

Minnesota Supreme Court Historical Society
Board of Directors
July 24, 2008

The meeting of the Board of Directors of the Minnesota Supreme Court Historical Society was held pursuant to notice on July 24, 2008 in room 230 of the Minnesota Judicial Center in St. Paul. The meeting was called to order at 2 o'clock p.m. by Chairman Justice Sam Hanson.

Members present in person and by telephone were Justice Sam Hanson, John Kelly, Kent Germander, Jim Hale, John Arnold, John Stuart, Kate MacKinnon, Bill Hart, Kate McBride, Jon Garon, Jim Simonson, Ken White, Patrick J. Kelly, Robin Wolpert, Mary Vasaly, David Herr, Doug Heidenreich and Esther Tomljanovich.

Also present was Barbara Golden, State Law Librarian.

The minutes of May 24, were approved as submitted.

Upon motion duly made and seconded Chief Justice Eric Magnuson was elected to membership on the Board of Directors and retiring Chief Justice Russell Anderson was named an honorary member of the Board.

Chairman Hanson reported that our application for Federal Tax Exempt status has been approved and we are exempt from Federal Income Tax under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. We have also applied for exemption from state income and sales tax. Upon motion by Jim Hale, the State application completed with income and expense information was approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

EVENTS COMMITTEE

Robin Wolpert reported for the Events Committee.

On August 29, 2008 we will have a booth at the State Fair. At 10 a.m. that day and again at 3 p.m. Justices Paul Anderson and Lori Gildea will do their presentations on Justice Loren W. Collins, an associate justice from 1887 to 1904 and Martha Angle Dorsett, the first woman admitted to practice law in Minnesota. Barbara Golden will coordinate volunteers to staff the booth on August 29.

Ms. Wolpert indicated there will be a series of book events throughout the state to present the book of testimonials to deceased Supreme Court Justices to public libraries. It is planned to have a local attorney and judge present the book, perhaps with a brief ceremony. The committee will coordinate the presentation events with the Publication Committee and a generic press release to be used to alert and inform local media of the event and the historical significance of the book. Ken White reported he did a book presentation in Mankato in Blue Earth County and it was well received and reported in the local press. Discussion was had of the presentations and it was suggested that the

presentations be first done in the home towns of judges featured in the book. It was suggested that as a realistic goal we do 25 presentations this year.

It was noted that we need to start now to collect the history of the activities of the Society. Chairman Hanson will check with John Kostouros to see if the Historical Society can be included in the clipping service for the State Courts.

In addition to the most recent Chief Justices there are four: Chief Justices, Emmett, Devaney, Gallagher and Loring whose portraits are missing from the Judicial Center. Chairman Hanson has talked to Merry DeCoursey an artist who does portraits and has done a number of Judges for the Landmark Center. Ms. DeCoursey says that typically the cost of a portrait done from a photograph is about \$7,500, but if she were to do all four she would do them for \$5,000 a portrait. It appears that in recent years, at least, the families or the former law firm of the retired justice has arranged for the portraits, including selecting the artist and assuming the cost of the portrait. It was reported that the Gallagher family will assume responsibility for the portrait of Chief Justice Henry Gallagher. The consensus was that at this point we did not wish to create a precedent of funding all portraits. Chairman Hanson will investigate what other funding might be available for these four Chief Justices and report back to the Board

The Court of appeals will celebrate its 25th anniversary this year and several events are planned. On November 6 there will be a dinner to mark the anniversary at Landmark Center in St. Paul. There will also be a law clerk reunion at noon on October 10, 2008, at the Town and Country Club, co-sponsored by the Society and the Appellate Practice Section of MSBA. David Herr is on the Court of Appeals anniversary committee and he will keep us informed of any events where our cooperation would be welcome.

Arrangements have been made to record Justice John Simonett doing his rendition of "Casey at the Bat" and perhaps his essay on "The Common Law of Stearns (*or is it Morrison?*) County."

An annual dinner of the Society was discussed. The consensus of the group was that we should have an annual dinner. The matter was referred back to the Events Committee to make arrangements for such a dinner and report back at the next meeting.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Bill Hart reported for the Publications committee.

