

**Federal Judges Association  
Executive Committee Meeting Notes  
Telephone Conference Call  
September 11, 2019**

Participating: Judges Cynthia Rufe (President), Richard Clifton (President-elect), Karen Schreier (Secretary), J. Michelle Childs (Treasurer) and Executive Committee members: Malachy Mannion, Dan A. Polster, Patti Saris, Nannette Brown, Patty Shwartz and Marilyn Huff (immediate past president).

Also participating: Julianne Clark (MSP).

Absent: Charles Simpson, Lawrence Piersol, Leo Gordon and Leigh May.

Judge Rufe called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. EDT by telephone

**Financial Report- Treasurer Michelle Childs**

An audit of FJA's finances was completed and no deficiencies were noted. A balance sheet showing total assets of \$812,923.68 as of August 31, 2019 was provided to the Executive Committee. Additionally, a profit and loss statement for April through August 2019 was provided. Judge Childs reported that we are averaging a profit of approximately \$13,000 to \$14,000 per month. \$100,000 was moved from the Bank of America to Federated Financial and invested in a Certificate of Deposit.

It was moved by Judge Saris and seconded by Judge Polster that the FJA establish a fund of a minimum of \$100,000 for future Quadrennial expenses to be paid in increments as determined by the Treasurer. The motion carried.

**Membership Report-Cynthia Rufe**

Judge Rufe reported that Julianne is generating letters that are signed by Judge Rufe and sent to the newly confirmed judges encouraging them to join FJA. The new judges have responded positively and membership is going well.

**Communications Report- Malachy Mannion**

Judge Mannion reported that the current FJA website provides good information on the public side, but the members-only side is not very user friendly and lacks pertinent information. He suggests that we consider other options for the members-only section. That section should include access to all the FJA minutes and be able to facilitate Quadrennial registration and receive payments. He also suggested adding a mobile app that would allow easy access from a cell phone or tablet. He recommended that we continue to communicate with our members primarily by e-blast, but the e-blast may include a link into the members-only section.

Judges Rufe and Mannion and Megan Cruz met with Higher Logic regarding its proposal to upgrade our technology. Higher Logic submitted a bid proposal including an annual installation cost of between \$7000 and \$9000 and a mobile app fee of \$5000 per year. Additionally, bids will be solicited from two other vendors by January.

## **ABA Task Force on Nineteenth Amendment – Nannette Brown**

Judge Brown is the FJA representative to the ABA Task Force on the Nineteenth Amendment. The Task Force is chaired by Judge Margaret McKeown. The Task Force has purchased two exhibits that illustrate the milestones and history of the Nineteenth Amendment. They are available for display during Circuit Conferences and upon request of judges. The shipping costs would be paid by local courts and are estimated to be approximately \$500 each way. The Task Force asked FJA if we would purchase and store an exhibit. Total cost would be approximately \$2500 to \$3000. After discussion, the suggestion was made that FJA donate a stipend as an alternative. Civic education is part of our mission, but the logistics of FJA storing and shipping the exhibits were concerns. Judge Brown will do further investigation. The Task Force also asked FJA to sponsor an essay/video contest.

## **Judicial Integrity and Independence-Patti Saris**

Judge Saris reported that her committee held a telephone conference call and identified their first immediate action item. They will identify and document the impact of the 2018 shut down. To do this, they are considering surveying the members of the FJA Board of Directors. The committee will identify a panel of professors, retired judges, ABA members, etc., who can speak on behalf of the judiciary if another shut down occurs. Judge Childs will help with identifying the panel members. The survey results can then be provided to the panel so the panel can speak in an informed manner about the impact of a shut down.

It was suggested that FJA should also consider whether there is a legislative fix that can be pursued. Judge Clifton will speak to David Best to gather information from him. Jim Duff will also be consulted.

## **IAJ Report- Judge Rufe**

Judges Rufe, Allyson Duncan and David Carter are leaving this week to attend the IAJ conference in Astana, Kazakhstan. They will report back after the conference concludes.

## **Committee Assignments- Judge Rufe**

Judge Rufe will send an e-blast asking each member of the Board of Directors to volunteer to serve on at least one committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen E. Schreier  
Secretary