

## FEDERAL PRACTICE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

April 29, 2016

Roman L. Hruska United States Federal Courthouse  
Omaha, Nebraska

Attendees included Chief District Judge Laurie Smith Camp, District Judge John Gerrard, Magistrate Judge Cheryl Zwart, Clerk of District Court Denise Lucks, Chief Probation and Pretrial Services Officer Mary Lee Ranheim, Clerk of Bankruptcy Court Diane Zech, Committee Chairperson Andre Barry, Professor Eric Berger, James Smith, Stuart Dornan, Michelle Epstein, Rubina Khaleel, Matthew Munderloh, Kristina Murphree, and Daniel Placzek (participated by telephone). Chief Deputy Clerk of District Court Therese Bollerup, Chief Deputy Clerk of District Court Designee Gabriela Acosta, and Budget Analyst Terry Brownfield also attended.

The following individuals were unable to attend: United States Attorney Deborah Gilg, Federal Public Defender David Stickman, Professor Michael Fenner, Jeremy Fitzpatrick, and Jay Jolley.

Andre Barry called the meeting to order.

### 1. **Introductions**

The judges, members, and staff in attendance introduced themselves.

### 2. **Approval of minutes**

Committee members approved the [minutes](#) from the October 23, 2015, meeting.

### 3. **Review of Federal Practice Fund**

Terry Brownfield reviewed the committee's financial [reports](#) for the 12-month period ending March 31. The fund balance is \$190,883.66, with \$51,085.64 held in a savings account and the remainder held in a certificate of deposit account. The certificate of deposit will mature on September 3, 2016. To date, eight lawyers have expressed interest in receiving a rebate on the conference registration fee for the Eighth Circuit Judicial Conference.

### 4. **Report from Budget Committee**

None.

### 5. **Report from Clerk of District Court**

Denise Lucks reported that, for the 12-month period ending March 31, civil cases increased by 3.08% over the same period last year, and the number of criminal felony

defendants decreased by 4.74%. As for the court's pending caseload, there were 605 pending civil cases and 530 pending criminal cases as of March 31.

Denise also reported the Judicial Conference suspended the cameras in the courtroom pilot in Nebraska. The video and recording equipment has been removed from Judge Smith Camp's courtroom in Omaha and Judge Gerrard's courtroom in Lincoln. Removing the equipment does not change the video or audio capabilities in either courtroom.

## **6. Report from Committee Chair**

### **a. Recruiting new members**

Judge Gerrard suggested the Federal Practice Committee form a subcommittee to actively recruit new committee members. The committee members agreed. Judge Gerrard, Stuart Dornan, Rubina Khaleel, Andy Barry, and Dan Placzek will serve on the subcommittee.

### **b. Next year's CLE program**

Committee members discussed possible topics for next year's CLE program. Judge Gerrard suggested discovery, discovery disputes, and pretrial practices as possible topics. Committee members agreed and decided to hold the CLE program after June 30, 2017, so that both new federal magistrate judges will be on board.

Rubina Khaleel and Michelle Epstein will serve on a subcommittee to plan next year's CLE. Eric Berger will ask Adjunct Law Professor Dan Klaus to participate. Judge Gerrard suggested that Judge Zwart also participate in the planning.

## **7. eVoucher system discussion**

David Stickman reported attorneys are getting paid faster under the new system. Kristina Murphree reported the system is difficult to use and there are software issues. Judge Smith Camp advised her and other committee members to report any concerns they have about the system to John Cambridge.