

**VERMONT SUPREME COURT
SPECIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON REMOTE HEARINGS**

Meeting Minutes – July 14, 2022

Committee Chair Scott Griffith called the meeting to order at approximately 12:00 p.m. via Teams. Members present included Cedric Baele, Ashley Beach, Julie Bronson, Amelia Darrow, Jim Dumont, Judge Frederick Glover, Magistrate Alicia Humbert, Laura LaRosa, Marshall Pahl, Marcia Schels, Judge Helen Toor, and Maggie Villeneuve. Court Administrator's Office staff Andy Campbell, Seema Kumar, Joseph Paquin, 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 April 14, 2022 meeting. Judge Glover moved to accept the minutes and Laura LaRosa seconded. Scott called for discussion. Hearing none, the minutes were considered accepted and approved.

II. Review of Results of Bar Survey

Scott reminded members that one of the recommendations of the Operations Subcommittee was to survey Bar members about remote hearings. He reported that the survey was conducted in June and that 441 people responded. A summary of responses was provided with the meeting agenda. Committee members discussed the results.

Scott will discuss with Teri Corsones the best way to share survey results with members of the Bar.

III. Update on Implementation of Operations Subcommittee's Recommendations

Scott briefly reviewed progress on implementation of the recommendations of the Operations Subcommittee. Scott mentioned that one of the recommendations of the Subcommittee was to survey the public about their remote hearing experience. He reported that Court Administrator's Office staff are working with the National Center for State Courts on an online survey. Cedric Baele suggested making paper copies of the survey available.

IV. Update on Policy Subcommittee's Draft Rule Amendments

Jim Dumont and Laura LaRosa summarized the Policy Subcommittee's revisions to VRCP 43.1, VRFP 17, and VRCrP 26. The revisions were based on feedback the Subcommittee received from several stakeholder groups.

Judge Toor said the Civil Oversight Committee has completed its review of the proposed amendments. Judge Glover said he will work with Judge Kilgore and the Probate Rules Committee and use the revised VRCP 43.1 as a basis for revising the equivalent rule for probate proceedings.

Jim Dumont said the Civil Rules Committee is ready to receive the draft rule. Marshall Pahl said he will have the Family Rules Committee review the draft at its July 22 meeting. Magistrate Humbert asked Jim Dumont to provide a written summary of the proposed amendments which she will share with the Family Oversight Committee.

Judge Toor asked if the Advisory Committee should ask the Supreme Court to request that the rules committees address the proposed amendments on an expedited basis so they can go into effect before A.O. 49 expires. Scott said he would discuss the matter with the Supreme Court.

Scott indicated that an outstanding policy issue is the manner in which the public are able to remotely access hearings. Laura LaRosa indicated there used to be a Supreme Court Media Advisory Committee and wondered if this is an issue that group could take up.

V. Committee Report to Supreme Court

Scott reminded members that the Advisory Committee's charge and designation directs it to submit a report to the Supreme Court "after one year." The report is to include a list of outstanding issues involving remote proceedings and a recommendation of whether to continue the committee in its present form, modify the charge and designation of the committee, or sunset the committee.

Jim Dumont said the committee should stay in existence at least long enough for the rules committees to complete their work. Judge Toor said the committee should revisit its work in one or two years and gather feedback about how remote hearings are going. Amelia Darrow said if there are any issues remaining within the committee's charge it should continue to operate. Scott will begin drafting the report.

Scott reported that during his recent conversations with the chairs of the rules committees they said they supported the continuation of the committee as a forum to discuss operational and technology issues related to remote proceedings.

VI. Adjourn

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:00 pm.

Submitted By:
Scott Griffith
Committee Chair