

The meeting convened at 4:30 p.m.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved. There were no minutes for May since the Discrimination Seminar at the Housing Court had taken the place of our regular May meeting.

Committee Reports

1. Patricia Augur reported for Carol Femia and Cecil Hanks that, due to a delay in submitting drafts of the Housing Court brochure to Aetna Insurance Co. for printing, Aetna is no longer able to schedule the work. We will have to seek a printer independently. Aetna, however, has sent a check for \$350. to cover at least a portion of printing costs. Carol Femia is delegated to follow through in completing the brochure.

2. The forms sub-committee drafted and submitted revised forms to the Housing Court and met with Mr. William Sadek, Chief Clerk of the Court, to review the needs and share ideas. The Court staff has now developed their own version of the forms, which they are relatively satisfied with, and which do not require any rules changes. Mr. Sadek has indicated that further comments are welcome. The forms sub-committee will meet on Tuesday, June 12th at 4:30 p.m. at Ed Dale's Office to further review forms. The one possible further revision contemplated is to either remove the Notice to Quit or redraft it in plain language. A question was raised by Atty. Podolsky as to whether or not this could be done without going through the Rules Committee. Atty. Podolsky asked to be added to the forms sub-committee. Atty. Dale will take care of distributing samples of the current forms to the subcommittee and informing other members of the next meeting.

3. A brief rundown was given by Patricia Augur of a number of personnel problems at the Housing Court. Ray Albert, a joint law-social work student will be working part-time as a Housing Specialist Assistant in New Britain during the summer on an emergency basis. Paul Zagorsky's second part-time job had made scheduling difficult. The Council was informed of the resignation of Donald Ball and the need for continuing supportiveness of Housing Court staff in light of pressures and caseloads. There is some possibility of Judge Spada's leaving in December, which would present a problem for the next legislative session and the smooth transition and carry-over to other possible Housing Sessions state-wide. It was agreed to add to the agenda the drafting of a letter commending Judge Spada on the fine, conscientious and sensitive work he has done in setting up and administering the Housing Session.

4. Judicial Selection sub-committee has no chairperson but it was agreed should be reactivated in light of the possible need for a second Judge, a replacement for Judge Spada, for relief Judges, and for assuring that candidates with good housing background and orientation be recruited into the system.

5. The fate of four bills submitted to the Judiciary Committee by Judge Spada and the Advisory Council was reported. Three never made it out of committee; and the fourth, regarding stays of execution, died in the house of Representatives by two votes. It was agreed that the drafting of these bills came late and that every attempt should be made next year to get an early start on our legislative priorities.

6. Sheila Scott reported for the Publicity/Public Outreach Sub-committee that a list of organizations and community groups from the 30 towns in the Housing Court judicial district is in the process of being compiled and that several mailings had been sent out from the Capitol Region Conference of Churches with brochures. Patricia Augur reported that there is a steady trickle of speaking requests. Ned Coll agreed to cover a speaking request on consumer protection in housing at the School of Social Work on June 28th since Pat will be away that week.

New Business

1. A procedure for screening Housing Specialist candidates has been proposed by Judge Spada. Advisory Council personnel subcommittee will be able to screen resumes and make recommendations to the Advisory Council Chairperson. The Chairperson will be able to sit in on interviews to be conducted by Judge Spada and Frances Calafiore, Chief Housing Specialist. The Advisory Council directed its Chairperson to request that our personnel committee be given the opportunity to meet candidates in person since it is difficult to evaluate candidates on the basis of a resume alone. Rudy Arnold, Carol Maurer, Rafie Podolsky, Joe Stafford and Mike Sharpe agreed to serve on the personnel screening committee. It was agreed that at least one minority member of the Advisory Council should be included in all interviewing.

2. It was noted that there has been some question raised by Judge Spada re the propriety of his sitting on cases brought by Advisory Council members. The issue was neither discussed nor resolved.

At this point the agenda was abandoned and three personnel matters involving court staff and advisory council members and staff were raised by Ned Coll. There was some discussion as to the propriety of dealing with these issues in a public meeting rather than in person or in Executive session. A motion was made and seconded that Affirmative Action considerations be followed in making recommendations regarding the hiring of housing specialists. The motion carried 4-0 but there was no quorum present.¹ (See footnote, next page)

3. Agenda item regarding Judge Spada's written opinions and indexing thereof was passed over and will be on next month's agenda.

4. Agenda item regarding jurisdictional issues was briefly touched upon by Chairperson in conjunction with agenda item (5.), an informal proposal for statewide expansion of the Housing Session into five additional districts, each with one judge and approximately 500,000 population served. This would reduce the Hartford-New Britain district from 800,000 to 500,000, which could more easily be served by one Judge. Judge Spada is willing to hear consumer protection cases in housing but recommends that other product liability cases, negligence and torts on insurance and commercial property, commercial leases, and breach of commissions in real estate cases be dropped in order to keep the court's caseload manageable and to keep within legislative intent.

6. Ned Coll proposed that the Advisory Council become involved in the Manchester case dealing with Federal Community Development Block Grants. It was pointed out that this is a federal issue, being dealt with

in the federal courts, and that it would not likely come within the Housing Court's jurisdiction. The matter was postponed to the next meeting since it is such a major issue and it was felt members should be alerted to its being on the agenda.

7. The Council was reminded again that we have no representation from east of the river. Mike Sharpe reported that the Governor's Office is under the impression that there is a vacancy on the Advisory Council and is preparing to appoint another member from east of the river whose name was on the list originally submitted to the Governor's Office by the Housing Court ad hoc legislative group. Chairperson Patricia Augur indicated there may be some misunderstanding, perhaps due to the fact that the original membership list released at the first organizational meeting only had 16 names, yet a 17th person had actually been appointed at the eleventh hour. She will check with the Governor's Office to clear the question.

8. Action item proposed by Rudy Arnold, to write a letter of commendation to Judge Spada, was not addressed by the Council since only two members remained at the meeting.

² (See footnote)

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A. Patricia Augur

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Chairperson
Acting Secretary

Present were: Arnold, Augur, Coll, Femia (left for another meeting), Maurer, Podolsky, Rivera, Sharpe, Stafford. Also guests Bob Kor, Philip Charpentier, Joe Bibisi, Ed Dale, and three members of the Revitalization Corps; and Scott, Advisory Council resource staff.

Footnotes by Chairperson

1. During the hiring of the original Housing Specialists aggressive efforts had been made, in fact, both to advertise the openings widely to community and minority groups (the Judicial Department had felt it was more appropriate that we do it than they); and also to include minority candidates in the interviewing process. The Advisory Council's top four candidates did, in fact, include a Black, a Hispanic and a Woman. However, due to the lack of staff help and the Chairperson's absence for a week out of state, no advertising of the position was formally done by the Advisory Council for this last position. There was a previous vote on record that our interviewing team in the future include minority members of the Advisory Council.
2. This action item has been assigned to Elizabeth Washington, Vice-Chairperson. Action item not addressed in meeting that was the priority of Judge Spada (his request for our help in getting air conditioners for the Hartford Courtroom, and a walkway to cut down on mud at the entrance of 83½ Lafayette) was likewise not addressed due to members having left the meeting and other issues having taken priority on agenda. This assignment has been made to Joe Stafford.