

MAINE CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES FUND COMMISSION

MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

October 8, 2015

Augusta, Maine

A public meeting of the Maine Civil Legal Services Fund Commission (“Commission”) was held on October 8, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. in Room 208 of the Burton M. Cross Office Building in Augusta, Maine. Commissioner Mary Toole presided over the hearing with fellow Commissioners John Foster and Angela Farrell.

The purpose of the public meeting was to discuss and make funding allocations and decisions for the 2016 – 2017 funding cycle based on applications that had been submitted to the Commission by the September 1, 2015 deadline. Notice of the application process as well as notice of the meeting was published on the webpages for the Maine Bar Foundation, the Maine State Bar Association and the State of Maine Judicial Branch. In addition, the Maine Bar Foundation sent an email to all current recipients of the fund.

The Commission received 9 applications for funding from the following organizations:

Volunteer Lawyers Project
Legal Services for the Elderly
Pine Tree Legal Assistance
Maine Equal Justice Partners
Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project
York County Community Action
Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic
Penquis Cap

Commissioner Toole opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and introduced Commissioners Foster and Farrell. Commissioner Toole described the process the Commission would follow for the meeting. The applicants were assigned numbers chosen at random as the order in which they would make their oral presentations to the Commission.

Commissioner Toole then opened the meeting to presentations by each organization in the assigned order. Commissioner Toole advised the applicants that they would have approximately five minutes to provide general statements to the Commission. The following individuals gave statements and answered the Commission’s questions on behalf of the organizations with which they were affiliated:

Volunteer Lawyers Project
Michael Levey, Board Member
Juliet Holmes-Smith, Executive Director

Legal Services for the Elderly

Steve Marsden, Chair, Board of Directors
Charlie Soltan, Vice Chair, Board of Directors
Jaye Martin, Executive Director

Pine Tree Legal Assistance

Marcus Jaynes, President, Board of Directors
Nan Heald, Executive Director

Disability Rights Maine

Chad Hansen, Vice President, Board of Directors
Kim Moody, Executive Director

Maine Equal Justice Partners

Charles Dingman, Board Member
Robyn Merrill, Executive Director

Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project

Lori Londis Dwyer, Past President, Board of Directors
Sue Roche, Executive Director

York County Community Action

Jennifer Gordon, Director

Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic

Danielle Conway, Dean, University of Maine School of Law
Dierdre Smith, Director

Penquis Cap Law Project

Tamara Mathieu, Director

Next the Commission commenced its deliberations. The Commission used the number of \$1.3 million as the most accurate estimate of the amount that was available for distribution during this funding cycle. The Commission noted that the total amount of funding that had been requested exceeded the monetary amount available and agreed to use percentage allocations rather than annual grant dollar amounts in their deliberations.

The Commission discussed the issue of whether all the applicant programs met the eligibility requirements under the Rules. Commissioner Toole stated that she believed the York CAP project did not qualify based on the criteria for selection. After discussion, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to discontinue funding for York CAP. The Commissioners then discussed the qualifications of Penquis CAP and upon a motion whether Penquis CAP should be funded, Commission Farrell voted yes and Commissioners Toole and Foster voted no. A motion to reduce the funding amount for the Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic failed, with Commissioner Foster voting yes and Commissioners Toole and Farrell voting no.

The Commission commenced with discussion of specific funding allocations to the seven remaining applicants.

The Commission decided on the following allocations:

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| Volunteer Lawyers Project | 6.039% | |
| Legal Services for the Elderly | 20.7355% | |
| Pine Tree Legal Assistance | 47.718% | |
| Disability Rights Maine | 2.98% | |
| Maine Equal Justice Partners | 10.89% | |
| Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project | 5.2025% | |
| Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic | 6.435% | |

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Toole, Esq.

John Foster, Esq.

Angela Farrell, Esq.