

MINUTES
BENCH BAR COMMITTEE
Monday, February 5, 2024
By C. Edward S. Mitchell, Chairman

Attendance

Participants were: Judge Butts, Judge Linhardt, Judge Tira, Judge Carlucci, Brian Bluth, Robert Cronin, Marc Drier, Jennifer Heverly, Brad Hillman, Thomas Marshall, Ed Mitchell, Melody Protasio, Kyle Rude, Nicole Spring, Adrienne Stahl, Elizabeth White, Mike Wiley, Dave Wilk, Prothonotary Tom Heap, Register and Recorder Dave Huffman, Domestic Relations Office Administrator Stephanie Tribble, Court Scheduling Technician April McDonald and LLA Executive Director Michele Frey

Method: the meeting was conducted in person at the LLA Office.

The first meeting of the LLA Bench/Bar Committee for 2024 was held at the LLA Headquarters on February 5, 2024. The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at noon. Members were welcomed. The Chairman explained the members had been appointed by the LLA President in accordance with the LLA by-laws. Each member has a designated area of practice and is expected to bring to the meetings any topics of interest pertaining to his/her designated area. The Judges will be given the first opportunity to speak. After the Judges, members will be given the opportunity to speak based upon their designated areas of practice.

All LLA Committee Chairpersons were advised of the meeting and given the opportunity to present topics for discussion. None responded.

Judge Butts reviewed the areas of assignments for each of the Judges. They are:

Judge Butts - criminal, Children & Youth, dependency and juvenile
Judge Linhardt - criminal, civil and family
Judge Tira - criminal
Judge Carlucci - civil and orphans court
Judge Gardner - family law and criminal limited to cases arising subsequent to January 1, 2024

Judge Tira advised that there are new criminal sentencing guidelines effective in 2024. There are also Children & Youth dependency training programs online.

Judge Carlucci advised that there have been statutory changes pertaining to guardianships and the need for the respondent to be present for hearings. Judge Carlucci also requested that attorneys appearing before him communicate with each other prior to arrival for the hearing rather than waiting for the time of the hearing.

The criminal defense representatives advised that the backlog of criminal cases has been reduced to the point that some cases are now being scheduled too quickly. Judge Butts responded that scheduling is necessary to force the attorneys to learn their cases. There was also a request that the District Attorney's office provide information to the Prothonotary's office for distribution earlier. There was a suggestion that conferences in criminal cases be held the Friday before jury selection.

There has been an increase in business and commercial litigation especially in shareholder oppression cases. Pretrials and mediations are helpful in reducing the issues for trial.

There is an open position for an attorney in the Department of Environmental Protection office.

The Prothonotary discussed service of pleadings and motions filed electronically in civil cases. The present software does not permit electronic service. The persons filing the pleadings and motions must serve them as authorized by the Rules of Civil Procedure.

The Register and Recorder discussed his efforts to make orphans court filings more efficient.

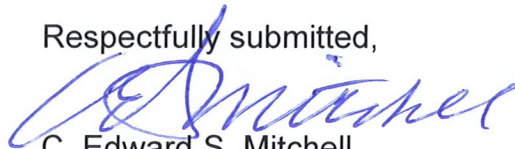
There is a need for conflict counsel for Children & Youth hearings.

The Law Day Committee needs additional members for planning and conducting Law Day activities.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

The next meeting will be May 6, 2024. The Notice will include the method and location.

Respectfully submitted,



C. Edward S. Mitchell
Chairman