

# Scott County Law Library

Meeting of the Board of Trustees

February 3, 2015, 7:30 a.m.

## **Present**

Those in attendance were Comr. Barbara Marschall, Jody Kieser Kisting, Assistant Scott County Attorney, Library Director Jake Grussing, and Law Librarian Mary Freyberg. The Honorable J. Rex Stacey was absent.

## **Welcome**

Long time Secretary of the Law Library Board, Susan McNellis has retired. Susan has been on the Law Library Board since the inception of the Law Library. She will be greatly missed for her guidance, vision and her wonderful dry sense of humor. We would like to welcome our newest Board Member- Jody Kieser Kisting. Jody was appointed by Scott County Attorney Pat Ciliberto. Jody is an Assistant Scott County Attorney in the Civil Division.

## **New Legislation**

- The issue of E-filing for Self Represented Litigants (SRL's) is before the Legislature this session. The Minnesota Coalition of County Law Libraries (MCCLL) has been asked to review committee recommendations by March 1<sup>st</sup>. The legislative committee has recommended that SRL e-filing NOT be mandatory, unless ordered by Court. Another recommendation would eliminate the requirement for notarization to file court documents. New language would include "under penalty of perjury" when signing paperwork. MCCLL is meeting next week to discuss these recommendations. At the meeting next week, Mary will suggest to the MCCLL that when they share their recommendations to the legislature that they recommend that the e-filing program be implemented in sections and through the use of pilot programs in select counties rather than making a large scale change statewide all at once.
- .When E-filing is implemented, a scanner will be required. Presently, the Law Library has one scanner on its' copy machine. In the future, it may be necessary to acquire a separate scanner to assist self-represented litigants especially if we have a large volume of patrons seeking to use this service. The public libraries recently purchased 7 scanners- one for each library which should help if the demand to E-file documents becomes large.
- The MCCLL is planning to create a training program for both law and public librarians in order to prepare for SRLs e-filing. If the proposed E-filing changes are approved by the Legislature, E-filing is expected to begin on July 15, 2015.

## **Statistics**

- 2010–8379 people visited, participated in a clinic or were visited by the Scott County Law Librarian
- 2011–13,590 visited the Law Library and 365 people attended Law Library outreach programs
- 2012 -12,036
- 2013 –10,853
- 2014-10,561
- 2015- 776 as of January 26<sup>th</sup>

## ***Programs***

- Beginning last November, the Law Library once again started offering the SKYPE Spanish-Speakers clinics. Mary continues to work with the Parish of Saints Joachim and Anne (formerly St. Marks) in order to bring the clinic to their parish. Mary has been communicating with Deacon Bill. There is some concern from the Church Council so the program has not yet been started. Both the law library and church staff continue to dialogue about ways to successfully bring this program to the parish. In other locations within the community the program continues to be successful and well attended. In November, all spots in the clinic were full. In January of this year, there were no participants. The January program however, was not heavily advertised.
- The Law Library continues to offer the Divorce Clinic each month during the school year. Besides the Divorce Clinics, additional resources are now being offered for self-represented litigants to assist them in family law matters. Dakota County Legal Aid now offers I-Can Clinics similar to the work that is being done in the Scott County Clinics. Dakota County Legal Aid clinics are offered during regular business hours. Mary reported that the Law Library has also been approached by Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services (SMRLS) and she has shared all of our clinic information. SMRLS is hoping to switch their current clinic to our model in the future.
- As of January 1, 2015, the expungement laws in Minnesota have changed. As a result, there has been an increase in questions and interest in Expungement. Currently, staff is working with Volunteer Lawyers Network (VLN) in hopes of expanding the number of times our clinic may be offered. Presently, the expungement clinic is offered every other month. We would like to see the clinic offered each month at least for the first several months of the year in order to accommodate the increased interest in this topic. Seventeen people attended the January clinic. Scott County partners with Carver County in order to offer expungement clinics. The next clinic will be offered in March. Mary has also written an article about expungement in the Scott County Scene.
- Because of the success of the Law Library Clinics, we hope to offer additional clinics throughout the year as relevant topics arise.

## ***Collection***

- Due to budget restraints we have continued to cut back on NOLO (self-help titles) Press books for both the Law Library and the public libraries.
- In an effort to reduce expenditures, the subscription to United States Supreme Digest has been cancelled due to lack of use and high expense. A new volume costs \$958.00 with an additional S&H charge of \$97.36.
- The law library continues to offer a robust Westlaw and Westlaw Next online package. Although these programs are commonly used, we are still watchful of our costs associated with the use of these programs. Mary has affirmatively taken steps to notify the West representative

that law library revenue has declined and we may need to revisit our contract in the future as a potential cost saving mechanism.

***Budget***

Getting the law library budget under control was a priority for 2014 and will continue to remain a priority for 2015. Thanks to the diligent efforts of law library staff, expenses have been decreased by 14.83%. The 2014 financial statistics have not yet been finalized and we are awaiting additional data from the State. We continue to see that the budget is being impacted negatively by fee waivers in district court cases because fee waivers result in less law library fee revenue.