

**MINUTES OF THE
BANKRUPTCY PRACTICE COMMITTEE MEETING
March 27, 2018**

The meeting commenced at 3:30 P.M. on Tuesday, March 27, 2018, via teleconference.

Committee members in attendance from the court were Judge Saladino, Judge Hastings, Joan Kramer, Donna Soukup, Eva Roeber, and Cheryl Belmont; Jerry Jensen from the United States Trustee's office; Kathy Laughlin, the Chapter 13 trustee; Don Swanson, chair of the Mediation Committee; Greg Frayser, current chair of the bankruptcy section of the NSBA; John Lentz, past chair of the bankruptcy section; Dave Pederson; and the two newly-appointed members Stacy Bach from Scottsbluff and Lea Wroblewski from Legal Aid. James Overcash, Patrick Turner, and Rick Myers were not in attendance.

Judge Saladino encouraged the members to get the word out regarding the existence of the Bankruptcy Practice Committee so that all bankruptcy attorneys could have a voice on issues and they would know who their representatives are to present such issues.

Judge Saladino noted that the court is in the process of working on the use of video conferencing for witnesses and conducting small trials in western Nebraska in an effort to save costs and expenses for all parties.

Agenda Discussions

1. New Committee Members. Stacy Bach and Lea Wroblewski have agreed to be on the committee for a two-year term.
2. New Chapter 13 Plan. Kathy advised that the new Chapter 13 plans appears to be working well.
3. Local Rules. Our Local Rules were last updated in 2014, and the court will be revising the Local Rules this year, which will include incorporating all the General Orders. A committee consisting of Judge Saladino, Donna, Eva, Dave, Kathy, and John was formed to work on the revisions. If anyone else would like to participate, they should contact Eva.
4. Mediation. Don Swanson proposed to the committee a change to the mediation local rule to require mediation in certain cases by inclusion of the following language: "Except as otherwise ordered by the court, all adversary proceedings filed in a business case shall be referred to mandatory mediation, except an adversary proceeding in which the United States Trustee is the plaintiff, one or both parties are pro se, or the plaintiff is seeking a preliminary injunction or temporary restraining order." After a discussion, several of the committee members were not comfortable with mandating mediation, but were open to taking baby steps to get there. Both judges liked the idea of the parties having to take an affirmative step to either request or reject mediation, and Judge Saladino will continue to work on that as part of the Local Rule revision process.

5. Other. Stacy and John have been working on an update of the brochure for the volunteer lawyer's program.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15. The next meeting will be in the fall; however if issues arise before that meeting, they can certainly be discussed via email.