

VERMONT SUPREME COURT
SPECIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON REMOTE HEARINGS

Meeting Minutes – January 6, 2022

Committee Chair Scott Griffith called the meeting to order at approximately 12:00 p.m. via WebEx. Members present included Justice William Cohen, Laura LaRosa, Margaret Villeneuve, Julie Bronson, Cedric Baele, Ashley Beach, James Dumont, David Koeninger, Marshall Pahl, Amelia Darrow, Judge Helen Toor, Judge Timothy Tomasi, Judge Frederick Glover, Magistrate Alicia Humbert, Marcia Schels, and Roger Garrity.

Court Administrator's Office staff members Andy Campbell and Jessica Van Buren were also present.

I. Welcome and Approval of Minutes

Scott Griffith called for a motion to accept the minutes of the December 10, 2021 meeting. Amelia Darrow moved to accept the minutes and Cedric Baele seconded. A vote was taken, and the minutes were approved without objection.

II. Policy Subcommittee Update

Scott noted that Laura LaRosa will chair the Policy Subcommittee. The Subcommittee will have its first meeting on January 13.

III. Review of Operations Subcommittee Recommendations

Judge Toor led a second round of discussion regarding the recommendations of the Operations Subcommittee. Discussion followed, after which the committee decided to advance several recommendations. These recommendations deal generally with the use of Webex; bandwidth and internet connectivity issues in local courts; serving pro se litigants; exhibit management issues; and docketing and scheduling issues.

Judge Toor will send a memo to Scott which includes the items from the Operations Subcommittee that the full Advisory Committee has decided to advance. Scott will share them with Judge Zonay, and they will devise a plan for moving forward. Scott will report back to the committee on progress made on the recommendations that have been advanced.

IV. New Businesses and Action Items

Roger Garrity reported that he has been sharing information about the committee's work with his media colleagues. The most common feedback he hears is that the media and public should be informed about hearings and when they will take place. He noted that the media does not want the fact that remote hearings are being conducted to prevent media from attending proceedings in person.

Mr. Garrity asked whether there would be a public comment period on the committee's recommendations. Scott noted that the committee is charged with submitting a report to the Supreme Court in June, and that the process of preparing the report could allow for the solicitation of input on this topic.

V. Next Meeting Date and Adjourn

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:10 p.m.

Submitted By:
Scott Griffith
Committee Chair