

# Scott County Law Library

Meeting of the Board of Trustees

December 19, 2017, 7:30 a.m.

Those in attendance were Scott County Commissioner Barbara Weckmann Brekke, Jody Kieser Kisting, Assistant Scott County Attorney, Law Librarian Mary Freyberg and the Honorable Rex Stacey.

Mary reported that upcoming changes to the current law library space will be happening in the upcoming year. Currently, there are three computer terminals for members of the public to use when they visit the law library. There is a shortage of space however, to work in the library itself. In an effort to provide more room for people to work, the space of the current law library is being reconfigured. Shelving with books will be removed in order to make room for the addition of tables and chairs for citizens to use as they complete paperwork and conduct research. The books that are being removed contain information that will be still be available to patrons through an electronic rather than paper format.

In the past year, the law library has continued to offer many clinics. The following is a breakdown of the clinics that have been offered in the past year:

## 2017 Recurring Clinics

### Family Law Clinics

This service is offered the second Monday of the month. Participants can schedule a 30 minute consultation with a volunteer attorney to talk about family law issues. There have been 11 clinics offered in 2017.

### Expungement Clinics

Scott County Law Library and Carver County Law Library have partnered to offer the Volunteer Lawyer's Network Expungement Clinic every other month. We have offered 4 clinics this year.

### Victim's Clinic

The Department of Justice has awarded Southern Minnesota Regional Law Services (SMRLS) a two year grant to offer victim legal services specifically to Scott County. Attorney Kevin Jonassen offers assistance with Orders for Protection, Harassment Restraining Orders and other victim issues every Monday from 9:00- 11:00 a.m. Mr. Jonassen has held 46 clinics as of December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

Mary also reported that in addition to the recurring clinics offered in 2017, there have been additional events the law library has participated in during the past year including:

A presentation in March about the dangers and criminal consequences of sexting in conjunction with the Scott County Sheriff's Office, the Scott County Attorney's Office and the New Prague School District.

A podcast in April concerning the issue of single parents obtaining passports for their children.

The Scott County Future Leaders Program took place in April and the law library had a booth highlighting the sexting program from March and the Minnesota Court Information System database.

May 1 was Law Day and in honor of the day, the law library offered free walk-in clinics all day offering information on victim's rights, family law, employment benefits, Social Security, food stamps, housing, eviction expungement, and criminal expungement. Ninety-nine members of the public participated in law library events that day.

Another event that took place in May was the Kinship Caregivers Clinic. Kinship Caregivers is a program sponsored by Lutheran Social Services offering services to people raising children that are not their own.

Mary participated in Minnesota Association of Law Libraries spring training on May 19.

In June and December, the law library in conjunction with Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services sponsored a Senior Will Clinic.

In September, the Law Library sponsored a program on the topic of identity theft.

Mary also reported that the past year also brought some legislative change concerning the use of law library funds elsewhere in the State. Earlier this year, Representative Zerwas from Sherburne County introduced a bill to revise MN Statute §134A to allow law library funds to be used for construction of law libraries and government buildings. The Minnesota Coalition of Law Libraries (MCCLL) and Law Librarians throughout the state urged Governor Dayton to veto the bill, which he did saying:

“County law librarians have raised concerns that the legislation too broadly applies, creating the potential that law library funds will be used to support the construction of new court buildings throughout the state. “

The bill did pass later as part of a larger omnibus bill, but with the language that it only applied to Sherburne County. Since the bill has passed Sherburne County has dropped its contract with Central Minnesota Legal Services and no longer offers free legal clinics and has reduced its annual budget. They are currently looking for a part-time law librarian as they have reduced their law librarian staff hours.

Mary also provided an update on the use of E-books within the law library. As the cost of legal publications continues to rise, more and more law libraries are reducing their print publications and relying more on electronic resources. We are reducing our print collection, but only if there is the same resource available electronically. The drawback to using E-books is that they are still very expensive and cannot be used by multiple users at the same time.

Before the end of the year, Mary will finish updating the NOLO collections at each of the library branches. It is anticipated that there will be some funds left in the law library budget at the end of the year. Any funds left will be put into the law library's reserve fund to be used at a later date. In 2014, a large amount of reserve funds were used because revenue was low. The excess funds would go toward replenishing those withdrawals from 2014 and building for the future.