

FCCA BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Saturday, January 17, 2009
Detroit (Dearborn), Michigan

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by President Bill McCool on Saturday, January 17, 2009, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Dearborn, Michigan.

Those present: Bill McCool, President; Jim Larsen, President-Elect; Sheryl Loesch, Immediate Past-President; Sue Rigan, Secretary; John Zingo, Treasurer; David Stechmann, Historian. Circuit Representatives: Mike Palus, Third Circuit; Tracy Couling, Sixth Circuit; Marian Frahm, Eighth Circuit; Michael Nagy, Ninth Circuit; Nancy Gilman, Eleventh Circuit; Scott Atchue, DC Federal Courts; Karen Mitchell, Clerks Council Chair; and, Jenine Wright, Deputy Clerks Council Chair. Committee Chairs: Pat McNutt, *Journal* Editor; Cheryl Sweat, Membership; Anne Stygles, Nominations; Ian Keye, Professional Development. Team Detroit: Dave Weaver, Clerk; Libby Smith, Deputy Court Administrator; and, Kim Grimes, Supervisor, Courtroom Deputy Services. Also present were Dr. Maureen Connor, Director, MSU Judicial Administration Program, and Cindy Idema, Data Quality Analyst, Western District of Michigan.

President's Update

Bill McCool opened the meeting by thanking those in attendance. He thanked Team Detroit for hosting the mid-year conference and selecting an excellent facility.

Mr. McCool said he received a request for \$500.00 to host a reception at the FAST Forum, as we did last year. Mike Palus made a motion to approve the expenditure. Jim Larson seconded. The motion carried.

Mr. McCool researched whether a contract guaranteeing minimum attendance at annual conferences is insurable. The FCCA's contract with the hotel guarantees a certain number of reservations and we are financially responsible if fewer than the minimum attend. He learned we cannot purchase insurance to cover our exposure, which demonstrates the importance of marketing the conference and getting high attendance.

Our marketing agreement with Gallagher is up for renewal. Jim Larsen said he will look into the financial benefits and services they provide. Mr. McCool said Jim De La Torre agreed to be a conference facilitator which is a benefit to be considered. Mr. McCool will appoint an ad hoc committee to assist Mr. Larsen.

The FCCA Foundation has finished its five-year plan. In order to raise funds, Dave Borkoski sent solicitation letters and received six responses. He plans to re-establish relationships with companies that are friendly to the FCCA, to raise funds for educational support. Karen Mitchell noted the Foundation is completely separate from the FCCA and therefore our members may attend educational programs they sponsor. The Foundation is exploring whether to apply for CFC eligibility. Lastly, a question was raised as to whether the

FCCA Board or the Foundation would support an initiative to offset insurance cost for federal retirees. Sheryl Loesch reported the AO is aware of the issue and is already looking into it.

Mr. McCool announced Libby Smith will replace Joe Haas as MSU Coordinator.

Detroit Conference Update

Dave Weaver reported a lot of work has been completed, thanks in large part to Libby Smith and Kim Grimes. The Hyatt is a wonderful hotel with a very good reputation. It is conveniently located next to the Fairlane Mall. He is especially excited about hosting the first MSU graduation.

Libby Smith reviewed the tentative agenda which promises to be exceptional. Kim Grimes said their goal was to present an agenda that is diverse, educational and fun. A surprise excursion awaits the first 25 attendees who arrive early on Saturday, July 18. On Sunday, July 19, the Board will meet from 8:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. The President's reception will be held in the Automotive Hall of Fame. The First Time Attendees orientation will be Monday morning. All Board members are required to attend. The opening ceremony will have a keynote speaker with ties to Michigan. Educational classes throughout the week will focus on case flow management, structured writing, motivating employees, teamwork, professionalism, creativity, financial planning, leadership, peer relationships, and project management, to name a few. Karen Mitchell suggested adding a session on Executive Compensation. Almost the entire second floor of the hotel will be for our exclusive use. Evening activities may include a Tigers baseball game, the Henry Ford Museum, and shuttles to local restaurants. The Banquet will be held on Thursday. The Banquet theme is Motown and the dress will be comfortable. The dress for the conference is business casual.

