

**PRO BONO COMMITTEE**  
**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA**  
**Minutes of Meeting of May 24, 2023 @ 4:30 p.m.– Zoom Meeting**

- I. Meeting called to order at 4:38 P.M. Introductory Remarks and Roll Call by Judge Mora. Present were
- Hon. Mindy Mora (Judicial Chair)
  - Peter Kelly (Lay Chair)
  - Steven Newburgh (Practitioner)
  - Nadine White-Boyd (Secretary)
  - Joe Falzone (Clerk of Court)
  - Bruce Levine (Dade Legal Aid – attended in lieu of Karen Ladis)
  - Kim Rommel Enright (Legal Aid of PBC)
  - Jerry Leakey, Esq. (Legal Aid of PBC)
  - Matthew Bayard (Legal Services of Greater Miami, Inc.)
  - Kristina Gonzalez (practitioner)
  - Patricia Redmond (UM Law School Professor)
  - Ariel Sagre (practitioner)
  - Tom Messana (practitioner and BBA Foundation)
  - Joey M. Grant (BBA ProBono Fort Lauderdale)
  - Britt Berg (Florida Rural Legal Services – Pro Bono manager)
  - Amy McCaffrey Florida Rural Legal Services Attorney Berg's administrative assistant)
  - Agnes Lambert (Florida Rural Legal Services Fort Pierce – Indian River, Martin County, Okeechobee and St. Lucie)
  - Cassandra Paniagua (Florida Rural Legal Services- WPB pro bono coordinator)
  - Heather Ries, BBA
  - Tara Trevorrow, (FLSB, Law Clerk to Judge Mora)
- Absent:
- Judge Isicoff
  - Jon Martin
  - Karen Ladis
  - Charles Vercillo
  - Sheena Robinson
  - Michael Dunn
  - Maria Gonzalez (Legal Aid Service of Broward County)
- II. Motion to approve Minutes of February 15, 2023 made by Tom Messana and seconded by Kristina Gonzalez. Minutes approved.
- III. Updated FLSB and National Filing Statistics – Steve Newburgh and Joe Falzone. Joe provided update on filings. No great stride in filings.
- IV. Report on Coordination of Pro Bono Cases in the Entire District as Opposed to County by County – no report

- V. Low Bono Guidelines – Committees’ Review of and Possible revision of Guidelines and Committees’ Recommendations to the judges (Guidelines attached)
  - a. Newburgh reported that he is working on finalizing the guidelines.
  
- VI. Pro Bono Assistance Intake – Discussion of possible procedures/standardization for challenging situations; consideration of email blast of available cases similar to FLSD pro bono case notifications.
  - a. Applications for pro bono cases are received from pro se individuals, trustees, and judges.
    - i. Dade legal conduct screening of pro se clients
    - ii. Law school programs refer it back to the volunteer organizations
    - iii. Make announcement at motion calendar that pro bono attorneys are needed.
  
- VII. Sub-Committee Reports and Discussion of Pending Projects
  - a. Pro se Clinics – Steve Newburgh (chair), Joe Grant
    - i. The monthly Pro Se Clinics are still operating. Typically, about 20 people will register but only about 2 – 3 people show up/attend the clinic.
    - ii. Evaluation of Middle District’s pro se clinic’s website/app (developed by Judge Brown: <https://www.bankruptcyproseclinic.com>) and creation of program for Southern District
      - Update on research. Volunteer lawyers sign into website and provide their availability to answer questions. Potential pro se debtors will connect, and reserve time. Lawyers have the ability to put notes in the system and debtors have the opportunity to get information before filing a case pro se. The company that is used is NetProfession founded/owned by attorney David Berkowitz
      - Budgeting for web development – court does not have the budget
  - b. Help Desks – Peter Kelly (chair) Ariel Sagre, Joe Grant, Kristina Gonzalez
    - i. Volunteer Attorneys Task Force. Still operate on Judge Isicoff’s calendar. Working on centralized email to provide basic information.
  - c. Law School Programs – Patricia Redmond (chair), Peter Kelly
    - i. 3 clinics operate in S. Florida. They are working on getting FIU on board for spring in order to have 4 clinics.
  - d. Website Review – Joe Falzone (chair), Joe Grant, Ariel Sagre
    - i. Request for any changes, edits, and/or additions should be sent to Joe Falzone
  - e. Veterans’ Programs – Judge Isicoff, Matt Bayard
    - i. No updates
  - f. Pro Bono Week – Karen Ladis (chair), Joe Grant, Kim Enright, Nadine White-Boyd, Tom Messana
    - i. Planning of probono week to begin in advance
      - Changing the seminar so content is not repetitive and allow more participants.

- Start soliciting nominations for pro bono awards.
  - Meeting to be scheduled in July
  - Application for Behind the Myth program applied for 2024 with Florida Bar
- g. Elder Affairs Sub Committee – Judge Mindy Mora, Nadine White-Boyd, Peter Kelly, Ariel Sagre
- Handbook is being finalized to add to the Court’s website
- h. Fresh Start Subcommittee (f/k/a Dress For Success) – Heather Ries, Judge Mora, Joe Grant, Tara Trevorrow
- Heather developed announcement with QR code directly to website for Dress for Success. The QR code will be distributed to Chapter 7 trustees and chapter 7 attorneys.
- i. Student Loan Issues Subcommittee – Patricia Redmond, Matthew Bayard, Nadine White-Boyd, Ariel Sagre, Peter Kelly
- Pro se filers need to be able to take advantage of the opportunities. Discussion as to whether the resources can be placed on website. A model complaint can be placed on the Court’s website. Procedural advice such as how to serve the complaint cannot be included on the court’s website.
  - Large law firms may have associates volunteer to handle adversary proceeding.
- VIII. Committee Interface with Legal Aid organizations – Reports from all Legal Aid Providers Concerning Improvement of Referral Systems
- a. Dade Legal – Karen indicate things are rolling. Intake to attorneys. Functioning. They are referring cases and getting lots of assistance.
- b. Florida Rural Legal Service – Probono bankruptcy steady. Still seeking volunteers.
- c. Broward Rural – no report.
- d. PBC Legal Aid – they have troublesome cases.
- e. Matt Bayard – they received a modest grant to handle chapter 7 cases. The funds end in July. Collection pause ends in 60 days from June 30<sup>th</sup> which may result in increase in filings.
- IX. No New Business
- X. Closing Comments – Next Meeting tentatively scheduled for 4:30pm September 20, 2023
- XI. Meeting adjourned