contain. It was also suggested that we might consider publishing the overviews in upcoming issues of the journal. Mr. Shea moved to approve his recommendations. Mr. Collier seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Paul Giguere, the president and chief executive officer of the Connecticut Public Affairs Network, briefly described the mission of his organization to promote knowledge of and engagement in civics. He said that his organization currently has two contracts with the State of Connecticut, one for the televising of legislative and judicial activities on CT-N, and one with the legislature for the management of the Old State House. He believes that the Old State House is a valuable teaching tool to promote civics engagement by telling the stories of those who have come before us in a place where a great deal of

history happened. Mr. Giguere said that his organization is looking for ways to collaborate with other organizations and would like to discuss possible collaborations with the Society. Ms. LeVan mentioned that the Society had previously considered the Old State House as a location for possible meetings but had found that it would be prohibitively expensive. Mr. Giguere suggested that programs co-sponsored with his organization might not be so costly. He also said that his organization has begun to submit grant applications to foundations and to corporate neighbors of the Old State House, and he was hopeful that subsidies for collaborative programs might be found. He mentioned the possibility of filming the presentations at the annual dinner for broadcast on CT-N. He has also discussed with Justice Zarella a program to be focused on the hundredth anniversary of the Supreme Court building, which will occur late this year. They have discussed the possibility of having the Court sit in each of the three locations that have housed the Court in Hartford - the Old State House, the Judiciary Room, and the current Supreme Court building - and having the Court sessions filmed for broadcast on CT-N. Mr. Giguere commented that some additional costs would be involved because CT-N would have to rent additional equipment to tape at each location. He said they are in the process of trying to identify potential funding sources to which they can submit grant applications.

Mr. Collier suggested that we ask Mike Widener to invite us to his bailiwick so that we can get a sense of the resources that are there. It was suggested that we might meet there before the annual meeting on May 11, possibly at 3 or 4 p.m. This suggestion was received with enthusiasm.

Mr. Collier also commented that at least four oral interview projects are ongoing in the state. He suggested that we might want to conduct interviews of those associated with the Court and publish the interviews in the journal. This suggestion was also well received, although Ms. Huddleston commented that the next issue (Volume V) may focus on the history of the Supreme Court building. Justice Zarella commented that there are ample resources on the history of the building to fill an entire journal.

Judge Jon Blue suggested that there ought to be a better record in portraiture of justices who have served on the Supreme Court, as well as of judges who have served on the Superior and Appellate Courts. He suggested that the Society should consider commissioning black and white archival-quality photographs of all sitting members and of all living retired members of the Supreme Court. These photographs could be placed on the Society's website, and prints could be hung in the halls of the Court building or in an album in the Supreme Court attorney's conference room. Ms. LeVan commented that there was a "Women in Black" project that photographed women judges, but that funding for that project was donated by individuals, not by the Judicial Branch. Mr. Widener suggested that if we were to undertake such a project, we should be sure to address the issue of publication of the photographs with the photographer at the outset of the project, to make sure that the photographs are in the public domain. It was suggested that Ginny Apple might be able to undertake the project. Mr. Horton said that he would follow up with her, and the Board can continue the discussion at a future meeting.

The next meeting of the Board will take place in New Haven on May 11, 2010, before the annual meeting. The precise time and place is to be determined. The Board generally favored meeting at a place chosen by Mr. Widener if he can arrange an appropriate space.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila A. Huddleston