Ms. Smith and Ms. Grimes gave a demonstration of the proposed conference web site. They hope to have the site launched by March 2. It is important to note that a passport will be required if attendees wish to travel to Canada, located across the river from downtown Detroit. The hotel rate will likely be \$107.00 per night. The registration fee will likely be \$300.00 per person and 400 attendees are expected. Attendance will be capped at 450. All Board members should reach out to their coworkers and encourage their attendance at the conference.

MSU Program Update

Dr. Maureen Connor announced 17 people will be the first to graduate from the MSU program this year. Many dignitaries from MSU and elsewhere are expected to attend the ceremony. This year starts a new, five-year cycle of classes and the topics are leadership and case flow management. Jim Woodward, Clerk, Eastern District of Missouri, will be the facilitator. Mr. McCool emphasized anyone can attend the MSU courses, which have proven to be outstanding. The courses benefit all levels of federal employees. Scott Atchue suggested publishing students' capstone papers as an educational and promotional tool. Ms. Smith suggested highlighting FCCA success stories. Ms. Mitchell noted FCCA involvement stands out

on a resume. Dr. Connor said students in the MSU courses identified the FCCA as the conduit to professional advancement.

Education Committee Update

Ian Keye reported Team Detroit did an excellent job preparing a strong educational agenda, which includes approximately 30 hours of MSU and other general education sessions. He was very impressed with the program they will provide.

The deadline for the Carol C. Fitzgerald Scholarship is April 15. No applications have been received to date.

Budget and Finance Update

John Zingo presented a written report. He said the budget is in good standing. We are under budget for the mid-year meeting and the extra funds will be moved to support the cost of the Journal. Mr. Zingo emphasized the importance of timely submitting annual dues. We receive ten percent royalty from Gallagher, based on our dues revenue, which amounts to thousands of dollars each year. Circuit Representatives need to immediately contact District Representatives who have not yet submitted their court's dues.

Historian Report

David Stechmann said he is exploring the purchase of two banners measuring 36 inches high by 84 inches long, along with a stand. He will put together a proposal for vote via e-mail. Due to a schedule conflict, Mr. Stechmann will not be available to set up the Historian room prior to the conference. Dave Weaver offered staff to assist. Mr. Stechmann said he will focus the Historian room on the Louisville conference and will have less memorabilia and photo albums this year

Membership Report

Cheryl Sweat reported 1242 current paid members, consisting of 55 Clerks of Court, 47 Chief Deputies and 1140 Deputy Clerks. She said there are 1432 former members whom she will target for membership. Anne Stygles reminded Circuit Representatives to complete their membership drive so that members will be able to vote in the election.

Ms. Sweat discussed her research on Memberclicks and the numerous features it provides. Mr. McCool appointed Michael Nagy, Tracey Couling, John Zingo and Steve Mandel to assist her with final design. Her goal is to go live with the web site by February 16. As a reminder, the process for any web site posting is to send it to the FCCA President, who then forwards it to the appropriate person. Eventually, conference registration fees may be payable through Memberclicks.

Journal Update

Pat McNutt received a number of articles for publication, resulting in the Journal being approximately 36 pages long. We may have to choose between going over budget or reducing the size of the Journal. She and Ms. Sweat will research the final cost and report back to the Board.

Marketing/Outreach Committee Update

Pat McNutt distributed proposed flyers titled "FCCA Mentor Program" and "What's New on the Web." Future flyers will focus on Valentine's Day, MSU, the annual conference, and FCCA Highlights. The Committee's goal is to have a new flyer distributed about once every six weeks. All ideas and suggestions are welcome. There are two new Committee members, Debi Boone and Steve Burch. Ms. McNutt asked whether new FCCA members could receive some sort of welcome package. Mr. McCool suggested the welcome package be electronically sent to new members via Memberclicks.

