

MINUTES

Commission on Courts of Limited Jurisdiction (COCOLJ) Helena, MT November 15, 2024

Members Participating: Hon. Kelly Mantooth, Hon. Steve Fagenstrom, Hon. Steve Bolstad, Hon. Jessie Connolly, Hon. David Grubich, Brian Smith, Greg Sullivan, Hon. Maureen O'Connor, Jeanne Torske, and Hon. Kerry Burman.

Members Absent: Nicole Siefert, Melissa Rosaaen, and Hon. Jim Rice

Staff Present: Shauna Ryan

Guests: Peggy Tonon, Beth McLaughlin, and Dave McAlpin

Judge Mantooth called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Public Comment: Beth McLaughlin introduced Dave McAlpin, the new Supreme Court Administrator, to the Commission. Beth is retiring but will be working part-time through the end of February to assist Dave during the first part of the legislative session.

OLD BUSINESS:

Minutes

The minutes from the meeting on September 23, 2024, were reviewed. Judge Burman moved to approve the minutes. Judge Fagenstrom seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

Montana Justice Institute – UM Law School

Peggy Tonon indicated that the MJI is set for June 9-20, 2025. Folks arrive on June 8th and will depart on June 20th. The housing at the University was just confirmed with judges likely being housed in Miller Hall. The three confirmed topics are criminal procedure, evidence and civil procedure. The professors will be Andrew King-Ries, Paul Kirgis and Craig Cowie. The classes are 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Class size will be limited to 20, with a minimum requirement of 15 judges to make it worthwhile. All class material will be made available on the University's website. Judges will be required to have a laptop to attend and will pay for their meals, mileage and any parking fees at the University. Judge Burman made a motion that judges who successfully complete MJI be allowed to request a waiver for one COLJ conference within one year of attending MJI. Judge Connolly seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously. Peggy will reach out to ALPS and several of the larger law firms in Missoula to see if they may be interested in sponsoring an opening reception for the judges.

NEW BUSINESS:

Request for Waiver of Training for Fall 2024 Conference

Hon. Jessie Connolly – On behalf of the waiver committee, Judge Grubich recommended that the waiver be approved. The Commission concurred with the waiver committee’s recommendation.

Curriculum for Spring 2025

The Commission reviewed the Survey Monkey results from the fall conference. As usual, comments varied on both topics and presenters. It was suggested that we consider changing “Conference” to “Overall Conference Content” to gather more constructive responses.

The Commission drafted the agenda for the spring conference in Butte. With the help of some Commission members, Shauna Ryan will begin contacting presenters and provide an update at the next meeting.

Adjourned: The meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Next Meeting Date: The next meeting will be Friday, January 17, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. in Helena.