

LINN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, February 19, 2009
Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

President Scott McLeod called the meeting to order at approximately 12:14 p.m.

The following judges were in attendance: Iowa Supreme Court Justice David Baker; Chief District Court Judge David Remley and District Court Judges Patrick Grady and Marsha Beckelman.

The following guests were introduced: None.

Membership Chair Sasha Monthei announced the following attorneys have been proposed and admitted for membership: Gary Walters, Justice For Our Neighbors; Paul Waterman and Laura Kanmienski, White Law Firm; and Dan Anderson, Wertz Law Firm.

Treasurer Todd Anderson distributed a Treasurer's Report. Todd advised that the Report shows approximately \$10,000 less in income than at this time last year. This is for two reasons: 1) last year the LCBA voted to spend down the amount of funds on hand (note: this was pre-flood); 2) the LCBA changed its billing system and in particular how the bills show the optional voluntary Legal Services charitable contribution (assessment) of \$100, resulting in fewer contributions. Todd noted since the LCBA's income is down this year, that means there will be less for the LCBA to distribute to applicants by the charitable contributions committee in the fall.

There was no Linn Law Club Report.

Iowa Supreme Court Justice David Baker and Sixth Judicial District Chief Judge David Remley provided an update regarding the current judicial branch budget crisis. Judge Baker advised that the governor has proposed a 2.5 percent cut in the judicial branch's budget. This would result in approximately a \$3.8 million cut. This cut would go into effect by July 2009. The fiscal year for 2010 looks even more bleak. The governor is proposing a 6.5 percent budget cut, which equates into a shortfall of \$13.9 million. Justice Baker stated that the judicial branch's budget is 96 – 97 percent salary. Therefore, the only way to absorb this type of budget cut is via a staff reduction (layoffs or furloughs). They did one furlough on February 16. A day's furlough results in approximately a \$350,000 savings. Justice Baker also noted that there is not really room to cut judges as there are only 117 judges in Iowa and research shows that the demand for Iowa's population is 148 judges. Justice Baker provided the contact phone numbers for the legislature: Senate – (515) 281-3371 and House – (515) 281-3221. Judge Remley then provided the names of key legislators to contact. Judge Remley also thanked the LCBA for offering office supplies (*editor note: this has not yet been formally approved by the LCBA*). Judge Remley advised a news conference was scheduled for 2:00 p.m. today by Justice Ternus. Judge Remley also advised that due to the budget crisis, the court has instituted travel restrictions for the judges, which has resulted in scaling back the number of court days in the rural counties and the scheduling of different types of trials in those counties. Judge Remley also noted that civil litigation is currently at the bottom of the priority list.

President McLeod advised that in response to his recent email to LCBA members regarding the current controversy over replacing court reporters with electronic recording, he received an overwhelming number of emails, all in support of retaining court reporters. He thanked all those who emailed their positions and noted he did not receive one single email in support of electronic recording.

Program Committee Co-Chair Amy Reasnor of Lynch Dallas introduced the speaker Linda McGuire, Associate Dean for Civic Engagement of the University of Iowa College of Law. She discussed the U of I Law School's citizen lawyer program. She also focused on pro bono requirements under Model Rule 36.6.1 and whether Iowa should adopt a mandatory reporting of lawyer pro bono hours. One-half hour of state ethics CLE will be applied for.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:00 pm. The next meeting of the LCBA will be Thursday, March 19, 2009 at the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art.

/s/ Stephanie Hinz
Stephanie Hinz, Secretary