



Task Force On Judicial Excellence

THOUGHTFUL RESEARCH AND INVESTIGATION TO ENSURE ACROSS-THE-BOARD JUDICIAL EXCELLENCE

Public Forum #3 Topic: Judge4Yourself – April 14 from 7-9 p.m.

Message from the Co-Chairs

The following is a summary of our forum from Thursday, April 14, at Mount Sinai Baptist Church.

A very good turnout, especially among our sitting judges (thanks to the Administrative Judge, Nancy Fuerst).

Present were:

Judge Dick Ambrose

Judge Nancy Fuerst

Judge Brian Hagan (Rocky
River Muni)

Judge Marilyn Cassidy

Judge John O'Donnell

Judge Pat Blackmon

Judge Larry Jones

Judge Joe D. Russo

Judge Alison Floyd

Judge Lillian Green

Judge Dan Polster

Judge Laura Gallagher

Judge Lynn Murray

Judge Maureen Clancy

Judge Robert McClelland

Judge Pat Kelly (ret).

We also had:

Robert Frost: Chair Republican Party

Stuart Garson: Chair, Democratic Party

Blaine Griffin, Vice Chair, Democratic Party

Rev. C. Jay Matthews welcomed us to his church and stayed for the entire two hours (as did all the people who came).

Dick Pogue showed up, as did our friend who helped found Judge4yourself, Rufus Sims.

Deborah Coleman led a panel discussion on the pros and cons of Judge4yourself.com. With her were Ron Johnson of the Norman S. Minor Bar Assoc., Christine Santoni of the Ohio Women's Bar Assoc., Dave Rowthorn of the Cuyahoga Criminal Defense Lawyers Assoc. (CCDLA), and Subodh Chandra of the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Assoc. (CMBA).

The discussion was mostly the Judge4Yourself folks telling more about their process and all the improvements that have been made in recent years. Tim McMonagle fielded some questions from our judges and asked some good questions that have been raised about Judge4Yourself.

Kerin Kaminski and Russ Tye turned out on behalf of the Task Force. The President and Presidents-in-waiting, Mike Ungar, Barbara Roman and Carter Strang all showed up, as did Dave Watson and Rita Klein of the CMBA. Thanks to them for all the help. Barbara Lum showed up as our clerk.

Lots of good discussion and takeaways for Judge4yourself.

We also had a nice opportunity to meet with Republican Party leaders beforehand, much as we did with the Democrats before our last forum. Kudos to Rob Frost for arranging the Mount Sinai site and getting some of his leaders to meet with us. We had a very productive exchange, led by Mike Ungar and Rob.

Significantly, the issue of citizen education again surfaced last night as it has in our previous forums. Average voters want to know more about what judges do and how they impact their lives and our society. They also want to see the judges more in their neighborhoods.

So a good night. Thanks to all who participated.

Obviously, we have been very successful so far just with the establishment of the Judicial Qualifications Committee, which is getting state-wide attention, including our Chief Justice and the OSBA. You all know this would not have been possible without the indefatigable efforts of Mike Ungar and the leadership of Rob Frost and Stuart Garson.

Best,

Jim and Tim