

2. Model Plan follow up (Jim Jones)

Jim Jones reported that the Model Plan was approved and effective December 1, 2018. Some attorneys continue to use the previous Chapter 13 Plan forms but there is progress in seeing more Model Plan filings. Some attorneys may be confused on what form to use. Judge Van Eck has observed some older forms and the Model Plan in his Chapter 13 review. Jim Jones noted no complaints or problems from those practitioners who utilize the Model Plan. Zac Christman heard a few complaints on the Plan from colleagues and from some who didn't know when the Plan was changed. Tracy Updike indicated there is no substantive issues but perhaps a few technical changes could be implemented. Carlo Sabatini acknowledged the efforts of Rick Thompson and the Clerk's Automation Department regarding the technology in developing the Plan for practitioners.

3. Video Appearance at hearings via CourtCall. Is Bar interested? (Rick Thompson/Judge Opel)

Judge Van Eck began the discussion that personnel from CourtCall came to the Court in the fall of 2018 and gave staff a presentation to demonstrate how appearing by video at hearings is possible through the CourtCall company. The Court is interested in whether this would be helpful for remote hearings and the bar's opinion or interest in this feature. There is a small additional charge to appear by video. Judge Opel indicated the bandwidth for participants would need to be tested prior to appearing. The Judge feels it would be beneficial to be able to see participants who choose to use CourtCall to appear by phone. There are some concerns about the voice activated camera. He suggested those present speak with their colleagues about this feature and report back to the Court.

Tracy Updike had some initial concerns as to delay in presentation and what additional equipment counsel would need in their offices. Judge Van Eck suggested any camera should work and speed would depend on bandwidth. Rick Thompson has received some flyers from CourtCall and will obtain the OWL unit for testing in the Wilkes-Barre Courtroom. Dan Rheam questioned whether this feature would be available for Trustees and petitioners appearing remotely for a 341 meeting. This matter was deferred to Ann Fiorenza who explained that the UST will make exceptions to certain requests regarding 341 meetings, but the main concern is to preserve the record and to not detract from the integrity of the proceedings. There are some logistical issues which would need to be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Judge Van Eck would like to keep the UST office in the loop.

This topic will be tabled until the next meeting when Rick will be able to address the technical questions to appear by video.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Status of Local Bankruptcy Forms in pdf and Word formats (Rick Thompson)

Rick Thompson reported that all Local Bankruptcy Forms are on the Court's webpage and available in both Word and Adobe format. Multiple emails were sent out alerting members of the bar about the availability of the forms. The Administrative Office updated some forms on April 1st. Rick offered to create fillable forms for those who want them. Just contact him.

Rick also mentioned that our Court has been approved to move forward with NextGen CM/ECF System and Pacer accounts will need to be updated because logins will no longer be shared. Users will be able to file in any NextGen Court (such as an Appeals Court) utilizing only one login and password. Preliminary transition will begin soon with total conversion months away.

2. Use of portal for mortgage modifications (Judge Opel)

Since use of the portal is discretionary, Judge Opel opened discussion to determine if the Bar is interested in making use of the portal mandatory. Both Zac Christman and Tracy Updike have had experience in using the portal and offered comment that they saw no reason to make it mandatory. They also thought mortgage companies seemed more responsive when dealt with directly. Judge Opel thanked the members and was satisfied with their responses.

3. Solicitation for New Members for the Attorney Advisory Committee (Judge Van Eck)

- a. Change to LBR 9029-1 to allow for staggering of the three-year terms**
- b. Review comments on the Draft Solicitation for new members**

Judge Van Eck reviewed the wording of the solicitation for new committee members which will be posted on the Court's webpage and emailed to the members of the MDBBA through the ListServ. Zac Christman expressed an interest to be on the committee. Judge Van Eck will permit telephonic appearance and apply two- or three-year membership terms on the committee. Members who served in the past could also serve in the future. It was undecided whether a change to the Local Rule will be needed. Carlo Sabatini will make an announcement at the MDBBA annual conference on June 14th, gather a list of those MDBBA members interested in serving on the committee, and review that list with the Judges prior to the next advisory meeting. Deadline for attorneys to respond will be June 21, 2019.

**4. Discussion on the date for the next quarterly meeting. (Judge Van Eck)
Proposed dates are: July 11, July 18, and July 25.**

The next quarterly meeting will be **July 25, 2019 at 3:00 pm.**

5. Other business.

Seth discussed a potential change to the Local Rules regarding a new IT feature whereby non-ECF users would have the ability to upload documentation to their case dockets. Language for this new Local Rule will be discussed in the future.