The book Testimony, Remembering Minnesota's Supreme Court Justices was discussed in detail. The committee recommends that we offer the book for sale at a cost of be \$40. That covers our cost of \$30 with about \$6 for mailing costs. Upon motion the price of the book was set at \$40. The book will be stored at the law library. One Thousand four books were printed; Barb Golden has a record of the distribution and will continue to handle the distribution of books. It was recommended that no books be sold until we have secured the sales tax exemption from the State.

No marketing plan has yet been devised, but the committee will prepare a media kit with instructions for the lawyer or judge presenting the book and a press release. The committee likes, and will attempt to carry out the local angle of presenting books to libraries in the home towns of deceased justices.

Upon motion duly seconded the Committee was authorized to distribute free books to 50 Public Libraries. The distribution and selection of the libraries will be coordinated with the Events Committee.

Upon motion, duly seconded and carried, it was decided to donate books to each of the four Minnesota law school libraries.

It was further moved, seconded and carried that a free copy of the book be provided to each author of new biography in the book.

Bill Hart reported on a web site. He recommended that we have a dedicated U.R.L so that we can have our own web site. He estimates the original cost would be about \$25,000 with annual maintenance costs of about \$2,000.

More planning work needs to be done on the web site. John Stuart suggested that we explore the possibility of hosting small videos. The committee will check with the Bar Association web site directors for help and suggestions.

Jon Garon summed up the elements of a website: the software design, which dictates the functionality for the site; the graphic design which provides the look and aesthetic feel of the site; and the content which determines the usefulness of the site. Mr. Garon stated that the costs of both software and graphic design have dropped considerably in recent years. The greatest challenge will be maintaining high quality, timely content on an ongoing basis.

The committee agreed with the statement and accepted it with approval.

FUND RAISING

Chairman Hanson reported that to date fund raising has been very successful. Eleven of the twenty five large firms have committed at \$10,000, two at \$5,000, to date none of the 25 firms has declined to contribute. Board members have contributed on an individual basis. The next step is to send a solicitation to the next seventy five firms. There was discussion of whether there should be a minimum contribution in order to be a "Founding Contributor."

The Board discussed the minimum gift to qualify as a "Founding Contributor". Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minimum contribution for a corporate/law firm Founding Contributor was established at \$1,000 and for an individual contributor was established at \$250.

MEMBERSHIP

Mary Vasaly reported for the membership committee. A thorough discussion was had of membership categories: whether there should be organization or only individual memberships and the fee for membership. There appeared to be consensus on allowing only individual membership. It was agreed that the Society would ask firms and corporations to sponsor the annual dinner or other specific projects. The board discussed the importance of keeping the fee for individual membership relatively low, and that there should be a structure that permits public defenders, government lawyers, and other public interest lawyers to pay even lower dues amounts. The discussion centered around establishing a dues amount in the range of \$50 to \$100 for regular membership. No comments were forthcoming on the membership committee's proposal for various level of membership, or providing a low "entry" dues amount, with subsequent renewals at higher levels. There was little support for lifetime memberships. The board also discussed whether to provide memorabilia or other membership benefits but the idea was rejected that we do not want complicated tax reporting for any return of benefits to members.

The matter of membership categories and the cost of membership were referred back to the Membership Committee to consider the discussion and to present recommendations at the next meeting.

EDUCATION

Kate McBride reported for the Education Committee. Recognizing that we have no infrastructure, staff or budget the Committee is looking for ways to effectively partner with organizations that have those three components:

Two possible partners are the Minnesota Historical Society and the Learning Law and Democracy Foundation.

Possible ways of partnering are: (1) to sponsor an award to a student participating in Minnesota History Day, a social studies program that encourages young people to explore a historical subject related to an annual theme. (2) To provide funding to a teacher to create a curriculum package that advances the goal of legal literacy among school-aged children or to fund a teach workshop that accomplishes the same.

The Committee also recommends working with the court information office to make the "Resource Guide to Interactive Judicial Outreach" a resource guide used by the judiciary when visiting schools available online.

Upon Motion duly made and seconded a Standing Education committee was established to encourage and promote legal literacy among all Minnesotans with special emphasis on school-aged children.

The Chairman announced that the next meeting will be held in Minneapolis on October 23, 2008.

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Esther M. Tomljanovich