Status of Hurricane Relief

Jim Larsen reported \$4200.00 was raised to support those who suffered loss as a result of Hurricane Ike. However, more than \$87,000.00 worth of claims were received. The consensus of members present agreed not to contribute FCCA general funds to the amount already raised. Karen Mitchell said a formula was used to allocate funds for Hurricane Katrina victims. David Stechmann said any amount of support probably would be appreciated. Mr. Larsen will continue working on an appropriate distribution of funds and will report back to the Board.

Wellness Survey Report

Mr. Larsen distributed the results of the Wellness Survey. There were approximately 500 responses. The topics of highest interest were diet and exercise, nutrition, heart healthy recipes, the aging process, and cardiac care. He will share this information with conference planners.

Mr. Larsen inquired whether the FCCA should proceed with an organ donor program. He thought someone in need of an organ donation could write an article to raise awareness. Mr. Atchue suggested asking "do you want to be added to the organ donor list?" on the membership application form. Mr. Larsen will approach the Blood for Life Committee for further suggestions.

Nominations Update

Anne Stygles reported the elections for 2009 will be for President-Elect, Secretary, and odd-numbered circuits. According to the by-laws, if someone is appointed to a term, it does not count toward elected term limits.

Site Selection Update

Bill McCool said the 2010 Annual Conference will be held in Eugene, Oregon, on June 27 through July 1. The theme will focus on “getting organized; going green in Eugene.” The registration fee is expected to be \$275.00. The contract for the Eugene Hilton - Downtown will be signed in a few weeks. The hotel rate will be the government per diem, around \$100.00 per night. The hotel is conveniently located and within walking distance of many area attractions. Approximately 300 participants are expected and the hotel will be to ourselves. Western Oregon is beautiful in the summertime. The Pacific coast and mountain hiking are within an hour either way. Optional trips may include Crater Lake, a Class A baseball game, sand dunes, gardens, and more. He said it is certain to be a memorable event and he encouraged families to make it a vacation. When looking into airfare, he suggested flying into Portland and renting a car. Flying directly into Eugene may be more expensive.

The 2011 Annual Conference will be held in Mobile, Alabama. Solicitation for the 2012 conference site will begin later this year. Conference sites are usually awarded two years ahead.

2009 Calendar Update

Bill McCool reported the project is complete and the calendars have been mailed. Calendars will continue to be mailed to new members. Remaining calendars will be available for attendees at the Detroit Conference. Rob Walker will work on this project again next year. Mr. McCool thanked Mr. Walker for a job well done.

Deputy Clerks’ Council Update

Jenine Wright said the yearly conference pins will be purchased again this year, but will be used as a give-away as part of membership, rather than a fund-raiser. Lanyards will be given away at the First Time Attendees breakfast. The Executive Board met in person at the Louisville conference. As a fund-raiser, they asked each Deputy Clerk’s Council member who is also a Circuit Representative to put together a gift bag for a silent auction at the Detroit conference. The content of each gift will focus on items familiar to their home area. The silent auction will run from registration day until the business luncheon and winners will be announced at the luncheon. Proceeds will be allocated at a later date.

Clerks’ Council Update

Karen Mitchell reported the Council plans to continue to present retiring Clerks and Chief Deputy Clerks with a plaque. Lance Wilson continues to reach out to new Clerks to set them up with a mentor. Each new Clerk receives a letter from the FCCA with a token gift. Mr. McCool will work with Ingrid Campbell regarding Chief Deputy mentors. The mentor program does not extend to Bankruptcy Court Clerks and Chief Deputies, as it is better left for NCBC. Ms. Mitchell said she will work with Dave Borkoski on whether the Foundation wishes to pursue

CFC eligibility.

For the Good of the Order

The FERS sick leave legislation expired in Congress and needs to be reintroduced.

Mr. McCool appointed Michael Nagy, Tracey Couling, John Zingo and himself to a committee on fund-raising.

A demonstration of Memberclicks will be held immediately following the Board meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 1:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Rigan
FCCA Secretary