

**Equal Justice Wyoming  
Board of Commissioners Meeting  
May 12, 2015 3-5pm\*\*\***

**Summary**

Those in attendance in Cheyenne were: Pat Day, Ray Fleming Dinneen, and Cathy Duncil. Timothy Beppler, Mark Aronowitz, Jennifer Hanft, Mary Johnson, Stuart Day, Rae Lynn Job, Stacey Obrecht and Jacquelyn Bridgeman joined by phone.

**Choosing new logo.** A new logo was chosen for Equal Justice Wyoming.

**Grant Proposal Discussion.**

**Laramie County Community Partnership (LCCP)**-The Board discussed the details of this application. The attorney would be employed by LCCP. At this time there are no other organizations providing the kind of service in this proposal. This attorney would focus on training and outreach in the medical community and would be part of the health care team. They would identify issues or barriers that an attorney could assist with such as denial of services. This proposal provides another way to provide direct services which would be this attorney's main priority. This proposal is primarily for Laramie County, however; it must start somewhere and the model can be expanded elsewhere or statewide. The LCCP works closely with the community health organizations and agencies and nonprofits serving low-income individuals and families. The LCCP is looking at adding this program to GoalConnect in order to streamline the application process so that only one application would need to be completed. They would only serve clients who are at or below 200% of poverty level. The Board requested additional information regarding the availability of matching or supplemental funds LCCP might be able to utilize for this project.

**Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault-** (the Coalition) This proposal has a significantly increased budget as they are seeking to increase attorneys and have a satellite office in Cody with an attorney and a legal secretary. At the present time the two attorneys from Laramie serve the entire state and this addition would reduce some travel. The Coalition takes extended, contested cases. There were concerns about a request for nearly half of the funds Equal Justice has to grant and questions as to whether the Coalition is facing possible reductions from other grantors. The Coalition is providing quality services for very difficult cases but the request is high. Additional concerns were expressed regarding overhead costs. There are two proposals for a Cody office, and there was discussion if there is enough work in that area for two attorneys. Board members expressed their feeling that this proposal is a priority because of the population and type of services rendered. The concerns over the amount of the request were balanced with the importance of this work and the need for additional services in the Cody area. Perhaps costs could be trimmed down.

The discussion turned at this point to concerns regarding Legal of Wyoming Inc. It was noted that Legal Aid of Wyoming continues to turn away many of the contested cases. Equal Justice has seen Legal Aid of Wyoming, Inc. stop accepting cases due to being "at capacity". Their numbers for extended services are very low compared to the national

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average when measured by the number of extended services cases per 10,000 poverty population. Equal Justice's new reporting requirements for the following grant cycle will give a more accurate picture of the number clients served and the level of service provided.

University of Wyoming College of Law-This proposal is for a fellowship for \$65,677 for salary and benefits, for a licensed attorney to expand their knowledge and assist the clinics by handling cases directly and supervising students. This is a less expensive program to provide direct services and partner with the college. There were concerns about travelling the state to assist elsewhere and how they would interact with the law school. Jacquelyn explained that they have a fellowship in another programs and it works well. They do not do any teaching and would be managing the clinic and handling cases. They would have access to all the college resources. There have been challenges with the supervision piece for the clinics and this could possibly resolve this issue. A question was raised as to whether the college has requested funding from other organizations. The current student directors are funded from IOLTA funds. Board members and staff like the idea of building a better bridge with the college and trying this model could help change the culture of new attorneys graduating regarding pro bono work. The Board requested additional information about other supplemental funds that might be available.

Self Help Center- There was discussion of the grant application. The Self Help Center is a member of the Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. The current grant to the WCADVSA centralizes the legal assistance project, whereas, this request seeks to have a separate legal assistance project utilizing contract attorneys for the Self Help Center clients.

Poverty Resistance- The Board discussed the proposal for a contract attorney program. Concerns were raised about the high expense of the contract attorney model in comparison to a staff attorney model. The Board requested that additional information be gathered from Poverty Resistance to consider at the next meeting.

There was a consensus to pick up the conversation at the next meeting as Board members had other commitments.

Meeting adjourned at 5:04pm.