

External Affairs Advisory Board – Draft

Minutes of January 9, 2009

In attendance: Judge Susan Handy (chair), Judge Dennis Eveleigh, Judge Douglas Lavine and Judge Jane Scholl.

(Staffing – Attorney Melissa Farley, Attorney Stephen Ment, Rhonda Stearley-Hebert, manager of communications)

I. Judge Handy called the meeting to order.

II. Judge Handy started the focus group assembled to discuss the Speakers Bureau. Besides Judges Handy, Eveleigh, Lavine and Scholl, judges who participated in the focus group were: Judge Barbara Bellis, Judge James Bentivegna, Judge John Cronan, Judge Richard Dyer, Judge Brian Fischer, Judge Michael Mack, Judge Douglas Mintz, Judge Barry Stevens, and Judge Robin Wilson.

All of the judges present had spoken at civic groups/schools, although not all of them had reported those engagements to the Speakers' Bureau. The judges offered the following observations about the Speakers Bureau:

- For all of them, dealing with the Speakers Bureau was a positive experience.
- The Branch could do a better job of publicizing the Speakers Bureau and where the judges speak and what they speak about.
- They don't need canned speeches; individual judges often tailor their comments to the audience.
- They do need resources such as statistics, and word needs to get out to the judges regarding what resources are available and how to get them.
- The Branch needs to better get the message out that our courts are open to the public. People are more interested in hearing about what judges do rather than what the Branch does.
- Some sort of program where judges educate teens about the consequences of their behavior should be developed.
- The Branch needs to do a better job of carrying its message to the schools.
- The Branch needs to market the importance of the Speakers Bureau among the judges themselves, in that if they speak to the public, then the public will have a better view of the judiciary.
- It's important to get the support of the administration, so that judges may be encouraged to speak in their community.
- A lot of judges are out speaking but not reporting their speaking engagements to the Speakers Bureau. Judges should be encouraged to inform the Speakers Bureau whenever they speak at an event.

When the focus group ended, all of the judges except the members of the advisory board left.

III. The advisory board unanimously approved the minutes from its meeting of December 5, 2008.

IV. Attorney Ment reported to the board that External Affairs is in the process of distributing a survey to 30-35 community groups to get their feedback regarding the Speakers Bureau. Attorney Ment also provided the board with responses from other divisions within the Branch regarding bringing Branch employees into the Speakers Bureau.

V. A focus group with educators is scheduled for Feb. 6, 2009. Judge Handy said the advisory board hopes to learn from the educators how judges could be helpful to their students and schools, and how best to get out the message that judges are available to visit.

VI. The advisory board adjourned its meeting at about 4 p.m.