

State Bar of Michigan
Committee on Libraries, Legal Research, and Legal Publications

Meeting Minutes
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

January 25, 2014; corrected November 6, 2014

Present: Kincaid Brown, Laura Mancini, Tom Weiss

Remote Participation: Ann Baker, Jan Bissett, Kim Breitmeyer, Marlene Coir, Randy Davidson, Barbara Goldman, Audra McClure, Heather Simmons, Ruth Stevens, Virginia Thomas, Lance Werner

Excused: Barbara Garavaglia & Lynn Ingram

Committee Chair, Kincaid Brown, called the meeting to order at 10:00AM.

Agenda Items

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed members of the 2013-2014 Committee in attendance (in person and virtually).

2. Committee Business

a. The Committee reviewed the minutes of the November 13, 2013 meeting. Jan Bissett offered a correction regarding responsibility for updating the Criminal Law page of the Michigan Online Legal Self-Help Center. (Randy Davidson, not Jan Bissett had updated that page. Jan Bissett had reviewed and updated the non-legal topic pages (i.e., Finding a Lawyer, Finding a Law Library, etc.)

Minutes of the November 13, 2013 meeting were approved as amended.

b. The Chair presented opportunities for *Michigan Bar Journal* column assignments for January 2015 through January 2016. Members present volunteered for columns and all slots through June 2015, with the exception of January 2015 are filled. An updated assignment list is provided as an addendum to these minutes.

c. The Chair thanked Committee members for submitting updates on existing topical research pages on the Michigan Online Legal Self-Help Center web site. He will forward the needed changes to the appropriate staff at the State Bar of Michigan.

d. The Chair suggested that information on the “Fee-Based Services for Michigan Lawyers” pages needs updating. He asked Committee representatives of the libraries listed under “Document Delivery Services from Libraries” to review and provide current information for their respective institutions.

3. Discussion Topic: Michigan Online Legal Self-Help Center and Michigan Legal Help

Laura Mancini lead a discussion comparing the contributions of the two web sites. While there is some overlap in the topical areas covered, there are differences in the type of assistance that each web site intends to provide. Michigan Legal Help views its target audience as individuals who intend to represent themselves in court. It outlines the information and processes they need to do so for selected legal issues.

Randy Davidson discussed the origins of the Michigan Online Legal Self-Help Center. A survey of Michigan law libraries revealed that they had the collections to assist patrons with legal issues, but not the staffing. The Michigan Online Legal Self-Help Center was developed to provide an effective legal information resource on legal topics of interest to many people.

Randy Davidson proposed a motion to change the name of the Michigan Online Legal Self-Help Center to the Michigan Online Legal Resource Center to better reflect the purpose of the web site. The motion passed. Kincaid Brown will contact the appropriate technical staff at the State Bar of Michigan to make the name change on the web pages.

The Committee discussed the possibility of the Michigan Online Legal Resource Center and Michigan Legal Help linking to each other from topics covered by both web sites. Kincaid Brown will have the links added to the relevant Resource Center site and Laura Mancini will inquire the Michigan Legal Help advisory board.

Laura Mancini provided a list of additional topics that are not presently nor likely in the future to be covered by Michigan Legal Help for the Michigan Online Legal Resource Center:

- Business Law
- Copyright Law
- Employment Law
- Veteran’s Law
- Driver’s License Restoration
- Power of Attorney
- Common Legal Terms/Definitions
- Foreclosure

- Retirement Issues.

The Committee discussed the merits of adding these and other topics to the web site. Ruth Stevens offered to create a “mock-up” for an Employment Law page. Laura Mancini offered to do the same for a Veteran’s Law page.

4. Updates

a. UELMA

Marlene Coir provided an update on UELMA, including information on fiscal impact. She highlighted financial information from a December 2011 white paper, Authentication of Primary Legal Materials, by the California Office of the Legislative Counsel.

Regarding UELMA interest in Michigan, she spoke with Kieren Marion of the Michigan Commission on Uniform State Laws. Mr. Marion informed her that he has a meeting with the Michigan legislature on Wednesday, January 29 regarding UELMA. He suggested that there is movement on a measure similar to UELMA in the legislature. Marlene will have a conversation with him on Thursday, January 30 to discuss the measure.

b. Member Reports

Randy Davidson called the Committee’s attention to a case pending before the Michigan Supreme Court, *People v. Cunningham*, docket #147437. The Court will consider whether it can impose reasonable flat fees for court costs in criminal cases. This would result in a shift from imposing *finer* to imposing *costs*.

Currently, fines are directed to the Library of Michigan for distribution among the State’s public libraries. The Library of Michigan received \$30.7M from fines in 2003 and \$24.3 in 2012. The potential impact on State libraries is great if funding (now received from fines) is re-directed to the courts.

Laura Mancini alerted the Committee to a pending Michigan Court Rule change that affects the provision of foreign language interpreters for court proceedings. The amended rule would also require that interpreters be provided in other places related to the court case. This change raises questions about the responsibilities of courts’ law libraries.

c. Heather Simmons announced that the University of Illinois is engaged in a search for a Law Library Director.

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be in May at the State Bar headquarters in Lansing. Kincaid Brown will survey the Committee for dates.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia C. Thomas
Advisory Member